

# Watershed Scientist & Program Manager

The Glen Lake Association (GLA) is seeking a passionate and collaborative **Watershed Scientist & Program Manager** to lead our science and stewardship efforts in the Glen Lake/Crystal River Watershed. This is a rare opportunity to build a meaningful career protecting one of Michigan's most treasured freshwater ecosystems while working alongside talented colleagues, engaged volunteers, and a community that deeply values conservation.



## Position Summary

The **Watershed Scientist & Program Manager** serves as the GLA's scientific leader, advancing the understanding and long-term stewardship of the Glen Lake/Crystal River Watershed in Leelanau County, Michigan. This position offers a unique opportunity to combine hands-on field science with community engagement in one of Michigan's most treasured freshwater systems.

You'll oversee the GLA's water quality, watershed science, and invasive species programs while communicating science in ways that inspire informed decision-making and stewardship. Working closely with the Executive Director, you'll lead seasonal staff, interns, volunteers, and program partners to deliver impactful science and stewardship initiatives.

The ideal candidate is a collaborative scientist who enjoys spending time in the field, mentoring others, building partnerships, and making complex science accessible to the community.

## Position Responsibilities

### Watershed Program Leadership

- Develop annual work plans and lead the day-to-day management of the GLA's water quality, invasive species, stewardship, and scientific monitoring programs.
- Monitor program progress, budgets, and key deliverables.
- Supervise and mentor seasonal staff, interns, volunteers, and contractors.
- Contribute scientific expertise to organizational strategic planning and long-term program development.
- Prepare technical reports, annual summaries, and scientific content to support organizational communications and decision-making.
- Partner with the Executive Director to identify funding opportunities and provide technical expertise for grant proposals and applications.
- Recommend, where appropriate, new monitoring initiatives and scientific approaches to address emerging watershed issues.



## Position Responsibilities

### Science, Monitoring, & Management

- Lead and oversee long-term monitoring of water quality and watershed conditions.
- Conduct and supervise watershed monitoring using a variety of scientific field methods and equipment, including water quality sampling with multi-probe sondes; shoreline assessments; aquatic vegetation surveys conducted through snorkeling or scuba; and the use of drones, remotely operated vehicles, and microscopes.
- Monitor and interpret biological indicators of watershed health, including aquatic vegetation, plankton communities, fisheries data, wildlife observations, and other ecological trends.
- Lead implementation of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species prevention, early detection, and response efforts.
- Manage long-term datasets and ensure data quality and reporting.
- Analyze and interpret data to identify trends and management opportunities.

### Community Science, Stewardship, & Education

- Lead the GLA's stewardship and community science programs, including the Guardian Stewardship and Discovery Boat programs.
- Design meaningful internship experiences and oversee, mentor, and support interns engaged in watershed science.
- Recruit and train volunteers participating in citizen science initiatives and stewardship programs.
- Represent the GLA through outreach and public presentations that communicate science and inspire stewardship.

### Partnerships & Scientific Collaboration

- Develop and maintain partnerships with government and tribal agencies, researchers, nonprofits, and other watershed organizations.
- Serve as the staff liaison and scientific advisor to the GLA Water Quality Committee.

### Equipment & Assets

- Oversee the operation, maintenance, calibration, and replacement planning for scientific equipment, boats, trailers, and other assets.
- Support the Water Levels Committee in coordinating dam operations and required inspections while monitoring compliance with the court order and applicable permits and regulations.



## Qualifications

### Required

- Bachelor's degree in Limnology, Environmental Science, Ecology, Natural Resources Management, or a related field.
- Five or more years of progressively responsible professional experience in watershed science, aquatic ecology, environmental management, or a related field, including experience leading conservation or natural resource programs.
- Demonstrated experience managing teams and/or volunteers.
- Strong project management, analytical, and problem-solving skills with the ability to balance multiple priorities and meet deadlines.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to communicate scientific information effectively to a variety of audiences.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to build collaborative relationships with partners, volunteers, agencies, and community.
- Experience using Microsoft Office and GIS or spatial mapping software, with the ability to learn emerging technologies.
- Experience operating boats, conducting fieldwork safely in aquatic environments, and swimming.
- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation.
- Must reside year-round within Benzie, Leelanau, or Grand Traverse County.

