Now Hiring for a York River Steward

**Position Title:** York River Steward  
**Supervisor:** Deputy Director (Friends of the Rappahannock)  
**Location:** Fredericksburg, VA or Tappahannock, VA  
**Job Classification:** Full Time Permanent

**About York River Steward**

York River Steward was founded in 2022 to build capacity for community engagement, advocacy, watershed restoration, and environmental education in the York River Watershed. Working in partnership with Friends of the Rappahannock and Waterkeepers Chesapeake, the York River Steward is the primary local advocate representing the interests of the York River region on a wide range of important conservation and water quality issues. The York River Steward also oversees the design and construction of watershed restoration projects focused on green infrastructure, agricultural best management practices (BMPs), and tree plantings. The York River Steward is a member of the York and Small Coastal Basins Roundtable, the Virginia Conservation Network, and the Choose Clean Water Coalition.

**About Friends of the Rappahannock**

Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR) is currently the parent organization and acting fiscal agent for the York River Steward while they work towards establishing a standalone 501c3 non-profit status. Founded in 1985, Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR) is a 501c3 watershed protection organization based in Fredericksburg, Virginia with satellite offices in Culpeper and Tappahannock, Virginia. FOR works to be the voice and active force for a healthy and scenic Rappahannock River. They accomplish this through three program pillars - advocacy, restoration and education. With 31 staff across 18 counties, FOR is always growing our partnerships and believes it takes a watershed to make a difference.

**Position Description**

This position will be the lead advocate, organizer, and project manager representing the interests of the York River Watershed, from its headwaters to the Chesapeake Bay. Since its inception, the York River Steward program has built strong relationships with community partners, brought thousands of dollars of funding for on the ground restoration projects to the region, reached hundreds of students through environmental education programs, lobbied on Capitol Hill and at
the General Assembly in Richmond, and is continuing to build capacity to lead conservation efforts in the region.

The successful candidate will continue to build capacity and grow the reach of the York River Steward program.

This position will be responsible for a variety of tasks, programs, and projects across a large geographic region including 10 counties of the York River Watershed, Richmond, VA, and Washington, DC. This can include working in the evening and on weekends as needed. This position is eligible for a flexible work schedule, including hybrid, work from home opportunities. We anticipate three days per week in one of our offices.

**Areas of Responsibility**

**Advocacy and Outreach:**

Represent the York River Steward by contributing to regional and statewide advocacy efforts with the Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)

Represent the York River Steward by contributing to federal water policy efforts with the Choose Clean Water Coalition

Develop and lead community outreach, campaigns, and organizing efforts on local environmental issues

Build and maintain relationships with local, state, and federal elected officials

Build capacity to launch a waterkeeper affiliate program in the York River Watershed

**Community Conservation and Restoration:**

Support community river cleanup projects across the York River region

Manage the Riparian Forests For Landowners (RFFL) tree planting cost-share program in partnership with the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) and Friends of the Rappahannock

Support multiple Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) with promotion, administration, and project development for the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)

Support local governments, tribes, homeowners associations, and other community groups plan and execute urban and community tree planting projects

Coordinate regional water quality monitoring efforts which includes check-ins with volunteers, training, and product replacement as required
Lead outreach and paddle trips within the Mattaponi, Pamunkey, and York rivers

Support youth programs, environmental literacy planning efforts, and meaningful watershed education experiences (MWEE) programs and projects.

Administration and Communications:

Develop and manage multiple grants from foundations, corporate partners, state and federal agencies. Tasks include seeking out grant opportunities, writing proposals, partnering with local organizations on joint proposals, and completing reports as needed.

Host and facilitate discussion for the monthly York River Steward Advisory Committee. This includes agenda creation encompassing advocacy, education, and restoration activities.

Continue collaboration and relationship building with conservation partners, sovereign nations, state agencies, and universities throughout Virginia.

Coordinate content generation for the York River Steward social media platforms, monthly newsletters, and websites.

Participate as core partner in the York River and Small Coastal Basins Roundtable. Serve on multiple committees, provide technical assistance to coordinator and partners, support grant writing, project development, and collaborative capacity building.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Science, Natural Resource Management, Forestry, Ecology, Environmental Policy, Communications, or a related degree. Six years of relevant experience may be substituted for a degree.
- Extremely organized, detail oriented, adaptable, and personable.
- Strong professional writing skills (press releases, letters to the editor, public comment letters, blog posts, grant proposals).
- Capable public speaker.
- Comfortable working on the river and outdoors in various weather conditions.
- Experience developing project proposals and grant writing.
- Working knowledge and passion for conservation and the Chesapeake Bay region.
- Able to lift and carry 50 lbs, e.g., Loading kayaks onto a trailer.
- Proficient with Google Suite and Microsoft software packages.
● Able to pass a background check
● A valid driver’s license is required

Preferred Qualifications

● 3+ years of experience working on water quality, environmental policy, or conservation issues in the Chesapeake Bay watershed
● Successful writing, award, and management of grant awards from private foundations, corporate partners, state, and federal agencies
● Experience with grant programs: grants.gov, cyber grants, easygrants, benevity, etc
● Competency with ArcGIS Pro, Survey123, and Arc Collector
● Understanding of VSMP and MS4 stormwater programs and JPA permit process
● Experience with water quality monitoring/sampling
● Experience working with volunteers and community partners
● Current U.S. Coast Guard OUPV Six Pack Captains License

Compensation

This is a full time, salaried position which equates to 37.5 hours per week. The salary range for this position is $47,000 to $55,000, commensurate with experience. This position includes a competitive benefits package including: 23 days paid time off, 12 paid holidays, 403(b) retirement plan with 3% employer match, monthly health care stipend, employer paid short and long term disability insurance, employer paid life insurance, professional development opportunities, flexible work schedules, pro deals, and more.

York River Steward commits to a drug free workplace to ensure the health and safety of our employees and the communities we serve.

York River Steward and Friends of the Rappahannock are an equal opportunity employer. We are inclusive. We believe diversity drives innovation. We are always growing our partnerships and believe it takes a watershed to make a difference.

Application Process:

Interested applicants should submit a resume, cover letter, and two references via email to daria.christian@riverfriends.org with “York River Steward” in the subject line. No phone calls please. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.