



**Point Blue Conservation Science  
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)  
Position Description**

***Painter Executive Search is supporting Point Blue Conservation Science in their search for a forward-thinking CFO who will be a key thought-partner in guiding the organization through a significant expansion.***

Point Blue Conservation Science (Point Blue, formerly PRBO), based in Petaluma, California, is a growing and internationally renowned nonprofit with over 140 staff and seasonal scientists. Their highest priority is to reduce the impacts of accelerating changes in climate, land-use and the ocean on wildlife and people while promoting climate-smart conservation for a healthy future.

Point Blue advances conservation of nature for wildlife and people through science, partnerships and outreach. Their scientists work hand-in-hand with wildlife managers, private land owners, ranchers, farmers, other scientists, major conservation groups, and federal, state, and local government agencies and officials. They understand that real solutions come from working together.

Point Blue has tripled in size over the past 12 years and is expected to continue growing over the next 5-10 years in response to the ever-increasing demand for sound science to assess and guide conservation investments in our rapidly changing world.

**POSITION SUMMARY**

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) is responsible for the overall financial health of Point Blue.

Reporting to the CEO, and together with her, the Finance Committee of the Board and key staff across the organization, the CFO will lead the efforts to assess, plan and manage the organizational and financial resources required to meet Point Blue's overall goals.

The CFO will both continue to ensure the timely, accurate and efficient financial and administrative management of the organization's 90+ conservation projects, and have a keen eye on the future. The CFO will take the lead in reviewing the deep scientific knowledge and capacity of the organization to evolve ideas and opportunities for new revenue streams, business and partnering opportunities, and increased operational efficiency at Point Blue.

The CFO is responsible for strategic and technical financial planning and analysis, asset management, banking, risk management and insurance, Board and Finance Committee reporting and staffing, audit and internal control, and will oversee the management and coordination of organizational and contract/grant budgets, financial operations and reporting, contract management, human resources and facilities.

Point Blue's fiscal year 2013-2014 budget is ~\$10.3 million. Point Blue has over 90 current conservation projects approximately half of which are federally funded. Income by source is roughly 50% from contracts, 25% from foundations and 25% from individuals. Point Blue is a healthy organization with net assets totaling ~\$10 million and the equivalent of 3 months of operating funds in cash and investments.

The CFO directly supervises the Controller and oversees the work of four additional finance and administrative staff including the Grants and Contracts Manager, Staff Accountant/Grants and Contracts Specialist, Human Resources Administrator/AP Accountant and Office and Facilities Manager. The CFO is a member of the Management Team and will work closely with the Chief Science Officer, Chief Technology Officer and programmatic Group Directors in ensuring that Point Blue is financially and operationally prepared to continue to grow its work and impact. With the Finance and Accounting Team, the CFO will lead the development and streamlining of Point Blue's financial and administrative infrastructure to maximize operational efficiency as the organization continues its expected growth.

## Point Blue History

Point Blue was founded as Point Reyes Bird Observatory in 1968 to study the birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway, and has conducted the longest running population study of landbirds in western North America. The bird ecology study methods they developed, tested and refined at their Palomarin Field Station (at Point Reyes National Seashore) are now used by scientists throughout the world.

Point Blue biologists have stewarded and studied the Farallon Islands continuously since 1965 through a unique cooperative agreement with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Farallones host the largest seabird breeding colony in the contiguous United States, with over 300,000 seabirds of 13 species, as well as 5 species of seals and sea lions, and white sharks off its shores. Among other long term studies, Point Blue has also studied Adélie Penguins and the Ross Sea ecosystem in Antarctica since 1972.

Point Blue's long-term data sets provide a unique window on environmental change and climate impacts. In the early 1990's, The Nature Conservancy invited Point Blue scientists to evaluate their Sacramento River habitat restoration program using birds as indicators. Point Blue has been assessing, guiding and improving conservation actions across the west and beyond ever since.

