



*Search for Vice President for Land, Water, and Nature*

**Washington, D.C.**

**Overview**

The Vice President (VP) for Land, Water, and Nature provides strategic leadership and management of the Land, Water, and Nature Program at Resources for the Future (RFF). Research and outreach activities of RFF's Land, Water, and Nature Program center on the economics of effectively and efficiently managing key land and marine resources, providing access to adequate supplies of clean water, and building resilience for communities and natural resources in a changing climate. Specific topics include, but are not limited to: forestry, biodiversity, water markets and pricing, ecosystem services valuation, invasive species management and policies, fisheries management, natural disaster financing, policies for climate resilience, public lands management, and endangered species. The Program also houses the Consortium for the Valuation of Applications Benefits Linked with Earth Science (VALUABLES), which focuses on the value of information from satellites and remote sensing. The VP for Land, Water, and Nature has a key role in formulating and implementing RFF's strategic research and outreach priorities and acts as a catalyst for new ideas and initiatives that strengthen the institution, increase its impact, and integrate research programs, communications, and fundraising. The VP for Land, Water, and Nature serves as a visible external representative of the organization, an officer of the organization, a member of the executive leadership team, and with the President and other officers, leads RFF to:

- Produce high quality research products—that are path breaking, practical and responsive to important decisions being made in the public and private sectors—through hiring and management of a diverse, high-skilled and collaborative staff.
- Expand RFF's capacity (financial, managerial and intellectual) for strategic, coordinated and focused action through a commitment to priority setting, identification of core research areas, and an emphasis on impactful initiatives. Ensure integration, coordination, and positive collaboration of RFF's Land, Water, and Nature Program with related communications and development operations, and with RFF's Energy and Climate Program.
- Build a financially sustainable and thriving Land, Water, and Nature Program through strategic deployment of unrestricted funds, effective acquisition of restricted funds, and active participation in the cultivation and stewardship of partners, supporters, and donors.

RFF has retained the search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in the recruitment of the Vice President for Land, Water, and Nature. All applications, inquiries, and nominations, which will remain confidential, should be directed to Isaacson, Miller as indicated at the end of this document.

## **About Resources for the Future**

RFF is an independent, nonpartisan organization that conducts rigorous economic research and analysis to help leaders make better decisions and craft smarter policies about natural resources and the environment. RFF's vision is to be the most trusted source of research insights and policy solutions for a healthy environment with a thriving economy.

As the birthplace of environmental economics, RFF builds on its tradition of independent, rigorous economic analysis and innovative policy solutions, while addressing the many needs for meaningful work emerging in a changing world. Since 1952, it has provided decisionmakers with the tools to improve the way policy choices are made, strengthening both the environment and the economy. More than six decades after its founding, RFF's role is more necessary than ever.

RFF has earned a reputation for conducting independent, nonpartisan policy analysis of the highest quality and generating nonproprietary, publicly available research. RFF researchers share the results of their work with policymakers in government at all levels, environmental and business organizations, academicians, the media, and the interested public. RFF neither lobbies nor takes positions on specific legislative or regulatory proposals, although individual researchers—speaking for themselves and not for RFF—can formulate specific policy recommendations based on the findings in their work.

RFF currently has a staff of approximately 80; about 25 are PhD experts engaged in environmental, energy, and natural resource policy research and analysis. Many university faculty members hold joint appointments at RFF or serve as visiting fellows at RFF. The work atmosphere is informal, much like a university. Collaboration and co-authorship are the norm—RFF researchers are able to focus on academic and policy issues in a noncompetitive setting that is characterized by active give-and-take among peers. During any given week, RFF hosts both in-house seminars on current research and public seminars that convene high-level policymakers, the business community, and leading academics from around the world.

RFF's annual budget is approximately \$14 million with a reserve fund of \$57 million. Five percent of the reserve fund is allocated each year for institutional operations. The balance of RFF's revenue comes from foundations, corporations, individuals, governments, and other institutions.

More information about RFF can be found at [www.rff.org](http://www.rff.org).

## **Specific Responsibilities of Vice President for Land, Water, and Nature**

### ***Research Strategy, Leadership, and Management***

- Engage externally as a thought leader on issues related to land, water, ecosystems, climate resilience, and natural resources, serving as a connection point for informing RFF's agenda and communicating RFF's research. Implement approaches to enhance RFF's leadership role in identifying critical and emerging issues.
- Work with researchers at RFF to develop strategies and mechanisms that strengthen RFF's ability to proactively maximize the impact of its work, through rigorous and practically impactful research on and engagement in relevant decision processes and deliberations in the public and private sectors.

