



Job Title: COAST AND ESTUARY NATURAL AREA MANAGER

Location: Astoria, OR

Salary Range: \$67,105 – \$87,237 annual salary

Job Type: Full Time, Permanent

FLSA Status: Exempt

Application Deadline: Open until filled - Applications will be reviewed beginning April 7th.

About Us

Columbia Land Trust is dedicated to conserving and caring for the vital lands, waters, and wildlife of the Columbia River region through sound science and strong relationships. In our first 30 years, Columbia Land Trust has permanently conserved more than 60,000 acres and restored thousands of acres across our ecologically diverse region, for the benefit of both wildlife and communities. Today, the Land Trust is nationally recognized as a leader in conservation, and locally appreciated as a part of the communities where we live and work.

At Columbia Land Trust, we often talk about our impact in terms of our science forward approach to lands, waters, and wildlife. However, just as important is how we work, through building and maintaining strong relationships. We set ambitious long-term goals that we know are only achievable by living up to our commitments to support more equitable conservation through diverse collaborations and thoughtful land management practices. We strive to ensure that all our employees, colleagues and partners feel a sense of belonging, and that their contributions to achieving our mission are valued. Columbia Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to building a workforce that fosters a sense of community, appreciates and includes more voices and cultures, inspires conservation achievement, and gives space for personal growth.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Natural Area Manager** will be part of the 22-member Stewardship Team, which manages approximately 36,000 acres of conservation lands including natural areas, parks and open spaces, and private lands where the Land Trust holds legal agreements, including conservation easements. The primary purpose of the stewardship program is to maintain and enhance the conservation values of protected properties across the Land Trust's region. Conservation lands are managed for multiple objectives, most often focused on ecological integrity, but also incorporates community values such as recreation, economic activity, and equitable access.

This natural area manager position will be responsible for the management of 22 stewardship units located along the lower Columbia River and the Long Beach Peninsula totaling approximately 3,700 acres, with sizes of each unit ranging from less than 5 acres to more than 600 acres. These conservation lands are ecologically diverse to include tidal floodplain and interdunal wetlands, riparian corridors, and associated uplands. The coast and estuary natural

area manager will be involved directly with the Land Trust's work in the lower Columbia River conserving and restoring intertidal wetland habitat, re-establishing native vegetation communities, and monitoring the success of these efforts in achieving restoration goals. The position will work in coordination with, and with the support of, other team members to ensure compliance with national Land Trust Alliance standards and practices and provide support to the Land Trust's Land Protection and Advancement programs. Specific areas of work are described below.

Land Management and Administration (50%)

Land management and administration work includes planning and implementing management for stewardship units, ensuring management is consistent with conservation goals for each site, documenting work accomplishments, and maintaining the legal integrity of the conservation interest. Management responsibilities will vary by site but will encompass a variety of tasks including:

- Property administration and data management including property information management, using GIS to input, view and present spatial data, tracking tax and parcel information, documenting site work in the land trust's database, regulatory compliance documentation, maintaining legal access and easement agreements, and managing property use and access permissions
- Prepare, update, and implement property management plans
- Maintenance, restoration, and enhancement of ecological systems and habitat features, including vegetation management, aquatic habitat restoration, weed control, planting, habitat feature installation, and grazing management
- Property maintenance activities including vegetation management and weed control, infrastructure (roads, structures, gates, signs, etc.), and habitat enhancement activities
- Monitoring annual compliance and project-level effectiveness and monitoring and evaluating ecological condition and trends on properties
- Resolving property issues such as boundary encroachments, dumping, neighbor concerns, and unauthorized public use
- Public use management, including working with state private lands hunting program, and assist in supporting the Land Trust's public use and management system
- Outreach to neighbors, stakeholders, rights-holders, and the general public to gain insight into community needs and concerns and raise awareness about land trust work
- Annual work plan and budget planning support
- Support and coordinate other stewardship staff in site work

Habitat Restoration (35%)

To achieve site conservation goals, the Land Trust implements habitat restoration work ranging from vegetation control and planting, to removing levees and restoring in-stream habitat complexity, to implementing habitat structure enhancements (large wood, snags, etc.), and post restoration monitoring and maintenance. This position will be involved with several properties with active restoration in different stages of development. Current projects include vegetation establishment and maintenance on two properties totaling approximately 330 acres. The natural area manager gathers intelligence from local partners, published science, and community input,

implements project planning and design, fundraising support and grant writing, project management (budgets, contracts, project reporting, etc.), permitting and compliance, and outreach to neighbors, stakeholders, rightsholders, decision-makers, and local communities. Project effectiveness monitoring is integral to habitat restoration projects and is part of the Land Trust's adaptive management approach. Additionally, the natural area manager may implement experimental trials to evaluate potential habitat restoration strategies.

Land Protection Support (5%)

The Land Trust is working closely with partners to conserve many thousands of acres in this ecoregion over the next decade. Natural area managers work closely with land protection staff to evaluate new properties for conservation. This includes identifying conservation values, assessing and documenting resource condition, identifying stewardship concerns, preparing budget estimates for management or restoration, providing input and review of conservation agreements and encumbrances, and supporting grant applications for property acquisition. Natural area managers also work closely with land protection and legal staff to resolve certain types of property issues that require legal transactions, such as amending legal agreements, creating new agreements, boundary line adjustments, or land transfers. This position will contribute to conservation planning with stewardship and land protection staff from across the organization.

