



SENIOR CONSERVATION PROJECT MANAGER



Reports To: Lands Director

Salary: \$65,000 - \$75,000, DOE

Benefits: Group Health Insurance with optional Health Savings Account or Flexible Savings Account
SIMPLE IRA with up to 3% Employer Match
Generous Leave Policy, including Personal, Parental, Medical, and Sabbatical Leaves
Flexible Scheduling

Status: 1.0 FTE (exempt)

To Apply: Application review will begin on October 9, 2023. The position is open until filled. Please send a cover letter and resume to Operations Director, Kori Anderson, at kori@bitterrootlandtrust.org. We will be available during Rally in Portland to meet with interested applicants. Please email kori@bitterrootlandtrust.org for availability.

Position Overview:

The Senior Conservation Project Manager is a key member of the land conservation program at Bitter Root Land Trust. Under the general supervision and direction of the Lands Director, the Senior Conservation Project Manager works closely with the Lands Team to help landowners protect high-priority lands in BRLT's service area. This position is responsible for developing and managing conservation easement projects, including building relationships with landowners and agencies, negotiating complex land transactions, overseeing due diligence, leading funding application processes, and closing real estate transactions. This person would build on existing partnerships and take the lead on multiple active projects.

About the Bitterroot Valley in southwest Montana:

Situated between the gentle Sapphires and rugged Bitterroot Mountains and bisected by the Bitterroot River, the Bitterroot Valley is home to a tremendous diversity of fish and wildlife, from bighorn sheep and elk to cutthroat trout and bald eagles. Rich soils in the valley support the historic farms and ranches that shape the culture and character of our region. Our offices are in Hamilton, MT, situated at the gateway to the Selway/Bitterroot Wilderness and a broad array of outdoor pursuits.

About Bitter Root Land Trust

Founded in 1996, the Bitter Root Land Trust is the only land trust focused exclusively on the needs and challenges of land conservation in the Bitterroot Valley. Since its inception, the Bitter Root Land Trust has grown into a trusted community partner, earning a reputation for excellence in conservation in the Intermountain West. Bitter Root Land Trust has recently been designated as a certified entity with the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The Senior Conservation Project Manager will join a talented, growing staff of 10 and a 15-member Board of Directors. The Bitter Root Land Trust is proud to be an Accredited land trust, initially earning accreditation in 2013. BRLT has completed 54 conservation easements protecting water resources, wildlife habitat, and working lands, while also creating several riverfront parks, fishing access sites, and other community-based recreational properties.

Scope of Work:

Project Management:

The Senior Conservation Project Manager is responsible for developing and completing new conservation easement and fee title projects within BRLT's service area.

Project Cultivation and Development:

The Senior Conservation Project Manager will assist the Lands Director with general outreach to prospective landowners to develop future conservation opportunities.

Other Duties:

All BRLT employees are expected to assist in strategic planning, and events, and act as ambassadors for BRLT's conservation, stewardship, and community enhancement efforts.

Areas of Responsibility:

Conservation Project Management (75%):

- Work closely with the Lands Director to generate, negotiate, guide, and implement BRLT's acquisition of conservation easements and fee title lands.
- Coordinate baseline contractors, appraisers, and other third-party contractors.
- Manage complex conservation projects, including generating budgets, timelines, and proposed project designs.
- Complete due diligence on conservation projects (analyze title and mineral reports, mineral remoteness tests, existing encumbrances, environmental hazard assessments, public benefit and private inurement analyses, and other project-related due diligence issues), and engage legal review, when necessary.
- Facilitate conservation project approvals through the BRLT Lands Committee, and Board of Directors.
- Identify funding strategies and sources for conservation projects.
- Draft technical grant applications to fund conservation easement and fee-title acquisitions, including a heavy emphasis on Agricultural Land Easement and Regional Conservation Partnership Program applications through the NRCS.
- Manage and lead successful grant applications, including reporting, budget tracking, and close-out.
- Coordinate with landowners, funders, and contractors to ensure conservation projects are completed in a timely manner.
- Work closely with landowners (in-person, via phone, and in writing) to develop conservation projects from vision to finality.

