Position: Project Manager (External Contract)

Who We Are
Save the Dunes Conservation Fund, Inc. ("Save the Dunes") is a non-profit conservation organization located in Michigan City, serving the three counties of Northwest Indiana. For more than 70 years, Save the Dunes has protected and advocated for the Indiana dunes, Lake Michigan, and surrounding natural areas. As an official philanthropic partner of Indiana Dunes National Park, Save the Dunes works across Conservation, Advocacy, and Community Engagement to protect these globally significant landscapes.

Purpose of Engagement
Save the Dunes seeks a Project Manager to provide contracted project management services for two initiatives at Indiana Dunes National Park: (1) **new exhibits at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education and key park sites** and (2) **a parkwide signage refresh**. Reporting to the Deputy Director, the Project Manager will support the planning, coordination, implementation, and completion of assigned projects. The selected contractor will organize work, coordinate partners and vendors, monitor progress, and help ensure that agreed deliverables are completed on schedule and within approved resources.

This engagement focuses solely on project delivery and does not include general organizational management, staff supervision, or fundraising responsibilities. The contractor will work closely with Indiana Dunes National Park (INDU) staff, the National Park Service (NPS)'s Harpers Ferry Center (HFC), and selected consultants and vendors. All exhibits and signage will be developed under INDU's direction in consultation with HFC.

The position is an external contract hire, anticipating an average of 8 to 12 hours worked per week (with necessary fluctuations), or an estimated 1,250 to 1,870 hours, over the life of this multi-year assignment through at least 2029. Final project delivery timeline and budget may shorten or lengthen this time period.

Project Scope

New Exhibits at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education and Key Park Sites
Coordinate planning, design, fabrication, and installation of orientation and educational exhibits at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education and other approved INDU facilities. The project envisions interactive, multimedia exhibits that tell the park's story, including its ecosystems, Indigenous stewardship, and conservation challenges. There is an estimated project budget of $2,360,000, subject to approved funding and scope. The current timeline anticipates final exhibit installation, coinciding with a grand opening and public celebration, by the end of 2028.

Parkwide Signage Refresh
Coordinate development and implementation of a unified signage plan addressing orientation, wayfinding, interpretive panels, and accessibility features. The project anticipates approximately 1,500 new and improved signs across the park's more than 16,000 acres. There is an estimated budget of $1,500,000, subject to approved funding and scope. The current timeline anticipates the installation of all aforementioned signage by the end of 2029.

Primary Responsibilities
- Develop and maintain separate project work plans, budgets, milestone schedules, and a coordinated master schedule covering planning, procurement, design reviews, fabrication, site preparation, installation, and closeout.

- Confirm current project status at the start of the engagement; identify outstanding decisions, dependencies, and approvals; and reconcile the projects' preliminary timelines with an agreed implementation schedule.
- Convene and document project meetings, design workshops, and site visits. Maintain action items, decision records, and approval logs, and follow up with responsible parties.
- Support Save the Dunes and NPS in preparing scopes of work, requests for proposals, evaluation materials, and vendor agreements, consistent with applicable grant and procurement requirements. Coordinate vendor questions and recommendations for authorized review.
- Track consultant and vendor deliverables against approved scopes, schedules, and budgets. Identify delays, cost variances, and proposed changes early and present options for resolution.
- Coordinate review of exhibit concepts, interpretive content, multimedia elements, sign inventories, locations, design packages, and fabrication submittals with NPS and Harpers Ferry Center. Track incorporation of approved feedback.
- Coordinate with NPS on accessibility, visitor orientation, interpretive consistency, national park identity, site conditions, resource protection, and required reviews or permissions. Help support NPS-led engagement with Tribal Nations and other subject matter contributors when relevant to content.
- Coordinate fabrication milestones, site readiness, installation sequencing, and vendor access with park staff. Identify visitor access and operational impacts for NPS review and scheduling.
- Maintain budget and expenditure trackers, review invoices against contracted milestones and supporting documentation, and recommend payment or follow-up to Save the Dunes. Track commitments, forecast remaining costs, and document proposed changes.
- Prepare concise monthly status updates and project-specific narrative, milestone, and expenditure information needed for Save the Dunes' grant reporting. Maintain organized project records and a risk register.
- Coordinate completion reviews, punch lists, correction of deficiencies, final acceptance documentation, warranties, maintenance instructions, and transfer of records to Save the Dunes and NPS. Support project-specific opening or dedication logistics as agreed.
- Provide additional services directly related to other projects as mutually agreed in writing, with any resulting adjustments to scope, fees, or schedule documented.

