SONOMA LAND TRUST
Job Description

Job Title:   Land Acquisition Program Manager (Freshwater Flows)
Reports To:  Land Acquisition Director
Status:     Exempt
Revised:    August 2023

General Duties:

The Land Acquisition Program Manager reports to the Land Acquisition Director with primary responsibilities to advance SLT’s Freshwater Flows Focal Strategy for the Russian River Region. The Program Manager will also share general administrative responsibilities with other land acquisition staff for county-wide project intake and evaluation, acquisition project support, accreditation and staffing decisions. The Manager is expected to have a high skill and confidence set enabling them to be a strong voice for program implementation to audiences both internal and external to SLT.

The Program Manager is primarily responsible for the strategy, planning and implementation of an innovative conservation program for the Russian River Region. Based on the conservation strategies and project priorities resulting from the Russian River Subwatershed Assessment, responsibilities include securing agency support, raising grants and funds for program administration and land acquisition projects, managing all transactional requirements to complete acquisition projects, and coordinating policy issues with multiple public and private conservation partners. The Program Manager will serve as team lead for the Freshwater Flows Strategy with representatives from SLT’s Stewardship, Philanthropy and Community Engagement departments. The Program Manager will also participate in staffing decisions and the hiring process for acquisition team members and provide appropriate supervision to land acquisition staff and consultants for program implementation.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Conservation Planning, Policy Development and Community Participation (30%)

- Implement the conservation goals, strategies and action items for the Freshwater Flows Focal Strategy and the Russian River Subwatershed Assessment.
- Build partnerships with public and private organizations for comprehensive and innovate solutions to the many ecological challenges facing the Russian River watershed.
- Work with SLT’s Public Policy and Funding Program Manager to advance policy and funding programs that support the Freshwater Flows Strategy.
- Lead an inter-departmental team to develop and implement community and landowner engagement strategies that consistently lead to high-quality conservation projects.
• Stay abreast of conservation science developments to inform our ongoing work.

**Land Acquisition Projects (35%)**

- Develop strong rapport and relationships with local landowners and community leaders.
- Supervise and complete all aspects of fee and conservation easement acquisition projects, including landowner contacts, project evaluation, site visits, project budget, negotiation of transaction terms, due diligence, application processing, site visits, and closing. Coordinate project review with SLT staff, real estate professionals (lawyers, appraisers, surveyors, biologists) and appropriate agencies, organizations and stakeholders.
- Provide supervision for land acquisition project management staff working in the Russian River Region.
- Serve as resource for Stewardship staff related to activities on SLT Preserves as well as monitoring and easement enforcement activities on conservation easement properties within the Region.

**Administrative Duties (25%)**

- Manage the screening, evaluation and disposition process for properties proposed for inclusion in the SLT portfolio.
- As a member of the acquisition team, contribute to ensuring that our policies and practices meet current professional standards and accreditation requirements.
- Assist Land Acquisition Director with preparation of acquisition team strategic plans, annual work plans and budgets.
- Track strategic plan progress for acquisition department reporting.

**Fundraising (10%)**

- Collaborate with Public Policy and Funding Manager and Philanthropy team to develop and maintain relationships with public and private funding organizations.
- Secure necessary acquisition funds from public and private sources as needed to prepare conservation plans and implement acquisition projects.
- Make program presentations to SLT donor gatherings that are coordinated by SLT’s Philanthropy team.

**Qualifications and Requirements:**

- At least 10 years of experience in conservation planning and land and water acquisition transactions, or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- The ability to work effectively with a broad range of diverse groups as evidenced by excellent listening and communication skills, balanced and reasoned approaches to problems, ability to inspire trust and confidence, and flexibility and openness to differing points of view.
- Demonstrated excellence in negotiating and closing complex conservation real estate deals.
- Experience in developing and fostering relationships with diverse communities and organizations that support the development and advancement of equity and inclusion.
- Experience in partnership development with non-profit organizations, community groups and government agencies.
- Demonstrated success in securing funding from public agencies, foundations, individuals and other philanthropic sources.
- A working knowledge of nonprofit tax and real estate law; and ability to legal and technical
documents.

- Practical and academic knowledge of natural resource issues (e.g. water, forestry, agriculture, land use, flora and fauna, wetlands restoration, etc.).
- Effective writing skills, including grant applications.
- Skill in public speaking, and ability to represent SLT in a public forum.
- Proficiency with computer applications and office systems. Knowledge of ArcGIS software a plus.
- The ability to work flexible hours including weekends and occasional evenings.

**Schedule, Salary & Benefits:**
Position is full time, 40 hours per week.

Employer contribution to a health insurance plan. Employer contribution to 403(b) retirement plan provided after one year. Vacation, holiday, personal and compensatory leave provided in accordance with the SLT Personnel Policies and Procedures.