### Preferred

- Master's degree in related field.
- Experience with freshwater science and management.
- Experience using drones, remotely operated vehicles (ROVs), or remote sensing technologies.
- Experience communicating scientific information to community audiences or leading environmental education programs.

*Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered. Research shows many qualified candidates, particularly women and underrepresented groups, hesitate to apply unless their experience aligns perfectly. If this role excites you, we encourage you to apply.*



## Working Conditions

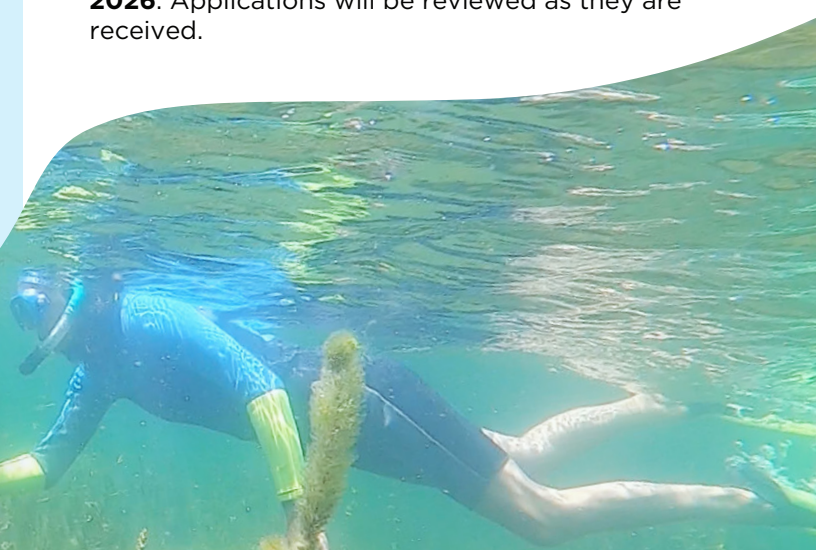
This hybrid position is based out of the GLA's office at 6406 Western Ave., Glen Arbor, MI 49636, with work-from-home flexibility in the off-season. Substantial time is spent outdoors on or near the water. Responsibilities include operating boats, carrying equipment, hiking uneven terrain, and swimming. Work may involve exposure to heat, cold, rain, wind, and other environmental conditions. Office responsibilities require sitting and repetitive computer use.

## Compensation

**The salary range for this position is \$70,000 to \$75,000**, commensurate with experience. Benefits include a flexible hybrid work schedule, vacation time, sick leave, and a health care stipend.

## How to Apply

**Submit your resume and cover letter to [apply@glenlakeassociation.org](mailto:apply@glenlakeassociation.org) by September 1, 2026.** Applications will be reviewed as they are received.



# Watershed Scientist & Program Manager



## About the Glen Lake Association

Founded in 1945, the **Glen Lake Association (GLA)** is a **nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the Glen Lake/Crystal River Watershed**. Through science-based programs, strategic partnerships, and community stewardship, the GLA works to safeguard water quality and natural resources across the watershed.

Located within and adjacent to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, this watershed is one of Michigan's natural treasures, where pristine lakes and streams support a vibrant ecosystem. The GLA enjoys an engaged community of residents, visitors, and business owners who are committed to protecting water quality now and for generations.



## A Day in the Life at the GLA

**At the GLA, no two days are the same.** One day you might be collecting water quality data by boat or conducting snorkel surveys for aquatic vegetation. The next, you may be sharing scientific findings with the community at the local library or collaborating in a conservation partner's office to help shape the future of watershed protection.

**This is mission-driven work with a tangible impact.** Every project and conversation contributes to protecting the health of the Glen Lake/Crystal River Watershed for future generations.

If you're passionate about freshwater science, enjoy working on the water, thrive in a collaborative environment, and want your expertise to directly support the stewardship of one of Michigan's most treasured freshwater systems, you'll feel right at home at the GLA.