



About Us

The Western New York Land Conservancy is a regional, non-profit land trust dedicated to permanently protecting land with significant conservation value for future generations. Our vision is a future where open spaces, working lands, wildlife habitats, and scenic landscapes are cherished and safeguarded as part of Western New York's natural heritage. To date, we have helped protect nearly 8,000 acres across the region. Learn more at www.wnylc.org.

Position Overview

Position Title: Conservation Easement Steward

Reports To: Stewardship Director

Employment Type: Non-exempt, Full-Time, Hourly (\$25/hour)

Location: Kenneglenn Office, Wales, NY (Hybrid)

Start Date: As soon as possible

The Conservation Easement Steward is responsible for planning, executing, and reporting on the Land Conservancy's annual monitoring program. This program ensures compliance with Land Trust Alliance standards, requiring all Land Conservancy properties to be monitored in person at least once annually per year. The Steward is also responsible for identifying and helping the Stewardship Director enforce violations of conservation easements and nature preserve regulations.

This is a field-focused role that requires working outdoors in all weather conditions and seasons in remote locations. The ideal candidate should be comfortable with physically demanding, independent work and have strong organizational and communication skills. In addition to monitoring conservation easements, the Steward will assist with preserve management, including trail building, maintenance, volunteer events, and rule enforcement, to enhance and protect the Land Conservancy's natural areas.

Key Responsibilities

- Conduct annual monitoring of assigned conservation easements and preserves, ensuring compliance with land trust alliance requirements
- Document field visits using GPS tools and Landscape Conservation Software.
- Preparing, filing, and organizing monitoring reports and other site visit documentation
- Communicate with landowners and neighbors before and after monitoring visits via phone, email, and written letters.
- Investigate and address violations, coordinating with the Stewardship Director on enforcement actions.

- Draft landowner correspondence, including notices regarding violations, information for neighbors, outreach materials, or stewardship concerns.
 - Assist with municipal tax exemption renewals for fee properties.
 - Participate in trail building, recreation management, and general preserve maintenance, including:
 - Trail construction
 - Hazard tree evaluation and clearing blowdowns
 - Boundary marking and rule enforcement
 - Installation of recreation infrastructure (e.g., kiosks, signage, bog bridges, parking lot lines etc.)
 - Support stewardship-related volunteer events, helping to lead groups and coordinate activities.
 - Maintain and organize stewardship tools and equipment, ensuring readiness for fieldwork.
 - Occasionally assist the Restoration Ecologist with restoration activities, such as planting and invasive species management.
 - Other duties as assigned
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Preferred Qualifications

To ensure success in this role, the ideal candidate will have:

- **Education:** A bachelor's degree in ecology, natural resource management, biology, outdoor recreation, or a related field (or equivalent experience).
- **Field Experience:** Prior experience in conservation, forest ecology, land management, recreation, or land stewardship activities.
- **Technical Skills:**
 - Ability to navigate using maps, GPS, and GIS tools.
 - Strong documentation skills, including field notes and report writing.
 - Basic knowledge of native and invasive plant species as well as general ecological principles.
- **Project & Landowner Relations:**
 - Comfort communicating with easement landowners, volunteers, and the public.
 - Ability to enforce nature preserve rules professionally.
- **Physical Requirements:**
 - Comfort with physically demanding work including the ability to lift 50 lbs and work in all types of weather and field conditions across four seasons.
 - Comfort working alone in remote locations for extended periods.
- **Equipment & Safety:**
 - Experience with chainsaws, hand tools, and basic trail maintenance equipment (or willingness to learn).
 - A driver's license and reliable personal vehicle for travel throughout the eight counties of WNY.
 - A personal cell phone for fieldwork communication and navigation.
- **Other Skills:**

- Strong organizational, problem-solving, and time-management skills.
- Experience leading volunteer groups or stewardship projects preferred.

Benefits

The Land Conservancy offers competitive and progressive benefits including but not limited to:

- Comprehensive health coverage
- Generous vacation time
- A 37.5-hour work week
- 401k retirement plan with up to 4% employer match
- Sabbatical leave every seven years of employment, earn up to a two-month paid sabbatical

This position offers a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the conservation and restoration of Western New York's most ecologically significant landscapes. If you have a passion for protecting natural habitats and farmland, engaging communities, and advancing conservation, we encourage you to apply!

To Apply

Please submit a single PDF that includes a cover letter, resume, and three references with "Conservation Easement Steward" in the subject to jobs@wnylc.org. Applications are only accepted electronically. No phone calls, please. The WNY Land Conservancy is accepting applications until the position is filled.

The WNY Land Conservancy is an equal-opportunity employer and is committed to enhancing diversity and inclusion in our organization and in land conservation. Multiple perspectives and experiences help strengthen our work as an organization and enhance our relevance throughout communities currently underrepresented in the land conservation sector. People of color, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply.