



THE  
AMERICAN  
CHESTNUT  
FOUNDATION\*

## Job Announcement

Founded in 1983, The American Chestnut Foundation is a 5,000-member non-profit scientific research organization headquartered in Asheville, North Carolina, with 16 volunteer-operated state chapters and three regional science offices located in Charlottesville, Virginia, Burlington, Vermont, and State College, Pennsylvania. The organization's research farm in Meadowview, Virginia has had over 60,000 trees planted at various stages of breeding. TACF has more than 60 formal partnerships with academia, government agencies, and private landowners and is recognized as a lead organization for tree species restoration. TACF's research and operations is 94% funded through private philanthropic foundations and generous individuals who are hopeful that the American chestnut can be restored to our Eastern forests.

*Our mission is to return the iconic American chestnut to its native range.*

### **Position: Regional Science Coordinator – Southern Region**

Full time, permanent position with benefits package

Position located in Asheville, North Carolina

Frequent travel throughout the southern region's assigned territory

Salary dependent on experience and qualifications; TACF is certified living wage employer

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

The Southern Regional Science Coordinator (SRSC) supports the science-related activities of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) volunteer-run chapters in Georgia, Alabama, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee. The coordinator collaborates with the three other Regional Science Coordinators and the TACF Director of Science, based in Asheville. The SRSC reports to the Director of Restoration out of State College, PA, and may supervise seasonal staff and/or interns.

The SRSC directs and supports chapter science programs following current breeding-program protocol, including such activities as pollination, harvest and seed collection, seed storage and distribution, planting site selection, directing the planting and maintenance of chestnut trees, inoculating and selecting trees, and database entry. In addition, the SRSC provides support to chapter programs by facilitating and organizing education and outreach opportunities, participating in chapter meetings, and acting as a link between the chapters and the national program of TACF.

1. Provide science, breeding, orchard management information, advice and assistance to the chapters in accordance with TACF science program protocol and principles of best horticultural practices
  - a. Review and direct chapter plantings and collection of required data on survival and growth rates, condition of trees and update orchard databases and maps.
  - b. Review records of orchard management practices including fertilization, watering, weed control, pest control, and environmental effects on the orchard. Answer questions and recommend improved management practices when needed.
  - c. Recommend next steps for each orchard depending on season, age and size of trees, and purpose for the planting. Determine an orchard's long term survival and purpose, including whether the orchard meets the chapter's goals; this includes repurposing if necessary and advised.



- d. Facilitate both current collaborations with groups and individuals for chapter activities, including establishing new orchards, organizing members and volunteers for work details, developing newsletters, and scheduling events.
  - e. In order to cultivate and motivate chapter volunteers, attend and present talks at chapter meetings, join planting and other field activities, and act as their overall support person for all chapter needs.
  - f. Train chapter members and others on chestnut planting, tree management, tree identification and other related topics.
  - g. Give presentations to outside groups, including schoolchildren and adults.
  - h. Develop a working list of future cooperators and capture opportunities for engagement on an ongoing basis to ensure longevity of science and volunteer activities.
2. Dependent on future needs and land acquisitions, act as lead staff manager of any Asheville-area chestnut plantings on potential new satellite farms. Work with staff of the Meadowview Research Farm and other science staff to develop chestnut plantings and land management plans.
  3. Participate in professional development for best practices and trends in chestnut research through professional journal reviews, attendance at TACF national board, committee, appropriate science meetings, and attend internal TACF science staff meetings, and annual meetings such as the NE-1833 meeting. Participate in staff retreats, professional coaching and trainings as offered and available. Act as liaison to board of director committees as assigned.
  4. Communicate regularly with other TACF staff, Chapter Presidents, and chapter members to facilitate goals, strategic plans, fundraising efforts, and membership drives and events.
  5. Prepare annual reports on the status of the region's chapter breeding programs for presentation to the TACF board and in TACF publications such as the annual report. Assist in the editing or review of TACF publications and articles as requested.
  6. Along with the Grants Manager based in Asheville, write and develop funding opportunities for use in grant proposals to support mission-critical projects and other chapter and national activities.
  7. Be lead relationship manager to the southern chapter volunteer leaders to ensure consistent flow of information and accomplishments are shared across the region and nationally.
  8. As requested by TACF President & CEO or development officer, participate as a TACF science liaison in the discovery, cultivation and stewardship of a wide variety of major donors in personal visits, presentations at private venues and as an advisor for large landowners interested in chestnut plantings and activities. Must comport themselves with discretion and demeanor required in such visits.
  9. Promote the work and accomplishments of the state chapters and of TACF as lead author on articles for various media outlets, participate in media interviews, and produce and conduct professional presentations to a wide variety of audiences from garden clubs to academic symposia both as lead speaker or as a panelist.

## Qualifications

1. Degree in biological sciences, environmental sciences, forestry, botany or equivalent with a preference for an advanced degree in one of those disciplines.
2. Ability to work in a highly decentralized non-profit organization made up of a small professional staff and large corps of volunteers with broad and diverse demographics.



3. Experience in complex project management in short- and long-term goals and objectives and ability to communicate same to volunteers, staff and board colleagues. Creative problem-solving and conflict management skills desired.
4. Excellent written communication skills for a variety of purposes: scientific, technical, and persuasive, dependent upon the audience. Experience publishing in peer review journals desired but not required.
5. Experience in public speaking to a variety of audiences with the ability to share complex, technical themes in compelling and accessible ways. Experience speaking with a variety of media outlets desirable.
6. Knowledge and ability in computer-based spreadsheets, databases, GPS systems, presentation software, reporting systems and as well as common communication tools such as Microsoft Office Suite of software and virtual meeting software such as Zoom.
7. Knowledge of the principles, concepts, and methodologies in the field of biological sciences, particularly genetics, restoration ecology, and botany.
8. Strong organizational skills required; ability to work independently and travel on short notice. Adherence to TACF's travel policy is required.
9. Physical activity required of the position includes hiking/walking in sometimes rough terrain and all kinds of weather; carrying field equipment; use of mechanical equipment such as chainsaws, lift/bucket equipment and sharp tools. Adherence to TACF safety standards is required and additional training may be warranted.
10. Experience in tree-orchard operation, plant and/or tree breeding and its management is preferred.

## Benefits

As part of a competitive compensation plan, The American Chestnut Foundation currently offers a robust Health, Dental, Vision, AD&D and Life insurance package with coverage beginning the first day of the month following the date of hire. Employees may add family members to the group plan at cost, and any cost is offered under a Section 125 cafeteria plan – meaning significant tax savings for the employee. Under the cafeteria plan, we also offer participation in a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) for healthcare related purchases.

We also offer participation in a 403(b) retirement plan, with a 5% company match after two years of service. Employees with less than 2 years of service may participate in the plan with no employer match. In addition to 10 paid holidays annually, TACF offers two weeks paid vacation and ten paid sick days per year. To attract longevity, the paid vacation allotment increases to three, and ultimately four, weeks per year, dependent on tenure and meeting all performance criteria.

## Application

Interested candidates should forward a cover letter and resume, including references, to [jobs@acf.org](mailto:jobs@acf.org). No phone calls will be accepted. We will acknowledge receipt of all applications; however, only those candidates forwarded in the process will be granted an in-person or remote interview for further vetting.

*The American Chestnut Foundation is committed to providing an equal opportunity to all qualified individuals who are seeking employment with TACF and to all current employees. TACF does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual or gender preference, veteran status, disability, pregnancy or related condition, ancestry, medical condition, physical handicap, or any other protected class or status.*