

# Center for Natural Lands Management

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## POSITION DESCRIPTION



Reports to: San Diego Regional Preserve Manager (currently vacant);  
Director of Conservation Science and Stewardship (at present)

Location: San Diego County (location of preserves)

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: Open until filled, but for fullest consideration please apply no later than June 9, 2025.

## Position Summary and General Duties

The Preserve Manager – San Diego will be responsible for managing a portfolio of CNLM preserves that are near or within the City of Carlsbad in San Diego County that have been permanently protected for conservation purposes. The portfolio of preserves is generally framed as the Rancho La Costa network of preserves (Preserves) and includes La Costa Villages, Elfin Forest, Meadowlark, University Commons, Cassia, Nelson, Denk Mountain, Copper Creek, and Luchia preserves. The Preserve Manager – San Diego will also play a role in managing a set of City of Carlsbad-owned preserves that CNLM manages under contract. The Preserve Manager will—as part of the CNLM San Diego conservation teamwork with other CNLM staff on some other preserves as reasonable for best effect and efficiency.

The Preserves include habitat types such as coastal sage scrub, southern maritime chaparral, southern willow scrub, southern mixed chaparral, perennial and annual grasslands, and coast live oak woodland. The species that command the stewardship focus on these preserves include coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, Del Mar manzanita, San Diego thornmint, Orcutt's hazardia, Orcutt's brodiaea, and thread-leaved brodiaea. (See CNLM website for more information on these preserves).

CNLM has a deep conservation history in San Diego County with some of our first preserve acquisitions here as well as there being more CNLM preserves in San Diego County than in any other county in California. The number of CNLM preserves is also an indicator of the rich diversity in species encountered and the opportunity to contribute significantly to wildlife corridors, research on particular species of concern, and climate resilience considerations. The new Preserve Manager will join the San Diego conservation team that currently includes three other preserve managers, a land steward, and rangers. The Preserve Manager will be responsible for managing the Preserves at both landscape and population levels. Stewardship activities include occasional restoration or enhancement activities; integrated pest management including chemical control of exotics if needed and/or mechanical control; biological monitoring; revising management plans; preparing annual budgets, work plans, and reports; and active engagement of regulatory agency personnel and other collaborators and contractors needed for specialized services. Public trails on some of the Preserves implies engagement of the public and management of any trail-related issues.

The Preserve Manager will provide resource management in accordance with the conservation values and regulatory requirements of the Preserves, CNLM's stewardship standards and practices (which also reflect and exceed Land Trust Accreditation Commission standards), and the preserve-specific

management plans. This position 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 this 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 this portfolio of preserves, 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 as needed, participate in the acquisition of new preserves.

## **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.

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 for and investing in excellent staff.

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 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.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Provide stewardship for a portfolio of CNLM preserves in San Diego County including planning, management, enhancement, monitoring, reporting, budgeting, and other activities
- Participating in managing a set of City of Carlsbad preserves under contract
- Supervise ranger(s) and land steward(s) (performance management, development, scheduling, time-sheet approval, expense report approval, etc.)
- Monitor and map occurrences and populations of native, listed, and exotic species of plants and animals
- Carry out specific preserve management activities such as vegetation management (could include trimming, pulling, or applying pesticides to non-native vegetation), maintaining and repairing fences and posting signs, patrolling and enforcement (of easement conditions), and preparing scopes of work and contracts for specific services if required for appropriate stewardship and as allowed by preserve budgets
- 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, home-owners associations, police and fire departments, volunteer organizations, recreational groups, and regulatory and other natural resource agencies and entities, as appropriate
- Manage and engage the public, as needed, especially with respect to use and maintenance of trails on CNLM preserves and during staff-led volunteer events
- 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
- Work collaboratively, productively, and professionally with other CNLM staff, natural resources agencies, consultants, and other conservation organizations
- 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 compelling evidence of equivalent experience and self-education that would result in understanding of core principles and ability to use statistical, preserve design, ecological, and genetic principles in preserve stewardship and decision-making
- 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 coastal sage scrub habitats is desirable
- Strong background—from formal education, experience, or a combination—in ecology, with an emphasis in plant and/or wildlife biology or range management, is highly desirable
- Knowledge—identification, life history characteristics, management—of southern California native plants is highly desirable
- Supervisory and staff leadership experience is desirable
- Experience managing and working with volunteers
- Excellent communication skills; ability to write professional stewardship-related plans, reports, and other documents
- Demonstrated effectiveness in working collaboratively and professionally at public and client meetings

- Experience and effective approach in communicating with neighboring landowners and the public regarding protection and management of CNLM preserves
- 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 them
- Able to structure time effectively 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 knowledge of GIS and GPS technologies (ArcGIS Pro, ArcGIS Online, Field Maps) and associated software and a working knowledge of Windows operating systems and PC applications such as Microsoft Office Suite
- 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 using associated software is highly desirable
- Familiarity with federal, state, and local environmental legislation and codes such as the California and Federal Endangered Species Acts and ability to work with appropriate discretion in a context involving listed species and regulatory requirements
- Possession of US Fish and Wildlife Service permit to monitor any of the listed wildlife species found on the preserves (coastal California gnatcatcher) or the ability to quickly acquire the skills and experience that would lead to acquiring such a permit is desirable
- Able to quickly learn and effectively use the PAR (Property Analysis Record) software, including the due diligence required for proper application of this financial tool.

## **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
- 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))
- Frequently works in an environment that involves overseeing contractors, working closely with other CNLM staff, managing public involvement, negotiating projects with regulatory agencies and others
- Some evening and weekend responsibilities may be required, including travel
- 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.

- May involve supervision of other staff 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
- Occasionally required to use or supervise the use of powered equipment such as weed trimmers and chain saws
- Occasionally lifts, positions, or otherwise moves 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.

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*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.*

***Position open until filled***

**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 strongly preferred.**

Email these materials to: [careers-sdpm@cnlm.org](mailto:careers-sdpm@cnlm.org)

Or mail to: Center for Natural Lands Management  
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