

CONSERVATION DIRECTOR

Purpose of the Position: A full-time position to oversee the management of The Escondido Creek Conservancy's conservation lands, ensuring that lands are cared for to a high and uniform standard, per Land Trust Alliance and Habitat Management Plan requirements. The Conservancy currently manages 3,000 acres of protected lands and implements outdoor education programs for North County youth.

Job Duties: The Conservation Director (Director) will provide direction, vision, strategic planning, management, and leadership to the Conservancy's conservation land department. The Director also contributes to the hands-on care of lands.

Desired Skills: The Director must be a strong manager and have successfully managed people and teams. The Director must be an excellent writer and have implemented complex conservation projects such as multi-year grants from state, federal and/or private sources. The Director should have excellent writing skills (including technical writing), organizational and GIS skills, and be versed in the principles of southern California conservation planning, including, but not limited to, the County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan(s), and the regional Management Strategic Plan. The Director should be practiced in creating Habitat Management Plans and PARs for conservation properties and be familiar with preserve level budgeting. Spanish speaking skills are helpful in this position.

Inclusion and equity. The Conservancy recognizes the significance of inclusion and equity, and we are actively working on it and continuing to learn. We are accountable for the ways in which the Conservancy may have unintentionally perpetuated inequities in our community. Going forward, our commitment to inclusion means we connect with the full diversity of people and communities throughout our watershed to seek input that informs our work. We find a place for new ideas and identify how we can respond, within our capacity. We invite everyone to join us through volunteer opportunities and program participation. We work to break down barriers to access that have historically limited participation by some community members. With some of our programs, we have been able to advocate for and facilitate equitable access to nature, environmental education, and empowering outdoors experiences for everyone. We know we have more work to do.

Position responsibilities include the following:

Programmatic Planning and Management

- Refine and implement the Conservancy's land management protocols
- Help the Conservancy define/implement a strategic vision for conservation lands and programs
- Oversee management activities, including annual reporting, of Conservancy-owned/managed properties
- Schedule and supervise necessary contract work; seek out and maintain relationships with contractors
- Work with the Conservancy's volunteer manager to develop programs to train, provide and manage volunteer land stewards on Conservancy-owned lands
- Organize and implement regular land stewardship volunteer events on Conservancy-owned/managed lands
- Interpret and apply state and federal laws that govern habitat management in San Diego to activities on Conservancy lands

- Apply for, update, and maintain necessary agency permits
- Oversee activities associated with initiation of new Conservancy preserves (communication with previous owner and neighbors, estimating costs to manage/PAR, securing entrances, designing and installing signage)

Land Management

- Field work including invasive species removal, trail, and infrastructure maintenance
- Schedule and conduct biological surveys including for sensitive plant and animal species, vegetation community mapping, invasive/exotic species mapping, transecting
- Create GIS maps for use by land team and other Conservancy needs, field data collection
- Ensure regular maintenance of land team assets including tools and truck, trailer
- Rally neighboring land managers to participate in joint efforts to maximize effectiveness
- Coordinate joint efforts with neighboring land managers (ex: invasive species control)
- Tie ongoing land management decision-making to regional goals
- Help the Conservancy manage human uses on Conservancy lands, as appropriate, where compatible with resource protection

Conservation Personnel Leadership

- Direct a team of 3 autonomous Preserve Managers in following Conservancy protocols
- Reviews annual reports, work plans, and other documents produced for Preserves
- Ensures compliance with all laws
- Implements workplace safety protocols and practices
- Supervises the ongoing development of conservation staff, interns, and volunteers
- Define and hire new positions as needed
- Help other land team members identify their goals and reach their dreams!
- Listen! To the land team, other staff members, board members, and community members
- Assist other land team staff members with prioritization of duties

Partnerships

- Connect with other conservation partners in the watershed and with government agencies that oversee wildlife management
- Work closely with the Conservancy's volunteer board members who provide land management and land stewardship; facilitate institutionalization of Conservancy history
- Seek out and participate in regional (City-, Watershed-, and county-wide) biological/ecological data gathering efforts and analysis
- When possible, participate personally or facilitate land team member's participation in local education events (presenting at schools, offering internships and mentorship)
- Facilitate mission-aligned education events (ex: restoration planting) onsite
- Seek out and maintain relationships with neighboring land managers; when possible, streamline joint participation in endeavors including fundraising events, invasive species control efforts

Administration

- Refine, as needed, organizational structures and procedures for land team members
- Review staff member's preserve-level budgeting; develop land department annual budget
- Monitor and manage compliance with annual budgets and grant requirements

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- Oversee acquisition/renewals of permits required for projects and ensure compliance with permits
- Complete or oversee annual biological reporting including Habitat Management Plans
- Implement and maintain systems for filing and documentation of activities on Conservancy lands, including ongoing/maintenance projects as well as special projects
- Write and maintain contract documents with various contractors
- Maintain/improve current database of maps and spatial data in ArcGIS Online/ArcPro for Conservancy land
- Work with the Conservancy's financial officer to track spending, promptly pay contractors, and seek reimbursements for grant expenditures

Funding and Communications

- Share the Conservancy's mission, vision, and rules with members of the public
- Seek out and write grant applications to help fund ongoing land stewardship activities and special projects, editing and assisting grant applications written by other land team members
- Seek out and apply for grant-funding opportunities in concert with neighboring land managers

Continuous Improvement

- Stays current on science and management techniques relating to sensitive species, integrated pest management, climate change and finds ways to incorporate innovative techniques into the Conservancy's operations
- Stays current on mapping technology and opportunities to streamline mapping

Minimum Qualifications: This position is for an experienced professional with at least 5 years of relevant experience in conservation biology, or a related field, and a bachelor's degree or higher. A Master's degree is preferred. The Conservation Director must be able to lift weight and carry out strenuous activities, on their feet, in rough terrain. The Director must maintain a valid driver's license and maintain current vaccinations against COVID-19.

Desired Skills: The Conservation Director must have successfully managed people and written and/or implemented complex conservation projects including multi-year grants from state, federal and/or private sources. The Conservation Director should have excellent writing (including technical writing), organizational and GIS skills, and be well versed in the principles of southern California conservation planning, including, but not limited to, the County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan(s), and the regional Management Strategic Plan. The Conservation Director should be practiced in creating Habitat Management Plans and PARs for conservation properties and be familiar with preserve level budgeting. Spanish speaking skills are helpful in this position.

Reporting: The Conservation Director reports to the Executive Director. The Conservation Director's Direct Reports include three preserve managers. See www.escondidocreek.org for more information.

Compensation and Application: Salary range \$59,000 to \$85,000, depending on experience. The Conservancy provides competitive benefits including 401K matching and payment for mileage. Please send a resume, cover letter, writing samples and references to information@escondidocreek.org. Position will be open until filled. No phone calls please.