## Point Blue's Work

At the core of Point Blue's work is innovative science. By studying birds and other environmental indicators they create the knowledge required to illuminate and protect nature's benefits. Using their long term data, they evaluate natural and human-driven change over time. This data allows them to guide their partners in adaptive management for improved conservation outcomes. They publish in peer-reviewed journals and contribute to the "conservation commons" of open access scientific knowledge.

Point Blue has grown its informatics capacity significantly in the past decade. They store, manage and interpret over 800 million bird and ecosystem observations from across North America and create sophisticated, yet accessible, decision support tools to improve conservation today and in an uncertain future.

This is a pivotal moment in the history of life on our planet requiring unprecedented actions to ensure that wildlife and people continue to thrive in the decades to come. Point Blue is very well positioned to collaboratively develop, test and implement the conservation actions needed.

Working in their priority focal areas including the Sierra Nevada, California's Central Valley, Pacific Coast, San Francisco Bay Estuary, California Current (including greater Gulf of the Farallones), Ross Sea (Antarctica), and the Internet, Point Blue will implement climate-smart conservation and disseminate this information globally. Point Blue has set out to achieve the following over the next five years:

### ***Secure Water and Wildlife on Working Lands***

Point Blue works with farmers, ranchers, foresters, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the US Forest Service and others to increase groundwater storage; gradually filter and release water downstream; increase soil carbon storage; sustain birds and other wildlife; and make working lands more economically productive. Their goals include "re-watering" 1.1 million acres through changes in grazing and other practices on rangelands to benefit wildlife and ranchers' bottom lines.

### ***Protect Our Shorelines***

Point Blue is identifying and prioritizing the best places and practices to protect coastal wetlands, streams, dunes and beaches in the face of more severe storms and rising seas. Working with scores of partners from San Francisco Bay to the Pacific coast of the Americas, they are translating data into decision support tools to assess future impacts on natural and human infrastructure and to develop conservation solutions to benefit wildlife and people today and in our changing future.

### ***Conserve Ocean Food Webs***

Point Blue is identifying and prioritizing ocean food webs for protection to give marine wildlife and fisheries more opportunities to adapt to rapid environmental change. Collaborating with public agencies, NGOs, universities, fishing and shipping industries, and others, they monitor ocean ecosystem health, develop and assess new approaches to management, prioritize stronger protections as needed, and help to reduce conflicts between wildlife needs and human uses of the marine environment (e.g., clean energy, shipping, and fishing). One project, "Whale Aware," uses a mobile app that engages commercial and recreational fishers, whale watchers and others in real-time reporting of whale locations. The result: shipping traffic has already been slowed or redirected during times of high whale use to reduce whale strikes. Our goal is to expand this program across the entire West coast.

### ***Climate-Smart Restoration***

Working with local communities and scores of public and private partners, Point Blue is developing innovative approaches to help ecosystems and people adapt to accelerating climate and land-use changes. They are designing habitats to better withstand extremes, provide food year-round as timing of animal life cycles change and sustain nature's benefits into the future.

### ***Make Natural Resource Plans and Policies Climate-Smart***

As leaders in major conservation collaborations and pioneers in climate-smart conservation, they are helping public and private natural resource management entities, from local municipalities to international commissions, to incorporate climate-smart principles into their ocean and land-use plans and policies, and to put climate-smart conservation into action.

### ***Train the Next Generation***

Point Blue is providing hands-on training for future scientists and educators, equipping them with tools to protect nature's benefits and help secure life as we know it. Building on Point Blue's hands-on field internship program that has graduated more than 1500 budding conservation biologists over the past few decades, they will engage scores more scientists-in-training, graduate students and school children in climate-smart conservation science over the next 5 years.

## **CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Leadership and General Management**

- Work closely with the CEO, Board, Chief Science Officer, Chief Technology Officer, Group Directors, Development Team, Finance and Administration team and other staff leaders in the development and implementation of the strategic plan.
- Together with the CEO, Board and senior staff assess opportunities and risks related to Point Blue's goals, strategies, programs and general operations and provide analyses that highlight potential costs and benefits.
- Guide the financial and administrative development of the organization to help ensure healthy and responsible development and fiscal activities in the context of the organization's goals.
- Develop and maintain effective policies to protect and manage Point Blue's financial and physical assets including facilities, equipment, vehicles, software and other resources.
- Represent Point Blue to key partners and participate in the development of relationships important to their mission and operations.

