



## **Staff Attorney for Native Nations Partnerships**

Midwest Environmental Advocates (MEA) is hiring a Staff Attorney for Native Nation Partnerships to focus on providing legal support to Native nations and other Indigenous partners.

MEA is a nonprofit law center that combines the power of law with the resolve of communities facing environmental injustice to secure and protect the rights of all people to healthy water, land and air. We provide legal services to communities with environmental concerns and seek to build their power.

MEA has stood alongside and provided legal representation to Native nations to help them achieve their goals. This is a new position that will continue that history by providing legal resources and services that support recognition of Native nation environmental sovereignty and self-determination.

The attorney will work on a variety of issues such as: oil pipelines, energy infrastructure, mining and other extractive industries; Clean Water Act implementation and Treatment as a State matters; wild rice stewardship and management; hydroelectric generation; and climate resilience and adaptation.

### **POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The attorney's work will be guided by the needs and requests of Native nations and other Indigenous partners. The staff attorney will strive to maintain and strengthen relationships with Native nations, their officials, agencies and legal departments, demonstrating excellent communication, respect, responsiveness and trustworthiness. This position is responsible for coordinating with Tribal legal departments and developing mechanisms for Tribal governments to continually inform the work of the position.

Below are examples of the type of legal work the attorney may undertake.

- Assisting Native nations to obtain recognition of their environmental standards by the Environmental Protection Agency and other non-Native governments.
- Supporting Native nations when state and federal government agency decisions implicate Tribal environmental sovereignty or other environmental interests, including through legal representations when requested.
- Providing legal information to facilitate Native nations' participation in agency proceedings.
- Upon request, representing Tribal governments in litigation.
- Upon request, assisting with the drafting of Tribal laws and regulations to protect natural resources and to codify processes that direct private actors and other governments to engage with the Tribes as governments.
- Advocating with state government to codify model Tribal consultation processes in administrative law and implementing other best practices for interacting with Tribes.

While this position has a particular focus and unique responsibilities, the attorney will share in general responsibilities with other MEA staff attorneys:

- Be part of a dynamic legal team that values collaboration and collegiality.
- Assist legal team with mentorship and feedback for legal interns and periodically supervise law students within MEA's clerkship program.
- Provide assistance with other MEA litigation and projects.
- Appear at public events to professionally represent MEA.
- Occasional travel required.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Awareness of and respect for Native nations, their governments, cultures, histories and environmental interests.
- Awareness of and respect for the needs and concerns of individuals from diverse cultures, backgrounds and orientations.
- Knowledge of or connection to communities that have historically been denied meaningful input into environmental decision-making.
- A demonstrated ability to build long-term relationships and to facilitate collaborative and consultative processes that allow stakeholders significant say over project development and work planning.
- A commitment to environmental stewardship and public interest law.
- Ability to consider complex ethical issues and diligently conform one's practice to rules of professional responsibility.
- High-level organizational and time management skills and attention to detail.
- Ability to work independently to manage multiple goals while effectively communicating and collaborating within a team structure.
- Juris Doctor from an accredited law school and licensed to practice law in the state of Wisconsin (or the willingness to become a member of the Wisconsin bar upon hire).
- Neither previous environmental law experience nor post-law school legal experience is required to be considered for this position.

**PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

- At least four years of legal experience in the areas of environmental and administrative law, Federal Indian law or Tribal law. Other work with Native nations is a plus.
- Litigation skills, including case investigation, brief writing, pre-trial preparation, oral advocacy and trials and settlement negotiations, showing a track record of success, increasing independence and responsibility.
- Experience respectfully working with traditional Indigenous Knowledge Holders and applying that knowledge in regulatory, legal or policy contexts.
- Scientific literacy and ability to work with scientific experts to digest complex issues.
- Exceptional writing, research, analytic and public speaking skills.
- Experience in policy development, analysis and review.

## COMPENSATION

Compensation is dependent on experience and qualifications. The salary range is \$65,000 to \$80,000 per year. Higher compensation may be available to highly qualified candidates. In addition, MEA offers a generous benefits package including medical, dental, long-term disability and a retirement plan with employer match.

## LOCATION

This can be a hybrid position, but it is not a fully remote position. Attorneys are expected to regularly work from MEA's offices in Madison, Wisconsin.

## HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, resume and a legal or other writing sample (less than 20 pages) by email. If possible, please combine all documents into one file before submission. Your one-page cover letter should address how you satisfy the minimum qualifications listed above and highlight any key examples of how you meet the preferred qualifications.

Midwest Environmental Advocates  
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Applications will be considered on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

For more information about MEA, visit [www.midwestadvocates.org](http://www.midwestadvocates.org).

***MEA's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is rooted in our organizational values of community, stewardship, empowerment and justice. We strive to contribute to a more powerful and equitable movement for environmental justice in Wisconsin, and we believe it is essential that all communities see themselves reflected in that movement. Diversity, equity and inclusion strengthen our organization's ability to advance environmental justice. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age or veteran status.***