Director of Operations
South Florida Wildlife Center
Reports To - Executive Director

Position Overview

The Director of Operations serves as the senior operational leader responsible for building the organizational capacity necessary to achieve South Florida Wildlife Center's mission, working closely with the Executive Director and overseeing day to day operations ensuring the highest standards of wildlife care, operational efficiency, regulatory compliance and public engagement . This position provides strategic leadership across operations, people, systems, facilities, safety and organizational infrastructure while fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, continuous improvement and professional excellence.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership, Organizational Culture, Team Development and Management

- Build and lead a high-performing operations team through coaching, mentorship, accountability and professional development.
- Lead through influence, trust, visibility and collaboration rather than authority or micromanagement.
- Model the Workplace Culture Agreement and organizational values while coaching managers and employees toward expected behaviors.
- Foster a culture of initiative, ownership, professionalism, continuous improvement and cross-department collaboration.
- Conduct regular operational rounds to maintain visibility, identify opportunities for improvement, recognize successes and proactively address concerns.
- Develop future leaders through regular coaching, delegation, feedback and succession planning.
- Establish clear performance expectations and utilize measurable outcomes to evaluate departmental effectiveness, employee development, engagement and retention.
- Demonstrate active leadership in identifying operational needs, provide cross-functional support, project management and oversight as well as systems and process improvement as it pertains to organizational and departmental needs.

Wildlife Operations, Capacity Planning & Safety

- Maintain a comprehensive understanding of organizational operations, staffing capacity, patient census, facility utilization and resource allocation.
- Forecast seasonal wildlife admissions and proactively align staffing, volunteers, facilities, and operational resources.
- Develop staffing recommendations that balance exceptional animal care, employee wellbeing, operational efficiency and financial stewardship through implementation and improvement of management systems.

- Serve as the operational lead for the Wildlife Ambassador Program in compliance with Global Federation of Sanctuary standards, ensuring exemplary animal care, regulatory compliance, educational excellence and integration with outreach and donor engagement.
- Serve as the organizational lead for emergency preparedness, disaster response, wildlife surge planning, and operational continuity.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable permits, regulations, safety standards and organizational policies while fostering a proactive culture of workplace safety.

Financial Stewardship & Resource Management

- Assist in development and management of departmental operating budgets.
- Prioritize expenditures based upon organizational need, mission impact, safety, operational sustainability and return on investment.
- Monitor labor utilization, overtime, purchasing and operational expenditures while identifying opportunities to improve financial efficiency.
- Ensure organizational resources are utilized responsibly and aligned with strategic priorities.

Organizational Leadership & Strategic Advancement

- Lead and facilitate productive leadership meetings that promote collaboration, accountability, innovation and organizational alignment.
- Prepare operational reports, dashboards and performance analyses that support strategic decision making by the Executive Director and Board.
- Participate in donor cultivation, tours, community partnerships, presentations and special events while effectively communicating the Center's mission and operational impact.
- Identify opportunities for new programs, operational partnerships, volunteer engagement, and organizational growth.
- Monitor emerging industry trends and recommend innovations that strengthen wildlife care, conservation, organizational effectiveness, and community impact.

Regulatory Compliance & Safety

- Ensure compliance with all applicable wildlife rehabilitation regulations and permits, including federal, state, and local requirements.
- Maintain adherence to Federal Animal Welfare laws.
- Develop and maintain Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for operational activities.
- Ensure staff and volunteers are trained in safety, emergency response and disaster preparedness procedures.

Facilities & Operational Management

- Oversee daily facility operations, including wildlife hospital areas, rehabilitation spaces, visitor areas, and operational infrastructure.
- Ensure facilities and equipment are maintained to the highest standards of safety and functionality.

- Manage operational logistics and workflow across departments to ensure efficient animal care and program delivery.
- Oversee operational implementation of capital improvements and infrastructure projects.

Outreach & Community Engagement

- Coordinate and collaborate with the Center's outreach and education programs, ensuring they effectively engage the public and promote wildlife conservation.
- Support staff in delivering high-quality visitor and educational experiences.
- Represent the Center in community partnerships, events, media interactions, and stakeholder engagement when appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with development and communications staff to ensure consistent messaging about the Center's work and impact.

Qualifications

Required

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Organizational Leadership, Nonprofit Management, Wildlife, Animal Science, Public Administration, or related field, or equivalent experience.
- Five years of progressively responsible operational leadership experience.
- Demonstrated success leading multiple departments and developing high-performing teams.
- Strong knowledge of budgeting, organizational systems, operational planning, process improvement and project management.
- Excellent communication, facilitation, coaching, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to analyze complex operational challenges and implement practical solutions.
- Excellent organizational, communication, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to collaborate effectively with diverse groups, including staff, volunteers, community partners, and stakeholders.
- Passion for wildlife conservation and commitment to the mission of the South Florida Wildlife Center.

Preferred

- Experience in wildlife rehabilitation, conservation, veterinary medicine, nonprofit, zoological, or animal welfare organizations.
- Experience implementing quality management systems, Lean, Kaizen, or continuous improvement methodologies.
- Experience managing volunteers.
- Bilingual English/Spanish.

Work Environment & Schedule

The South Florida Wildlife Center operates 365 days per year, and this position may require occasional weekend work, evening events, or emergency response during wildlife surges or natural disasters. As ambassadors of the Center, staff may participate in visitor interactions, educational activities, and community events that support the organization's mission.

Work Hours

This is a full-time position. SFWC operates 365 days per year; schedules may include occasional evenings, weekends, or holidays to support outreach events and organizational needs. Specific hours will be established according to departmental scheduling requirements.

Compensation & Benefits

Annual salary range: $70,000–$85,000, depending on qualifications and experience. This full-time position is eligible for benefits in accordance with current SFWC policies, including paid time off, holiday pay, and medical, dental, and vision coverage. Overtime, when applicable, requires prior approval.