Minnesota Landscape Arboretum
Job Description

Title: Curator of Endangered Plants

Supervisor: Pete Moe – Director, Operations and Research

Job Code: 0001 Casual (Not to exceed 14 hrs per week on average in a calendar year)

Overview:
The Curator of Endangered Plants is a Part-Time, not to exceed 14 hours per week, position at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. This position serves as Curator of the endangered plant and seed collections in support of the Arboretum programs; coordinates and implements plant conservation “on-the-ground” monitoring programs for imperiled plants in the Upper Midwest; serves as a liaison and builds partnerships and agreements with Federal, State, regional, local, and NGO organizations for rare and endangered plants; disseminates timely information, in collaboration with Arboretum publicity staff and is the responsible steward for rare plants in the living collections and greenhouse collections. The Curator position will report to the Director of Operations and Research and interact closely with managers and directors of other Arboretum units.

Duties and Responsibilities:

70% “RTE” (Rare, Threatened, and Endangered) PROGRAMS
- Responsible for day to day management of the Arboretum’s plant conservation activities, including acquisition of appropriate plant materials including the management the RTE collections following established CPC and other scientific methods and standards.
- Conduct scientific based research and monitoring related to plant conservation, serving as the Arboretum’s plant conservation representative to collaborating institutions and government agencies, and fostering awareness of the need for conservation and involvement with the Arboretum’s conservation programs.
- Participate in strategic planning and development of the Arboretum’s plant conservation programs, including developing priorities for action, and advising senior management on needs to be addressed.
- Work with Arboretum staff to develop and carry out an effective fundraising, communication, education, display, and public outreach related to plant conservation.
- Ensure the Arboretum’s application, acquisition of, and adherence to appropriate government permits and memoranda of understanding, including preparation of regular reports as may be required.
- Maintain database of Arboretum’s conservation collection in coordination with the Center for Plant Conservation and the USDA National Center for Genetic Resources Preservation as applicable. Maintain secure archives (hard-copy) of unpublished data and sensitive information on sensitive, threatened, and endangered species
- Collaborate with appropriate land management agencies, and other Center for Plant Conservation (CPC) partners, to develop and implement a strategy to ensure the conservation of Minnesota’s most imperiled plants through seed banking, ex situ conservation strategies, and research into the general botany, reproductive biology, ecological restoration, and land management techniques affecting species of concern.
- Serve as the Arboretum’s liaison to the Center for Plant Conservation and government agencies responsible for management of sensitive, threatened, and endangered species. Attend meetings of the Center for Plant Conservation.
- Publish results in appropriate peer-reviewed journals
- Seek Grant funding or other sources of funding to implement and carry out general and special needs funding
• Provide advice regarding display and care for living collections to include appropriate training sessions, participation in the education and public outreach programs, and typically giving lectures or classes annually related to conservation and ecological restoration.
• Perform other duties as assigned by the Director of Operations and Research.

30% Seed Collections
• Coordinate, and accomplish the cleaning, testing, packaging and storage of all seed collections in accordance with current best practices. Order necessary supplies and schedule necessary repairs and/or maintenance of Seed Bank equipment. In conjunction with supervisor, prepare and adhere to annual budget.
• Curate conservation accessions (plants and seeds) consistent with standards provided by state (e.g., Minnesota Department of Natural Resources) and federal agencies (e.g., USDA National Center for Genetic Resources Preservation, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management); maintain data records and files for all seed accessions.
• Process requests and distribute seed and tissue samples from the Arboretum’s Seed Bank and Living Collections.
• Train, direct, and oversee organizational volunteers, interns, and students in accomplishing Plant and Seed Conservation Program activities.
• Initiate projects and activities that maintain and/or improve the quality and usefulness of the seed collection and that increase current understanding of seed processing, storage, and germination techniques.
• Participates in seed collecting and salvage efforts for the living collection of rare, threatened, and endangered plants, in collaboration with the curator of the living collection and supervision by the Director of Research and Operations

Required Qualifications:
• Graduate degree in botany, biology, horticulture, or related science
• Working knowledge of the flora, basic taxonomic principles and characteristics of major plant families.
• Ability to type and basic computer skills essential.
• Physical stamina and agility to conduct field work.
• Demonstrated field work experience
• Ability to effectively train, supervise, motivate, and coordinate the work of students, volunteers, and interns.
• Excellent time management and prioritization skills and manage multiple projects simultaneously.

Preferred Qualifications:
• Graduate degree in seed biology, conservation or ecology preferred.
• Good communication skills and willingness to work cooperatively and collaboratively with other department staff, volunteers, students and associates outside the institution.
• Build and maintain data base programs

Additional Information:
Position requires occasional weekend and evening work, as well as occasional (less than 10%) overnight travel around the state. The ideal candidate should have a solid understanding of botanical garden collections and interest in plant conservation; have a balance of both field experience and laboratory understanding and the ability to perform in remote locations far from modern conveniences, and be able to work collaboratively and build relationships with Arboretum staff, volunteers, and members of the public to enhance knowledge of plant conservation issues, foster an understanding of the value and appropriate use of conservation collections.