- Work with researchers to identify and develop new programmatic initiatives and support efforts to build and maintain these and existing research efforts at a world-class level of quality.
- Provide leadership to the Land, Water, and Nature Program on fundraising, working with individual researchers, program staff, and Development staff and in collaboration with government, foundations, corporations, multilateral organizations, and individuals.
- Oversee the Land, Water, and Nature Program budget and along with other members of the executive leadership team, institution-wide financial priority setting.
- In collaboration with other members of the executive team, ensure the integration and coordination of RFF's research related to land, water, and nature with its communications and development operations, with the goal of maximizing the impact and financial sustainability of RFF's programs. Work with RFF research and communications staff to identify opportunities for RFF to place its research into action and act as a convener for discussion of important policy issues.
- Expand RFF's ability to leverage its position as a Washington-based center of research related to land, water, ecosystems, climate resilience, and natural resources, by strengthening and identifying new opportunities to develop networks and partnerships with universities, think tanks, and other organizations. Work with RFF researchers to evaluate current practices and develop systems/mechanisms to identify opportunities for collaborative research with other institutions.
- In collaboration with other members of the executive team, provide briefing materials for and design the land, water, and nature components of Board meetings.

### ***Research Talent Management***

Oversee Land, Water, and Nature Program staff and in conjunction with the VP for Energy and Climate, ensure the effective and efficient operation of research personnel management systems.

- Ensure that the organizational culture, systems, and structure of RFF's programs and associated researchers maintain intellectual rigor and are strategically focused on high-priority areas of public and private decision-making.
- Provide managerial leadership in an organization that prizes independent creative scholarship. Exhibit a leadership style that is open and fluid, empowers staff through active communication and collaboration, and promotes teamwork.
- Develop, sustain, and evolve a set of full-time, part-time, and affiliated research positions and career paths that enable the recruitment, retention, and advancement of a staff with the diverse set of skills needed to both conduct high-quality research on consequential issues and drive that research to impact. These positions currently include Senior Fellows, Fellows, Visiting Fellows, University Fellows, Postdoctoral Fellows, Senior Policy Advisors, Research Associates, and Research Assistants.
- Foster an environment of achievement, identifying strengths in individual staff members and encouraging the application of those strengths to the mission of RFF. Create and maintain a creative and flexible research work environment that sustains individual researchers, supports innovators, and encourages productive collaboration and strategically-driven research impact at the institutional level.
- Implement existing and develop new means to effectively hire and integrate new staff to expand RFF's research capacity and implement key projects and initiatives. Oversee the hiring, performance review, compensation, and promotion processes for research staff and other program staff at all levels to attract and retain high quality talent. Ensure staff accountability for excellence through clearly-defined and measurable goals.

- Ensure a framework of mentoring and professional development is in place to advance and retain key research and research support personnel.

### ***Research Support***

In conjunction with the VP for Energy and Climate, oversee and ensure the effective and efficient operation of research administrative support functions.

- Manage research administrative support staff and oversee processes for research funding opportunity identification, solicitation, acquisition, administration, and completion.
- Ensure that RFF has the necessary infrastructure to support large-scale research projects and initiatives.
- Ensure effective and efficient coordination with Finance and Administration at the staff and VP level.

### **Qualifications, Experience & Competencies**

- Minimum ten years of experience in the public, private, non-profit, or academic sectors.
- Minimum five years of management and supervisory experience with increasing responsibilities to the senior management level.
- An advanced degree in the social sciences is preferred, with a PhD in economics or closely related discipline and a distinguished record of research desirable. An advanced degree in the natural sciences with experience in policy and a desire to work with economists and other social scientists is also acceptable.
- Respected expert, with substantial knowledge and network related to land, water, ecosystem services, forestry, fisheries, endangered species, climate resilience, and natural resource issues; experience with earth observations data, applications, and policy a plus.
- Fundraising experience with government, foundations, corporations, multilateral organizations, and/or individuals.
- Interest in working with the President to develop and execute strategy on an organizational level and to lead through change.
- Experience in building and maintaining partnerships with organizations, universities, and/or multilateral institutions.
- Demonstrated leadership and financial and personnel management abilities. Strong and inspiring leader; able to balance the role of strategist with ability to deliver timely results.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills; ability to develop and manage productive relationships at all levels, establish trust and respond to partners, donors and trustees as well as RFF scholars and other colleagues in a thoughtful and helpful manner.
- Strong collaboration skills.

**Procedure for Application, Nomination & Inquiries**

Review of nominations and applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (including CVs and/or resumes, and letter of interest) should be sent electronically and in confidence to:

Tim McFeeley & Kahn Lee  
Isaacson, Miller  
1300 19<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Suite 700, Washington, D.C., 20037  
To apply, nominate or inquire visit: [www.imsearch.com/6218](http://www.imsearch.com/6218)



RFF is an equal opportunity employer. Women, minorities and veterans are encouraged to apply.