

Center for Natural Lands Management

POSITION DESCRIPTION



Preserve Manager – Coachella Valley

Reports to: Regional Preserve Manager – Riverside County Region

Location: Coachella Valley, Central Riverside County (location of CNLM preserves in this portfolio)

Position: Permanent / Full-time (1.0 FTE); Exempt (Salaried)

Compensation: **\$68,640,- \$78,640** (\$74,320.48 - \$84,320.48 including home office and phone stipends) 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

Application deadline: The position is open until filled but for best consideration submission of applications by June 24, 2025, is recommended

Position Summary and General Duties

The Preserve Manager – Coachella Valley (Preserve Manager) will be responsible for managing a portfolio of preserves with the anchor preserve being the Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve which is owned by Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM). This 880-acre Preserve was established primarily for the protection and conservation of the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard and desert pupfish. A current focus for stewardship staff is the protection of the onsite desert pupfish and its recently restored habitat that is challenged with threats including variable and perhaps dwindling water supply, invasive plant species, and the ever-present risk of the introduction of various domestic or non-native taxa by the public.

Preserve habitats include desert scrub, desert palm oases, desert wetlands, and desert sand dunes. This Preserve also offers public opportunities for walking on trails and natural resource education via informative signs, docent-led tours, and interactions with staff and volunteers onsite. Amenities to support staff, volunteers, and the visiting public include restrooms, trails, educational kiosks, and some buildings for staff/volunteer use. Preserve Manager responsibilities at this Preserve will be largely driven by seasonal variation in natural resources (monitoring, weed control), and in public visitation (November through March being peak visitor season).

In addition to this anchor preserve, the portfolio includes two other preserves that are owned and/or managed by CNLM (Dos Palmas, Palm Canyon Wash) and two

preserves that CNLM protects with conservation easements but does not manage (CVAG- I10 and Smoke Tree Ranch Preserves). Other significant species within the portfolio include Coachella Valley milkvetch, Casey's June beetle, and Ridgeway's clapper rail.

This position provides an opportunity for the successful applicant to make a significant and direct contribution to conservation of precious desert environments and their resident species. The dramatically beautiful, ever-changing, and sometimes harsh desert environment requires a well-informed commitment to stewardship. As such, we require prior experience working in a desert environment in order to successfully function at the level needed in this position. The Preserve Manager will be responsible for biological monitoring, vegetation management, and general management of visitor services.

The Preserve Manager is the onsite supervisor for CNLM staff, docents, and volunteers. The Preserve Manager will provide resource management in accordance with the conservation values and any regulatory (e.g., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) requirements of the Preserve, CNLM's stewardship standards and practices (which also reflect and exceed Land Trust Alliance standards), and the preserve-specific management plans.

The position of Preserve Manager requires maintenance of a home office for which CNLM provides a stipend. A company vehicle may be provided at management's discretion. There is a considerable degree of autonomy (and responsibility) associated with the position because of CNLM's organizational structure which focuses on preserve management rather than high levels of administration and supervision. In addition to the management of the Preserve, the Preserve Manager will contribute to CNLM's expertise and documentation of 'best management practices' for managing rare and protected plant and animal species. The Preserve Manager will participate in internal and external stewardship and conservation science events and participate in the acquisition of new preserves as needed.

About CNLM

The Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, created in 1990, whose mission is the perpetual stewardship of natural and created conservation lands, sensitive species, and their resident ecosystems. Conservation stewardship activities are practiced on preserves in California, Oregon, and Washington. CNLM currently has a preserve portfolio of over 100 preserves that combined represent more than 75,000 acres of high conservation value.

The majority (>90) of CNLM's preserves are in California, encompassing over 70,000 acres throughout the state, with new preserves added intermittently. The preserves vary in size from three to thousands of acres and are managed under direct ownership, conservation easements, or management contracts. For purposes of organizational structure and oversight, CNLM's California preserves are organized into five regions: Northern California, Central California, South Coast, Riverside County, and San Diego

County.

Central to CNLM's mission and fundamental to its success are the principles of rigorous cost estimation for managing conservation areas in perpetuity and application of appropriate scientific information for conservation and restoration. CNLM staff developed the iconic "PAR" software and made it available (now through subscription to the app) to the conservation community to assist with determination of perpetual stewardship costs.

CNLM is culturally significant in its focus on rare and vulnerable species, small populations, and sensitive habitats. Such responsibilities require stewardship staff with a strong background in natural sciences, the ability to apply principles from conservation biology with experienced discretion, and a passion for contributing to conservation success through long-term, on-the-ground, management. To fulfill its conservation mission, CNLM has a well-established practice of selecting and investing in excellent staff.

