



Land Protection Forester

- Location:** Rhinebeck, NY, and will require local travel to engage with partners and assess projects. The position also may work remotely within the greater Hudson Valley region with weekly visits to the main office.
- Salary:** \$55,000 - \$79,000 depending upon years of experience and qualifications.
- Benefits:** Health insurance, 401K, generous vacation, medical/family leave
- Reports to:** Director of Environmental Programs
- Deadline:** Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. For first consideration, apply by February 3, 2023

Position Summary

The Land Protection Forester is responsible for implementing WLT's acquisition work in alignment with the organization's strategic plan and in coordination with WLT conservation, stewardship, community engagement, and development departments. Duties include managing all land transactions; maintaining all real estate records; overseeing the land acquisition process to ensure compliance with standards and practices required for WLT to continue its Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Accreditation; evaluating unsolicited landowner offers or inquiries; developing strategies for approaching landowners to offer conservation options; supporting related stewardship and conservation program activities; and soliciting public and private funding to support projects.

Essential Job Functions:

Land Acquisition Project Implementation

- Negotiate and complete land acquisitions (fee title and easements; donations and purchase) with private landowners, governmental entities and/or other conservation organizations.
- Draft and negotiate easement documents, Purchase and Sale Agreements, Letters of Intent and related acquisition documents.
- Negotiate and complete leases and land transfers, including sale of land to private or public entities or sale of property interests.
- Manage and direct attorneys, appraisers, surveyors, environmental consultants, and other professionals associated with real estate transactions.
- Maintain acquisition pipeline, including tracking, record-keeping, and reporting.
- Manage unsolicited acquisition inquiries and opportunities.

- Prepare project materials to present to Board of Directors for approval, including Board Committees such as Land Protection, Land Stewardship and Finance.
 - Review and maintain WLT compliance with Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Accreditation “Standards and Practices” and associated policies in coordination with other WLT departments.
 - Maintain knowledge of relevant conservation real estate laws and regulations and related natural resource, land use, planning and development laws and regulations.
 - Maintain positive and productive contact with private landowners, public agencies, and partner groups.
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Conservation and Stewardship Programs Support, Planning and Coordination

- Assess and refine acquisition plan in collaboration with conservation and stewardship department staff.
 - Support conservation and stewardship staff on real estate related issues associated with projects.
 - Assist in review of, and provide advice on, existing easement and fee lands documents as issues arise.
 - Submit initial and annual property tax exemption forms with local assessors.
 - Coordinate and contribute to successful post-acquisition activities such as developing property transition plans, transferring ownership to external partners, following up with funders, and transitioning properties to our Land Stewardship team for long-term management of natural resources.
 - Assess and update list of potential fee land transfer opportunities and identify priorities.
 - Represent WLT at community meetings, with peer groups, and at professional meetings.
 - Track local, state, and federal regulations and policies that may influence land acquisition projects.
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Funding and Financing for Acquisition

- Investigate potential funding opportunities (primarily public funding, but not exclusively) and apply for grants to support acquisition related projects in collaboration with Director of Conservation and WLT Development and Finance staff. This includes developing, writing, submitting, and tracking grant proposals, as well as monitoring grant commitments to ensure timely completion of deliverables and submission of grant reports.
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Administration

- Participate in project and departmental team meetings and planning sessions.

- Propose WLT acquisition policy updates/revisions which may become necessary to keep the organization current and to ensure compliance with LTA Accreditation.
 - Participate in organizational annual planning including project level planning steps and estimated outcomes for specific actions.
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Accountabilities

The Land Acquisition Manager position is accountable for delivering the following results:

- 1) Management of an acquisitions plan, including maintaining a system for tracking acquisition opportunities and synthesizing and identifying progress.
 - 2) Management of all land transactions, including completion of priority acquisitions, and maintenance of all real estate records, all in compliance with LTA Accreditation Standards and Practices, and Accreditation renewal process.
 - 3) Meeting Strategic Plan goals related to land acquisition.
 - 4) Professional presentations to Board of Directors and partners as directed.
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Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in forestry, natural resources management, or a related field.
 - Demonstrable results in project management.
 - Excellent communication skills.
 - Proven record of positive landowner relations.
 - Experience with ArcGIS
 - Must have valid driver's license
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Preferred Qualifications

Preference will be given to candidates with the following professional qualifications:

- Two to three years of real estate experience; specific experience in conservation real estate highly desirable, including fee land, conservation easement and trail easement transactions, with demonstrated understanding of deal structure and sensitivity unique to this type of work; experience with complex real property transactions, and multi-party land acquisitions also highly desirable.
- Familiarity with LTA accreditation standards; LTA real estate training desirable.
- Experience in grant writing

Physical Requirements and Work Environment

- The employee must have the ability to navigate and traverse a variety of landscapes on foot or via off-road driving, at times in deep back country, in off-trail land conditions, sometimes in rugged terrain.
- The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds.
- Ability to work in adverse weather conditions including but not limited to high heat, rain, snow, smoke, dust, and cold temperatures (within reason)
- Ability to walk, hike, or stand for extended periods of time with others and alone in steep, rugged, brushy, and/or remote terrain under adverse weather conditions.

How to Apply

Send resume and cover letter via email to: jobs@winnakee.org

We recognize that conservation is best advanced by the leadership and contributions of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities. WLT encourages individuals from all backgrounds to apply and join our engaged community that is committed to environmental conservation.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status. WLT strives to live our value of respecting and welcoming diversity in all forms, which undoubtedly advances our mission to conserve land, care for land, and connect people with land.