



# Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy

PROTECTING LAND AND WATER FOR PEOPLE, FOR WILDLIFE, FOREVER.

## STEWARDSHIP SPECIALIST

### **About Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC)**

Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy is a nonprofit, regional conservation organization working with the communities of Litchfield and northern Fairfield Counties to safeguard natural and working lands, public recreation areas, and drinking water resources forever. Founded in 1965, NCLC is the largest land trust in Connecticut, protecting 12,500 acres (and growing) of vast, connected natural areas. NCLC's conserved lands include 21 public hiking preserves, 40 working farms, and over 3,000 acres of habitat for rare and endangered species.

NCLC believes in connecting people to nature through public access to wildlands and free educational programming for all ages. NCLC is also a dedicated conservation partner and service provider, assisting the work of local land trusts and regional partners through funding and technical assistance for acquisitions and stewardship, as well as providing shared staff. To strengthen the region's capacity to conserve high-quality conservation lands and ensure the permanence of those conserved lands for the future, NCLC merged with Brookfield Open Space Legacy in 2019 and Naromi Land Trust in 2020.

In recognition of its exceptional work, NCLC is a nationally accredited land trust, and has received the state's highest land trust award for land preservation from the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, an EPA Environmental Merit Award for its outstanding commitment to protecting the natural environment, and a Working Lands Alliance Pathfinder Award for its significant contributions to educating the public about the importance of farmland preservation.

### **Position Description:**

The Stewardship Specialist implements the effective protection and management of more than 12,500 acres of natural lands and waters. The Stewardship Specialist will implement NCLC's strategic conservation priorities for its stewardship program, manage all aspects of NCLC's conservation easement and fee-land inspection program, provide technical guidance on land management practices, be responsible for day-to-day supervision of stewardship interns and volunteers, manage the organization-wide GIS and land records databases, and assist with public lands maintenance. The Stewardship Specialist will work closely with the land trust staff, Board of Directors, its members, partners, key stakeholders, and prospective supporters to ensure the integrity of NCLC's conservation lands.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

### *Stewardship Program*

- Implement the annual inspection program in compliance with NCLC's policies and procedures and LTA Standards and Practices and perform annual property monitoring via aerial imagery and/or on the ground.
- Ensure the integrity of NCLC's conservation easements and fee-owned preserves through thorough and routine monitoring, landowner interactions, and defense and enforcement including: completing at least annual monitoring visits and reports, maintaining positive landowner relations, following-up on potential encroachments and violations, and maintaining detailed records.
- Oversee NCLC's organizational implementation of GIS, GPS, ArcGIS online, and other technology, and maintenance of GIS files and records for all NCLC lands including fee-owned lands. Provide technology training to NCLC personnel, board members, and partners.
- Oversee, maintain, and keep up-to-date NCLC's land management database (Landscape), for all NCLC conserved properties.
- Maintain and build professional, measured, and well-documented relationships with easement landowners and/or their assigned representatives.
- Maintain record of and respond to landowner property needs surrounding approvals for activities on easement land. Provide references and technical advice as appropriate for private landowners interested in better stewardship of their lands.
- In coordination with the Director of Land Conservation and Executive Director, offer training and education programs to easement landowners and property neighbors.
- Assist with land management activities on NCLC-owned and managed properties, including trail maintenance and invasive species removal. This will include the unaided operation of vehicles and equipment in a variety of maintenance and utility tasks.
- Recruit, manage, and inspire interns and volunteers to achieve land management goals in both in-office and field settings.

### *Outreach and Partnerships*

- Assist with building and maintaining relationships with partner organizations including providing technical assistance for GIS, GPS, database and easement and fee stewardship.
- Support the organization's public events by leading, attending, and helping to organize hikes, lectures, and other programs.
- Support the promotion and communication of land preservation and stewardship projects by assisting with the creation of press releases, outreach, and development materials by drafting, providing, and editing written and media content.

- Work in partnership with colleagues, partner organizations, members, and the community at large to build a welcoming, successful, and respected community institution.
- Support the organization's philanthropic efforts by participating in member events, visits, communications, grant writing, and gift solicitations.

#### *Organizational Sustainability*

- Support stewardship team in developing grants for land protection, habitat restoration, and other conservation-related activities. Assist in other fundraising activities, as needed, that may include attending member events/activities and donor cultivation.
- Maintain familiarity with the organization's governing documents (mission, bylaws, strategic plan, policies, etc.).
- Keep current on all aspects of Land Trust Standards and Practices as they apply to job function.
- Make recommendations for policy and procedure improvements.
- NCLC's staff operates as a close-knit team and the Stewardship Specialist will be expected to perform other duties as needed or assigned.

#### **Reports to:**

Director of Land Conservation

#### **Salary and Benefits:**

NCLC is a collaborative and supportive work environment that encourages and inspires professional growth. NCLC offers a competitive salary and comprehensive benefits package. The salary range for this position is \$40-50,000 depending on experience. NCLC offers full-time employees paid vacation, holidays, personal, and sick leave. NCLC pays 95% of health, life, vision, and dental insurance for full-time employees and contributes to a retirement plan.

This is an equal opportunity, full-time, non-exempt position located in Kent, CT.

#### **Qualifications**

##### *Preferred Qualifications*

- Experience managing public recreation lands.
- Masters' degree or higher-level degree in related field (natural resource management, science, education etc.)
- Supervisory experience over volunteers and interns.

### *Minimum Qualifications*

- 3+ years of prior land trust or land management experience. Experience in working with other organizations and agencies in a similar conservation capacity also qualifies.
- Familiarity with aerial photos, deeds, surveys, topographic maps, and ability to navigate properties in the field.
- Proficiency with Arc GIS desktop and online, GPS, and related hardware and software to create and enhance maps, including digitizing property boundaries from surveys and editing shapefiles. Ability to create presentation quality maps for printing, web pages, and PowerPoint displays and teach GPS and basic mapping to colleagues, partners, and volunteers. Experience with remote satellite imagery platforms like LENS, Digital Globe, etc. desirable.
- Excellent interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills, including public speaking.
- Ability to identify northeastern plants, trees, and habitat types.
- Demonstrated knowledge of natural resources issues (related to land management, recreation, agriculture, and forestry, etc.) and ability to communicate to landowners.
- Familiarity with trail maintenance equipment including brush hog, chainsaw, weed whacker, shovel, loppers.
- Experience developing, directing and managing multiple projects and budgets and implementing strategic program goals.
- Strong sense of ethics, integrity, discretion, and ability to maintain confidentiality of donor and project information.
- Ability to work some non-standard hours, including evenings and weekends.
- High level of computer skills required, including demonstrated competency with MS Office, Powerpoint, Word, and Excel.
- Be in good physical condition and able to work outdoors in all types of weather, and able to lift up to 50 lbs.
- Valid, insurable driver's license/record.