Deliverables and Decision Authority

Core deliverables include an initial project status assessment and work plan; maintained schedules and budget trackers; meeting records and action logs; monthly status and risk updates; milestone and approval records; and a final closeout package for each project. Submission dates and acceptance criteria will be established in the contract.

The Project Manager coordinates, monitors, and recommends actions. Save the Dunes retains authority over its contracts, grant administration, payments, and financial commitments, whereas NPS, including INDU, retains authority over agency and park requirements, interpretive content, site access, and required project approvals. The contractor may not commit funds, amend contracts, authorize scope changes, or approve installation independently. Such actions require written approval from the authorized Save the Dunes representative and, where applicable, the designated NPS approving official.

Qualifications

- At least five (5) years of relevant project management experience, including delivery of exhibits, signage, visitor facilities upgrades, and/or comparable design and installation projects. Project management certification is preferred but not required.
- Demonstrated ability to manage schedules, budgets, procurement coordination, consultant and vendor performance, and project documentation across multiple organizations.

- Experience with museums, parks, public agencies, nonprofits, or grant-funded capital projects preferred. Familiarity with governmental procurement and contracting procedures, including those of NPS, is strongly preferred.
- Ability to coordinate technical specialists and content reviewers, recognize approval dependencies, and communicate risks and decisions clearly.
- Strong written communication, meeting facilitation, attention to detail, and proficiency with project scheduling, spreadsheets, shared document systems, and Microsoft Office or comparable tools.
- Ability to travel and participate in regular site visits and meetings in Northwest Indiana. Familiarity with the region, and in particular, Indiana Dunes National Park, is strongly preferred.

Contract Structure and Working Arrangements

This is an external, contract-only engagement for project management services. A future agreement will establish the scope, deliverables, term, level of effort, fee structure, invoicing schedule, reimbursable expenses, and any insurance or other contracting requirements. Employee benefits, including health insurance, paid leave, and retirement, are NOT included.

Fees will be negotiated based on qualifications, the agreed scope, and anticipated level of effort. The exhibit and signage budgets above are total project estimates; not compensation budgets for this engagement.

The contract start date, duration, and milestones will be confirmed based on current project status, funding availability, and NPS coordination. The project's dates are planning assumptions and do not establish a guaranteed contract term.

The contractor will manage how the contracted services are performed, subject to agreed deliverables, coordination needs, deadlines, and park access requirements. Remote work may be combined with scheduled meetings and site visits at Save the Dunes headquarters in Michigan City, IN and in/around Indiana Dunes National Park. Occasional evening or weekend coordination may be needed by agreement.

Site visits may involve walking or standing on varied terrain and working around active fabrication or installation areas. The contractor must have reliable transportation for required visits and follow applicable site access and safety procedures. Access and accommodation needs can be discussed when arranging site activities.

Submission Instructions

Interested and qualified individuals and firms should email* their applications to Deputy Director Daniel King at daniel@savedunes.org **no later than 11:59pm Central Time on Tuesday, November 10, 2026**.

*Suggested subject line: "Project Manager Application"

Applications should include the following:

- Cover letter
- CV/résumé(s)
- A brief description of proposed approach
- Relevant exhibit, signage, or comparable project examples
- Availability, anticipated start date, and capacity through 2029

Thank you for your interest in this position. Save the Dunes welcomes qualified professionals and firms from diverse backgrounds. Candidate selection will be based on relevant qualifications, demonstrated capability, proposed approach, availability, and later negotiated costs.