

Center for Natural Lands Management



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Land Steward – Orange County California

Reports to: Regional Preserve Manager – South Coast Region

Location: Generally Orange County, CA (Fullerton, San Clemente, Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano), possibly some work locations in neighboring counties

Type: Temporary Full time – 40 hours weekly (1.0 FTE); Non-exempt (hourly)

Compensation: \$24.45 – \$30.00 / hour; with benefits DOE; with benefits, including but not limited to 11 paid holidays annually; three weeks of vacation annually (progressive); sick leave; substantial employer contribution to health insurance plan; dental and vision plans; employer contribution to retirement plan.

Period: Through September 30, 2026 – position may be extended or made permanent depending on funding.

Application Deadline: Open until filled; for the fullest consideration please apply no later than September 1, 2025.

About the Center for Natural Lands Management

Founded in 1990, the Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) has implemented its mission with two guiding principles: first, protecting and managing conservation properties through perpetual legal instruments and second, focusing on conservation lands that support and provide refuge for rare, endangered, and vulnerable species. To fulfill its conservation mission, CNLM not only maintains its current real estate portfolio, but acquires new preserves regularly.

To manage its over 100 preserves (primarily in California, but with several in the states of Washington and Oregon), CNLM hires talented and committed staff who perform all aspects of preserve planning, budgeting, monitoring, management, reporting, and protection. Given the dispersed nature of its preserves throughout California, and in Washington and Oregon, almost all CNLM staff work from home offices — accessing and posting information in a cloud-based system and maintaining core culture through virtual and in-person meetings.

CNLM's preserves vary in size from three to over 25,000 acres and are managed under direct ownership, conservation easements, or management contracts. In Orange County, CNLM owns and/or manages four preserves ranging from 30 to 120 acres in size, all of which have trails open to public access. The preserves were created to protect endangered and threatened species, rare plants, and sensitive habitat. Visit our website, www.CNLM.org, for more information.

CNLM offers competitive salary, paid vacation and sick time, and other financial benefits. Most importantly, we offer the opportunity to work with a team of talented and committed conservation professionals and to achieve a legacy of substantial conservation impact.

Essential Functions

CNLM seeks a Land Steward for conservation work primarily in Orange County. This position has the potential to assist on preserves outside Orange County such as in San Diego, Riverside or Los Angeles counties. The Land Steward's role is primarily to protect CNLM nature preserves and participate in various biological monitoring and management activities, and thus, help fulfill the mission of CNLM. The Land Steward will typically be in the field 70-80% of their time and 20-30% in the office, but this percentage changes throughout the year based on need. The position involves occasionally working in the evenings and early mornings, typically for biological monitoring or patrols. Although infrequent, the position requires a willingness to work on the occasional Saturday or holiday, and at odd or irregular hours —typically a few weeks during February through September when conducting biological monitoring and patrols. The Land Steward will assist with monitoring of biological resources—including vegetation transect surveys, small mammal track-tube monitoring, and California gnatcatcher monitoring— assist with writing annual work plans and reports, and provide general support to the Regional Preserve Manager. In addition, the Land Steward position requires excellent interpersonal skills to communicate with CNLM staff, our conservation partners, volunteers, and the public. The Land Steward should have the ability to travel to work sites independently and work in an outdoor environment with a variety of habitat types and terrain in various weather conditions.

There is a high degree of autonomy and responsibility associated with this position due to CNLM's organizational structure. The Land Steward will work closely with the Regional Preserve Manager to provide workflow management including overseeing projects, organizing and coordination of work tasks, and assuring effective knowledge transfer to staff and volunteers.

Maintenance of a home office is expected and a stipend for this is provided. Communication with supervisors is typically through the use of email and phone; therefore, the position requires home internet access. CNLM will pay the costs of all necessary supplies, materials, and office equipment—including a computer. A shared truck is provided for transportation between preserves.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities will include but not necessarily be limited to:

- Conducting biological monitoring activities, such as general animal and plant surveys, vegetation transects/habitat monitoring, monitoring using wildlife cameras, and focused species surveys (e.g., targeting coastal California gnatcatcher, Pacific pocket mouse, and least Bell's vireo)
- Implementing and overseeing projects as designated by the Regional Preserve Manager
- Coordinating work efforts with CNLM colleagues and volunteers
- Entering, compiling, and analyzing data, including spatial data
- Assisting in the drafting and reviewing of stewardship reports and work plans
- Management of non-native plant species using hand tools, weed whacker, chainsaw, and herbicide
- Assisting in conservation easement monitoring and management
- Patrolling and enforcing preserve and trail rules, interacting with trespassers, and coordinating with local enforcement agencies
- Conducting general land stewardship tasks including fixing fences and maintaining trails
- Interacting with public, conservation partners, easement holders, and other parties who use or work on the preserves

- Travel to preserve and project sites in southern California
- Fulfilling other duties as assigned

Requirements

- A Bachelor's degree with specialization in Ecology, Environmental Studies, or a related field with two or more years of related experience
- Responsible and reliable work ethic
- Strong interest in natural resource conservation, especially small populations of threatened and endangered species
- Some knowledge of California native plant species
- Experience with or willingness to learn the safe and efficient use of pesticides
- Ability to hike through a variety of habitat types and terrain, walking over uneven ground, climbing over obstacles, in variable weather conditions, and carrying equipment to access sites
- Ability to occasionally lift, position, or otherwise move objects weighing up to 50 pounds
- Ability to use GIS applications such as ArcGIS Esri Field Maps or ArcGIS Online
- Working knowledge of Windows XP operating system and PC applications such as Microsoft Office Suite
- Ability to conduct work from a home (or other) office with internet connection
- Excellent communication skills
- Current / valid driver's license with a good driving record
- Applicant must be able to pass a background check (administered after position is offered)

Desirable Qualifications

- Experience working with the general public in a professional capacity
- Experience conducting vegetation, bird or small mammal surveys
- Experience in monitoring, management, or research of natural resources
- Experience operating 4WD vehicles
- Ability to use various power tools including chainsaws, drills, and brush cutters
- Experience with analysis of biological data preferred
- Familiarity using GPS technologies in the field

Working Conditions

- Required to wear CNLM identification, at a minimum, this includes a CNLM hat and shirt (provided)
- Regularly required to hike across uneven ground, through mature scrub to access locations, often while carrying equipment and gear
- Sitting or standing in their home office to complete office tasks, such as data analysis and writing reports
- Communication with supervisors is typically through use of email or telephone
- At commencement of work, the successful applicant is expected to work an average of 40 hours per week. Schedule and work days may vary over time.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature of the work being performed by people assigned to this work. This is not an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities. CNLM management reserves the right to amend and change responsibilities to meet business and organizational needs, as necessary.

CNLM is an Equal Opportunity employer. Personnel are chosen on the basis of ability without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation, in accordance with federal and state law.

This position description does not constitute an employment agreement between the CNLM and the employee and is subject to change by CNLM as the needs of the CNLM and requirements of the job change.

TO APPLY:

Qualified applicants must provide a letter of interest, a detailed resumé or CV, and contact information (but no letters of support, please) for those who could supply references for the applicant, if and when appropriate.

All applications will be acknowledged.

Electronic submissions strongly preferred.

Email or mail these materials to:

OCLS@cnlm.org

Center for Natural Lands Management
27258 Via Industria, Suite B
Temecula, CA 92590