

Center for Natural Lands Management

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Conservation Acquisitions Program Manager/Land Agent



Reports to: Director of Administration
Location: Sacramento, California (may require a home office)
Type: Permanent Full-time (1.0 FTE); Exempt (Salaried)
Salary: DOE; with benefits
Application deadline: Open until filled, but for fullest consideration please apply no later than September 16, 2019.

The Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) is a nonprofit 501(3)(c) organization, created in 1990, whose mission is the perpetual stewardship of natural and created conservation lands, sensitive species, and their resident ecosystems. Central to CNLM's mission and fundamental to its success are the principles of rigorous cost estimation for managing conservation areas in perpetuity and application of appropriate scientific information for conservation and restoration. Stewardship activities are currently divided between California and Washington. Currently, CNLM is headquartered in Temecula, CA where a physical office is maintained and several administrative staff, including the Director of Administration, are located.

CNLM is culturally significant in its focus on high-risk species, small populations, and sensitive habitats. Although acquisition and protection of large, intact ecosystems are desirable, conservation opportunities are not always available on that scale. To practice real conservation, the emphasis is on a perpetual relationship—typically through fee-title interest—an interest that also allows for effective adaptive management. Given that adequate financial resources are essential to provide effective protection and stewardship, CNLM's core business model is to simultaneously secure the necessary financial resources and the conservation property. To fulfill its conservation mission, CNLM has a well-established practice of selecting for and investing in excellent staff.

In the State of Washington, CNLM's South Puget Sound (SPS) Program focuses on conservation of the rare prairie and oak woodlands of Cascadia, especially those lands and habitats within the South Puget Sound Region. In that Region, the Program aims to protect, restore habitats, and support recovery of rare species that are candidates for federal listing. CNLM currently manages over 1,500 acres of important habitats and rare and listed species under fee ownership or conservation easement mainly in the SPS area.

Currently in California, over 100 preserves, encompassing over 70,000 acres throughout the state, are within CNLM's portfolio, with new preserves added regularly. The preserves vary in size from three to tens of thousands of acres and are managed under direct ownership, conservation easements, or management contracts. In California, because of the geographic distribution of its preserves, staff are widely distributed and business is conducted with a virtual office model. Most staff, including most senior staff, maintain home offices and communication is more often by phone and email than by in-person meetings.

To fulfill its conservation mission, CNLM not only maintains its current real estate portfolio, but acquires new preserves regularly. Many of those acquisition opportunities are through

mitigation processes; however, other sources of funding—including grants, property transfers, and novel collaborations—have contributed to the current preserve portfolio. CNLM's business model is directed by a strong acquisitions policy that provides for diverse acquisition scenarios and is supported by a robust set of legal document templates that reflect the various stages of acquisition. The acquisition process includes thorough due diligence regarding the property's history and conservation values, and a robust analysis of the perpetual funding required for stewardship (i.e., CNLM's "PAR" process).

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Conservation Acquisitions Program Manager/Land Agent (Acquisitions Manager) provides a critical role in the acquisition of conservation lands for CNLM. The Acquisitions Manager will be responsible for ensuring that acquisitions are managed to provide the best opportunity for CNLM, developing relationships that enhance such opportunities, and ensuring that all acquisitions projects that are performed according to CNLM protocols and policies. The Acquisitions Manager will not only be responsible for the elements of program management but acquisitions program development, property review tasks, document development, and periodic review of acquisitions processes and outcomes so as to improve both, providing information concerning CNLM's acquisition interests and process, conducting due diligence on potential acquisitions, managing the acquisition process and coordinating with other CNLM staff; and documenting potential and active projects such that CNLM's acquisitions are increasingly effective, targeted, and successful over time. The main responsibilities include:

- Developing relationships with the conservation (including regulatory and permittee) community for the purposes of cultivating appropriate acquisitions opportunities
- Conducting in-depth due diligence on potential acquisitions
- Investigating grants or other funding opportunities for acquisition and stewardship of conservation lands and preparing proposals as appropriate
- Implementing CNLM's acquisition policies and practices through appropriate screening and documentation of acquisition opportunities, risk assessment, and preparation of contracts and proposals
- Conducting specific property-related tasks such as title review, property tax review and application for exemptions, district fee obligations, CC&R review, recording documents with County offices, etc.
- Managing and coordinating all stages of acquisitions through escrow closing, coordinating closely with other CNLM legal, financial, stewardship, and administrative staff
- Assisting with projects to enhance stewardship capacity on existing preserves through preparation of contracts and agreements and other project management functions
- Identifying critical tasks and time sensitivity for all acquisition projects and coordinating and managing to meet goals, expectations, and deadlines
- Managing acquisition budgets so as to minimize risk of unintended expenses or opportunity costs, keeping within budgets as appropriate
- Maintaining all project records and summarizing data on CNLM acquisitions for use in planning
- Using GIS tools to assist with acquisitions planning
- Briefing senior staff on developments or trends that may affect acquisition opportunities

- Preparing documents to inform the Board of Directors and to acquire authorization for real estate and associated financial transactions, including project summaries and acquisition resolutions
- Fulfilling other duties as assigned.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Knowledge of real estate transactions through appropriate experience and/or education including escrow closings, title insurance, surveys, deeds, leases, and title reports
- Bachelor or Master's degree in appropriate science and/or business field
- Excellent communication skills; in particular, ability to write contracts, proposals, reports, and other documents
- Demonstrated experience in project management
- At least three years of professional experience related to land acquisition
- Demonstrated ability to engage professionally and responsibly with multiple parties to achieve project completion (e.g., regulatory agencies, permittees, title companies, conservation bankers, various other government entities, etc.)
- Demonstrated ability to work professionally, effectively, and collaboratively with in-house staff to achieve stated goals
- Demonstrated ability to represent one's employer professionally and effectively at public meetings and events
- Proven self-starter, able to work efficiently and effectively with minimal supervision, and able to appropriately use initiative to meet project goals; seeking advice and policy guidance when needed and appropriate
- Working knowledge of Windows operating systems and PC applications such as Microsoft Office Suite
- Ability to operate from a home office, if required
- Must have and maintain a valid driver's license and safe driving record
- Ability to travel in relation to real estate opportunities, meetings, and CNLM events

PREFERRED REQUIREMENTS (additional requirements)

- Some formal education or work experience in real estate or environmental law
- Some knowledge of environmental/conservation mitigation processes
- Working knowledge of GIS and GPS technologies and associated software

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature of the work being performed by people assigned to this work. This is not an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities. CNLM management reserves the right to amend and change responsibilities to meet business and organizational needs as necessary.

CNLM is an Equal Opportunity employer. Personnel are chosen on the basis of ability without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, marital status or sexual orientation, in accordance with federal and state law.

This position description does not constitute an employment agreement between the CNLM and the employee and is subject to change by CNLM as the needs of the CNLM and requirements of the job change.

TO APPLY:

Qualified applicants must provide a letter of interest, a detailed resumé, and contact information (but no letters of support, please) for those who could supply references for the applicant, if and when appropriate.

Electronic submissions strongly preferred.

Email or mail these materials to:

careers-cam@cnlm.org

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