Outreach and Engagement (5%)

The natural area manager will support the Land Trust's advancement, outreach and engagement programs to build awareness and support of land conservation. This includes working with a volunteer coordinator to plan and implement volunteer activities on lands; supporting the Advancement team with land tours, events, and fundraising and communication materials; building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders; and collaborating on community engagement projects.

Organizational Support (5%)

Land Trust staff also support a broad range of organizational activities ranging from participation in meetings with the Land Trust's Board of Directors; participating in the Land Trust's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) work; participation in fundraising activities; and rotating involvement on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and/or Safety Committees.

The position is based in the Land Trust's Astoria, OR office with frequent travel throughout the region to complete site work, traveling up to two hours one-way with occasional overnight stays. A significant portion of this position's work duties will take place at field sites and can be labor-intensive, requiring the ability to work safely and independently in remote areas, often without cell service. Columbia Land Trust has COVID-19 precautions for both field and office work that all staff may be required to follow based on the status of the pandemic.

QUALIFICATIONS

Columbia Land Trust expects applicants will have skills and experience relevant to the work listed

above. However, applicants are not expected to have experience in all tasks to apply for the position.

The ideal candidate will value learning, is curious about nature and people, can translate science and community input into an actionable management pathway, has a good foundation in ecology, experience with natural area management and/or restoration, project management experience, problem solving skills, and an ability to work collaboratively with a wide range of partners.

Columbia Land Trust is prepared to provide training to ensure qualified candidates have the skills to accomplish the work safely and effectively.

To thrive in this job, the qualified candidate will have the following qualifications:

- A background in land stewardship, habitat restoration, biology, ecology, or traditional ecological knowledge, equivalent to five years either through related experience and/or education/training
- An ability to prepare management plans, reports, and other technical documents
- An ability to assess habitat conditions using general ecological knowledge and specific habitat assessment protocols, and to develop and implement land management and restoration pathways
- Restoration project management experience including developing and managing project budgets, working with partners, developing and managing contracts project documentation, and public outreach
- An ability to identify plants and wildlife of the Columbia River region using dichotomous keys and field guide
- A willingness to obtain a pesticide applicator's license and chemically control weeds
- A strong capability for safely implementing field work under difficult conditions, often independently
- An ability to implement protocols and collect data for effectiveness monitoring and ecological monitoring such as native or invasive plant mapping, plant survival, stream channel dimensions, water quality, water levels, or wildlife presence
- An ability to communicate and collaborate effectively with staff, members of the public, contractors, agencies, and project partners in a variety of circumstances
- Strong organization skills to identify, prioritize, schedule, and prepare for work activities in coordination with other staff and a supervisor
- Competency with common computer programs, including Microsoft Word and Excel
- An ability to learn and use GIS, GPS, field data collection technology, and an online database
- The ability to effectively collaborate with other staff in other offices, including regular email communications and participating in virtual meetings
- A desire to learn new skills and gain knowledge related to conservation land management.
- An ability to work productively with people from racially, culturally, and politically diverse backgrounds. Candidates must demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion through personal learning, implementing work practices that support equity and inclusion, and willingness to support the Land Trust's equity commitments
- Enthusiasm for conservation and the mission, goals, and values of Columbia Land Trust

Longer days and driving to remote locations are a regular part of this work. A valid driver's license is required and applicants who are offered a position will be asked to consent to a driving record review. The Land Trust provides mileage reimbursement for use of personal vehicles and has organizational vehicles available as needed. The Land Trust will provide emergency beacons for remote travel and has a notification protocol for working in the field independently. Herbicide application, ability to lift and carry materials up to 40 pounds, ATV and truck with trailer operation, and use of handheld power equipment will be required, with training and practice provided by Columbia Land Trust as needed.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Columbia Land Trust offers a competitive salary, a comprehensive benefits package, and a supportive and positive work environment. The full salary range for this position is \$67,105 – \$87,237 annually. Based on our internal equity review and candidate's qualifications the estimated starting salary will typically be between \$67,105 – \$77,171 annually, depending on the candidate's qualifications and experience. The Land Trust benefits package includes paid vacation, holidays, and sick leave. Columbia Land Trust pays 100% of health and dental insurance premiums for three-quarter to full-time employees; voluntary benefits include a Section 125 – FSA and long-term disability. We also offer a match (up to 5% of annual salary) to our 401(K)-retirement plan. Healthy, happy staff are an important element of our success and we strongly believe in and support a work/life balance. The Land Trust offers a flexible work environment and is currently implementing a hybrid work schedule where employees can balance their work from home, the field and the office.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

For consideration, please email your resume, cover letter and list of potential references to: jobs@columbialandtrust.org. The position is open until filled. Applications will be reviewed starting on April 8th, 2024. We will not contact your references without notifying you first.

Please include the following in your cover letter:

- A description of your interest in, and relevant experience for, this position, and where it might fit within your career objectives; and,
- Your commitment to, and experience with, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Emailed applications are preferred, but you may submit your materials by mail to:

Ian Sinks, Stewardship Director
Columbia Land Trust; 850 Officers Row Vancouver, WA 98661