- Utilize ArcGIS to evaluate properties, develop maps, assess resources, and complete funding applications.
- Maintain and update project files according to BRLT policy, including in-office, off-site, and digital records storage.
- Ensure BRLT land and easement acquisitions remain consistent and compliant with LTA Accreditation Commission standards.

Conservation Project Cultivation (15%):

- Respond to land protection inquiries from private landowners, community groups, public agencies, and the public.
- Develop and maintain strong working relationships with public and private partners to complete individual conservation projects and further BRLT's strategic conservation goals.

Additional Duties (10%):

- Attend BRLT outreach and fundraising functions, as assigned.
- Assume an active role in BRLT strategic planning.
- Seek opportunities to stay current and familiar with innovative, state-of-the-art conservation programs and emerging conservation program advancements.
- Participate in weekly staff meetings and lands team meetings.
- At all times, act as an ambassador for BRLT, its mission, and its programs.
- As requested, provide conservation-related content for the Land Trust's communication materials.
- Other duties as assigned.

Required Qualifications:

- Minimum of bachelor's degree in law, ecology, land conservation, real estate, resource management, conservation biology, or another field of study and/or applicable experience. Advanced degree in related field preferred.
- At least three years of direct experience working in private land conservation on projects such as conservation easements, farm and ranchland real estate transactions, community access projects, and/or law.
- Land Trust experience, and familiarity with the Land Trust Alliance Standards & Practices.
- Demonstrated experience leading title review, contract, and real estate negotiations.
- At least three years of direct experience working with landowners on legal, real estate, or resource management issues.
- Demonstrated oral communication skills. Must be tactful, professional, and able to maintain confidentiality.
- Demonstrated technical grant-writing ability, and experience with grant management and grant reporting.
- Detail-oriented and well-organized. Ability to balance and prioritize multiple tasks and detailed projects simultaneously.
- Demonstrated ability to work in a self-directed, independent manner, while also working effectively as part of a team.
- Willingness to support all facets of the organization, including fundraising, outreach, and long-range planning.
- Ability to develop and maintain relationships with NRCS to implement ALE and RCPP projects.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite and ArcGIS.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Non-profit or mission-driven professional experience.
- Experience working in a rural western community that is culturally and politically diverse.
- Demonstrated interest in land conservation and environmental issues.
- Knowledge of natural resource values and management, preferably in the Rockies. This includes familiarity and interest in agriculture, wildlife, water, forestry, and/or rangeland.
- Proven ability and experience in developing positive and effective working relationships and partnerships with diverse groups such as agricultural groups, government agencies, private landowners, and resource professionals.
- Experience communicating in public settings, including presenting projects to public agencies or at public meetings.
- Familiarity with land conservation funding sources, especially from government agencies.
- Experience in the development, management, and implementation of annual work plans.
- Willingness to work evenings and weekends on occasion.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively as part of a team, working closely with the staff, committees, and the Board of Directors.

Working Conditions:

- Work from shared office space in Hamilton, with part-time, telecommute options after 6 months.
- Frequent day travel throughout Ravalli County for property visits and partner meetings, including hiking on uneven ground.
- Must have a valid driver's license and be willing to drive in winter conditions.
- This position may include opportunities for overnight travel once or twice a year for professional development.

Basic conditions of employment form the fundamental performance requirements for continued employment. All employees are ambassadors of BRLT and are expected to support and fulfill the organization's mission. All employees, regardless of job title, must demonstrate the following minimum requirements for continued employment. In addition, the employee is responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with all policies and procedures.

- *1) Donor Relationships:* Identify key individual, business, foundation, and partner groups to support the work of the land trust.
- *2) Quality:* Comply with established requirements for job performance methods, procedures, and standards.
- *3) Professional Conduct:* Comply with established employment policies and practices. Maintain confidentiality of client, member/contributor, and employee information. Accept direction and provide direction in a cooperative and positive manner. Willing to work collaboratively in a holistic team environment.
- *4) Personal Conduct:* Engage in personal conduct that is honest, respectful, courteous, and dignified as well as legal, ethical, dependable, and reliable. Demonstrate appropriate dress and personal hygiene.
- *5) Competency:* Develop and maintain skills, knowledge, and abilities required to adequately perform assigned job duties.