



Land Acquisition Program Manager (Rising Waters) Position Announcement

Job Title: Land Acquisition Program Manager
Reports to: Director of Community Conservation

Ready to apply your skills or interest in habitat protection and restoration, program management or regional planning? Want to be part of a talented, deeply committed, and national award-winning conservation organization? Then please read on!

Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) is looking for a person with experience in managing regional conservation programs in coastal or bay environments. This program is focused on the unique San Pablo Baylands of Sonoma County with its tidal marshes, rivers, wetlands, and farmland bisected by major highway, rail, and utility corridors that are threatened by sea level rise. SLT is looking for candidates with a passion, commitment or understanding of this complex type of ecosystem and landscape.

SLT serves a diverse audience with broad cultural heritages, socioeconomic backgrounds, genders, and orientations. We encourage applications from candidates who reflect and value the audiences and populations we serve.

Overview

The Land Acquisition Program Manager plays a key role in advancing the Rising Waters Focal Strategy in our 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, a highly visible, multi-faceted program of state and national significance for the implementation of natural climate solutions. The Program Manager reports to the Director of Community Conservation and works closely with the stewardship and public policy teams to deliver our sea level rise resilience strategies for Sonoma County. In particular, the Program Manager leads the acquisition of properties in the San Pablo Baylands region, which includes the watersheds of the Petaluma River and lower Sonoma Creek.

You are encouraged to apply if you have:

- Experience in developing, negotiating, and completing conservation real estate transactions and managing projects or programs at a regional scale.
- Proven success in securing funding from public agencies and philanthropic sources.
- Background in environmental studies, natural resources management, or conservation planning.

Primary Responsibilities

Regional Planning and Coordination

- Implement SLT's 2020 Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy and 2023 Petaluma River Watershed Strategy to achieve Strategic Plan goals and objectives.
- Build key partnerships with landowners, Indigenous groups and tribal nations, and community organizations in pursuit of these objectives.
- Collaborate with SLT's Stewardship, Community Engagement and Education, and other departments to develop and implement strategies that consistently lead to high quality conservation projects with an engaged constituency.

- Participate in local, regional, and state public policy and funding efforts affecting land and water conservation in the Baylands region.
- Maintain strategic awareness of regional development threats and collaborate with internal and external partners to address them.

Land Acquisition Projects

- Develop and complete all aspects of fee and conservation easement acquisitions for priority properties, including landowner communication, project evaluation, site visits, project budget, contract negotiations, due diligence (appraisals, environmental analysis, surveys, title, etc.), securing funding, writing grant applications, and closing project purchases.
- Coordinate projects with SLT's Stewardship Department and real estate professionals such as lawyers, appraisers, government land agents, partner agencies, and other organizations.
- Occasionally manage fee and conservation easement projects outside the Baylands region to support the Acquisition Team's ability to deliver on SLT's strategic priorities.
- Evaluate properties proposed for donation to SLT and oversee related outcomes.
- Present projects to SLT's Board and other audiences as needed to advance goals.

Fundraising and Communications

- Develop and maintain relationships with public and private funding organizations.
- Secure necessary funds from public and private sources to prepare conservation plans and complete acquisition projects.
- Collaborate with other departments to cultivate major donors and funders, as well as elected and agency officials and other individuals in support of land acquisition and regional conservation, particularly as it relates to the Rising Waters program.
- Collaborate with the Marketing and Communications Team to develop persuasive messaging to build community support and funding for SLT's Rising Waters strategy.

Program Duties

- Assist with the development of acquisition team policies and practices as needed for compliance with Land Trust Alliance accreditation standards and practices.
- Assist with preparation of acquisition team strategic plans, annual work plans, and budgets.
- Work with the Baylands Stewardship Program Manager who serves as team lead for the Rising Waters focal strategy to develop organizational priorities for acquisition, stewardship, and restoration projects in the Baylands region.

Stewardship Department Collaboration

- Partner with stewardship staff to deliver on Rising Waters strategy priorities.
- Develop baseline information for land protection projects.
- Assist in securing funding for planning, stewardship, and long-term management of properties acquired by SLT.

Essential Qualifications

- Comprehensive experience in conservation real estate transactions and managing regional projects or programs.
- Proven success in securing funding from public agencies and philanthropic sources.
- Professional writing skills, including preparing grant applications.
- Skill in public speaking and ability to represent SLT in public forums.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office, Box, Google, and Salesforce related applications and office systems.
- The ability to work flexible hours including weekends and occasional evenings.

Preferred Skills and Experience

SLT is open to candidates with diverse backgrounds, experience, and transferrable skills. We are looking for candidates with the following experience OR the ability to develop skills in each of these categories:

- Background in environmental studies, natural resources management, or conservation planning.
- Practical knowledge of resource issues related to watershed management, tidal marsh restoration, sea level rise, hydrology, climate change, flooding, subsidence, land use, agriculture, and viticulture.
- Geospatial analysis and cartography in ArcGIS Pro.

Schedule, Salary & Benefits

Position is a regular, full-time, 40 hours per week (exempt status).

Salary starting at \$81,000 annually, commensurate with experience. Benefits include generous employer contributions to medical, dental and vision insurance plans. Employer contribution to retirement plan after 1 year of employment. Paid time off includes 15 paid holidays, paid vacation based on tenure and personal and parental leave in accordance with SLT policies and procedures.

This position is located at the Sonoma Land Trust office in Santa Rosa, California. Staff are working a hybrid model which allows them to work from their home office and SLT's office or in the field. Some fieldwork is required for this position.

About Sonoma Land Trust

Sonoma Land Trust works in alliance with nature to conserve and restore the integrity of the land, with a focus on climate resiliency. The organization is also committed to ensuring more equitable access to the outdoors. Since 1976, the non-profit Land Trust has protected over 57,000 acres of scenic, natural, agricultural, and open land for future generations. Sonoma Land Trust is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission and was the recipient of the 2019 Land Trust Alliance Award of Excellence. For more information, please visit [the Sonoma Land Trust website](#).

We are passionate about building and sustaining an inclusive and equitable working environment that is representative of the communities we serve. We know that having varied perspectives leads to better outcomes to solve the complex problems of conservation, climate change and environmental justice in Sonoma County. And to best serve the people of our community, we are taking the actions outlined in our [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion \(DEI\) Plan](#).

To Apply

Please email your resume and cover letter to staffing@sonomalandtrust.org.

Sonoma Land Trust is an Equal Opportunity Employer

We strive to create a diverse and inclusive organization and encourage applicants from all cultures, races, colors, religions, national or regional origins, sexes, ages, disability status, sexual orientations, gender identities, military or veteran status or other status protected by law.