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.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide stewardship and adaptive management for the portfolio of preserves including planning, management, enhancement, (biological and other – e.g., weather, hydrological) monitoring, reporting, budget preparation and management, and other activities
- Review monitoring protocols, analyze and interpret the results of monitoring activities, and incorporate this information into management activities and plans
- Develop and maintain a permanent record of preserve activities, decisions taken, and preserve conditions
- Participate in planning and community meetings as a representative of CNLM and lead outreach as needed – especially with neighboring landowners, police and fire departments, regulatory and other natural resource agencies and entities, and sovereign tribes, as appropriate
- Prepare and implement annual work plans, budgets, and reports
- Identify any additional (beyond provided budget and work plan) important activities, develop plans, and participate in efforts to acquire additional resources

- Manage and monitor pupfish population and aquatic conditions at Simone Pond (may involve coordination with permitted biologists/regulatory agency personnel)
- Participate in reviewing requested access for research on the CNLM preserve portfolio in the Coachella Valley, provide recommendations to researchers to improve methods or protect species, oversee onsite researchers as needed
- Monitor occurrences and populations of native, listed, and nonnative species of plants and animals.
- Implement vegetation treatment activities for high-priority nonnative invasive plant species
- Support public visitor services by supervising and recruiting, as needed, volunteer corps; provide educational materials and opportunities
- Maintain visitor infrastructure, including composting toilets, kiosks, trails, fences and gates, and signs
- Maintain other preserve infrastructure, including buildings, wells, and septic system
- Supervise onsite CNLM staff, docents, RV hosts, and volunteers
- Conduct easement compliance monitoring on properties where CNLM holds conservation easements
- Participate in acquiring new CNLM preserves which includes conducting PAR (Property Analysis Record) analyses on new properties and conducting associated field surveys and due diligence as needed
- Fulfill other duties as assigned .

REQUIREMENTS

- Master of Science (or Arts) degree (strongly preferred) in Natural Resource Management, Biology, Wildlife Ecology, Range Ecology, Botany, or related field OR – Bachelor of Science or Arts degree with strong emphasis in biology-related discipline and related work experience
- Experience working in a desert environment is required.
- Relevant experience in land stewardship, including application of good management practices, restoration, and management of rare or fragile species; at least three years of such experience is desirable
- Experience in management of desert ecosystems
- Experience in supervising staff and/or volunteers, highly desirable

- Ability to interact with the public in a professional manner and use discretion appropriately in the control of the visiting public and enforcement of public use protocols
- Knowledge—identification, life history characteristics, management—of southern California native plants is highly desirable
- Excellent communication skills; ability to write professional stewardship-related plans, reports, and other documents
- Demonstrated effectiveness in working collaboratively and professionally with committees and the public
- Proven self-starter, able to work efficiently and effectively with minimal supervision, and able to appropriately use initiative to meet habitat management goals; seeking advice and policy guidance when needed and appropriate
- Able to prepare annual budgets and manage Preserve activities within the budget
- Working knowledge of GIS and GPS technologies and associated software and ability to use these technologies effectively
- Working knowledge of Windows operating systems and PC applications such as Microsoft Office Suite; familiarity with statistical analyses and associated software is desirable
- Possession and maintenance of a valid driver's license and safe driving record
- Understanding of basic statistical principles for designing monitoring protocols, simple field trials, and analyzing resulting data is highly desirable
- Some familiarity with environmental legislation and codes such as the California and Federal Endangered Species Acts is desirable and ability to work with appropriate discretion in a context involving listed species and regulatory requirements
- Able to structure time effectively, set priorities, and meet deadlines
- Ability to operate from a home office, to provide a safe location for a CNLM vehicle if one is provided, and to make efficient use of the limited funds available for transportation in traveling to/from the Preserve and conducting other work-related responsibilities

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Regularly required to hike through a variety of habitat types and terrain, walking over uneven ground, climbing over obstacles, and accessing remote locations; occasionally carrying equipment/gear

- Outdoor working conditions may involve seasonal extremes in temperature (heat) and wind; mitigated with selecting times of day for work (typically, extreme heat may be present ~ six months of the year; wind for ~ three months of the year)
- Dramatic seasonal differences – both for weather/natural resources and public visitation; intensity as busy seasons for both overlap
- Involves interaction with the visiting public – and trespass (local to international)
- Regularly sits or stands at a desk or computer workstation
- Regularly required to operate a CNLM vehicle to conduct stewardship responsibilities (this may include a 4x4 truck or an all-terrain vehicle (ATV))
- Works in an environment that involves overseeing contractors, working closely with other CNLM staff, managing public involvement, interacting with regulatory agencies
- Some evening, holiday, and weekend responsibilities may be required, including travel. Weekend responsibilities may be more likely during the peak visitor season (November through March)
- Timing of work may be related to biological windows, fiscal deadlines, Board meetings, legal commitments, or other defining timeframes. As such, periods of heavy workload may occur.
- Involves supervision of other staff, volunteers, and docents and coordination of work with other CNLM staff
- Occasionally may be required to use or supervise the use of pesticides and/or other chemical substances (Required to participate in annual CNLM pesticide safety training)
- Occasionally required to use or supervise the use of powered equipment such as weed trimmers and chainsaws and hand tools such as t-post pounders, saws, and McLeod rake and hoe
- Occasionally lifts, positions, or otherwise move objects weighing up to 50 pounds.

The working conditions described here are representative in part of those that will be encountered by an employee in this position. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to successfully function in these working conditions.

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 based on 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 **detailed letter of interest**, a **detailed resumé**, and **two examples** of written communication for which the applicant was the sole or senior author (such as a report or publication).

Electronic submissions are highly preferred.

Email these materials to: careers-cvpm@cnlm.org

Or mail to: Center for Natural Lands Management
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Temecula, CA 92590