### **Financial Management**

- Assess, develop and implement effective and efficient financial systems and processes providing for effective internal control, accurate and timely financial reporting and efficient operations.

- Evaluate, develop and implement an effective annual budget process, working closely with the CEO, Controller and other senior staff and oversee the development, updates and regular assessment of the organizational budget.
- Manage finance, banking and cash flow to ensure protection of assets, liquidity, maximization of interest income and efficient operations.
- Manage the reserve and endowment funds.
- Work closely with senior staff to support their effectiveness in program financial management, program budgeting and related activities.
- Manage the annual audit process; ensure strong operational and financial controls and that the highest levels of integrity and transparency are maintained.
- Administer Point Blue's risk management program and insurance
- Oversee the internal accounting and reporting functions.
- Ensure compliance with all federal, state and local laws and reporting requirements;
- Report to the Finance Committee and Board of Directors at least quarterly on the financial health of the organization including fundraising progress, financial results relative to budget, liquidity, cash flow and reserve fund allocation.
- Oversee the management of 90+ federal, state and local governmental and non-governmental contracts and dozens of grants. Ensure compliance with federal Office of Budget and Management requirements for all Point Blue federal proposals and agreements. Working with our consultant and the Controller, oversee the annual preparation of the Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Proposal for Point Blue's cognizant agency.
- Assist in the preparation of grant and contract proposal budgets and reports, as appropriate.

### **Administrative Management**

- Recruit, hire, train, supervise and mentor a strong and effective accounting and finance department.
- Oversee Human Resources management including recruiting and hiring a Human Resources Manager, ensuring Point Blue's compliance with all federal and state labor laws, personnel policies, compensation and benefits administration, payroll administration, recordkeeping, employee relations and annual performance review process.
- Oversee management of facilities including Point Blue's 20,000 sq. ft. Petaluma headquarters, field stations throughout California (currently 7) and various rentals for field work.
- Other related responsibilities as needed and as determined by the CEO and Board of Directors.

### **Experience**

A successful CFO candidate will likely have:

- At least ten years of experience in financial and administrative management, ideally with experience in nonprofit accounting, federal contract management and a growing organization.
- Master's degree in Accounting/Finance, Business or related degree preferred.
- Expertise in business planning, budget development and assessments, risk analysis and resource development.

- Working knowledge of GAAP, FASB, and other financial accounting and contract management standards, including federal OMB guidelines.
- Demonstrates resourcefulness in setting priorities, creating efficiencies and guiding investment in people and systems.
- Technologically savvy; experience working with IT and program staff to develop and implement new processes and systems that increased efficiencies.
- Seasoned in overseeing management of Human Resources, benefits management and related.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills and ability to listen well to others.
- Working knowledge of standard financial accounting software (preferably Sage MIP Fund Accounting).
- Excellent skills in Excel, Word, Access database and PowerPoint. Experience with donor databases (preferably Raiser's Edge) a plus.

### **Attributes**

- Passion for nature and conservation.
- Demonstrates exceptional integrity and strong work ethic.
- Proven ability to work collaboratively and remain flexible and good natured under pressure.
- Ability to manage multiple, simultaneous projects and deadlines while maintaining a high level of accuracy.
- Strong leadership skills in managing a team for growth; inspires trust and cohesiveness.
- Strong interpersonal skills; enjoys working with people.
- An independent thinker as well as a team player who can make a positive impact on operational efficiency and enjoys building the capacity of their organizations.
- Dedicated; ability to attend occasional evening and weekend events and put in the extra effort and time sometimes required to meet deadlines.
- Good sense of humor!

For additional information or to be considered for this role contact:

Nancy Painter  
[Nancy@painterexecutivesearch.com](mailto:Nancy@painterexecutivesearch.com)  
 (415) 202- 6240