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Conservation Director Job Description

Ventura Land Trust (VLT) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit accredited land trust working to protect the land, water, wildlife, and scenic beauty of the Ventura region for current and future generations. The organization strives to create a fun, inspiring and team-oriented environment with flexible work hours.

The Conservation Director is responsible for the conservation efforts of Ventura Land Trust. Duties include overseeing land acquisition efforts, overseeing and managing habitat restoration, contributing to grant writing in support of conservation projects, building strong and successful relationships with conservation groups, maintaining communications with land owners, and collaborating effectively with staff to execute conservation efforts. The Conservation Director reports to the Executive Director, leads the conservation team, and works collaboratively with public and private landowners, funders, fellow VLT staff, board members, committee members and volunteers to advance the permanent protection, restoration and management of priority parcels of land.

Responsibilities

- Provide leadership, direction, management, and evaluation of all of VLT's land conservation efforts and processes
- Develop proposals, budgets, grant funding applications, and reports
- Manage the evaluation and prioritization of land projects to ensure alignment with VLT's objectives, priorities, and financial obligations for maximum conservation benefit, in alignment with the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices and state and federal laws
- Hold primary responsibility for all aspects of real estate transactions, including negotiating with landowners and representatives; contracting for and reviewing property appraisals and environmental reports; preparing transaction documents, completing title review, performing due diligence, and conducting closings
- Hold primary responsibility for land-related record keeping, landowner engagement and response, and annual monitoring for fee properties and conservation easements.
- Work with senior and executive leadership on the development and implementation of VLT's Strategic Plan objectives for conservation
- Lead future landowner outreach efforts and foster good working relationships with landowners in VLT's focus area to promote land protection and restoration
- Partner with the Preserve Director in the development and implementation of educational and stewardship activities related to the Conservation Program, including some volunteer events
- Identify and foster partnerships with other environmental organizations, land trusts, federal agencies, tribes, community leaders, and other partners to help attain program goals
- Educate interested landowners, their professional advisors, watershed councils and partner groups about conservation options, both one-on-one and through public presentation

- Collaborate with the Development and Outreach teams to provide content for land acquisition and outreach efforts; serve as subject matter expert in discussions with potential funders to promote and sustain the organization
- Pursue professional development opportunities and education, including changes to tax and conservation laws

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required (Master's preferred)
- Course work or experience in business, environmental studies, natural resource conservation, real estate, agriculture economics, planning, public policy, or a related discipline
- Four to five years experience in land conservation, including demonstrated experience negotiating agreements and managing complex projects from start to finish
- Minimum of 10 years of related experience and evidence of progressive advancement in previous jobs
- Experience working with landowners, government agencies, community groups, and conservation partners to achieve objectives
- Finely-tuned negotiation and collaboration skills
- Experience in developing and writing grant applications, budgets, and demonstrated success in receiving public and private funding
- Familiarity with local flora and fauna preferred, especially sage scrub habitat
- Experience with GPS, GIS mapping and analysis
- Significant experience in land-based real estate transactions, both fee-title and conservation easements and a strong understanding of tax and conservation law
- Physical ability to hike rough terrain

The ideal candidate will be a skilled facilitator, with a keen appreciation for the challenges and opportunities of working successfully with funders, landowners, land trusts, municipalities, county, state and federal agencies. A problem-solver and creative thinker, the candidate will inspire partners to advance a shared conservation vision, showing initiative to solve problems and remove barriers to keep their strategic land protection efforts moving forward.

Annual compensation range \$80,000-\$85,000, commensurate with experience and other qualifications. Conservation Director qualifies as a full-time salaried/exempt employee and is eligible for full-time holiday, vacation, and sick time.

For more information and to view the full job description, please visit:
https://www.venturalandtrust.org/conservation_director_job_opening.

To be considered for this position, please email resume and cover letter to careers@venturalandtrust.org with "Conservation Director" in the subject line.