

Conservation Steward Position Description

POSITION SUMMARY

The Conservation Steward works with members of the Conservation Team to further the mission of the Grand Traverse Conservation District (GTCD) by leading work conducted on the over 2,500 acres of parklands managed by the District. Primary responsibilities include the development and implementation of annual work plans, trail and parkland maintenance, implementation of conservation and restoration projects, obtaining permits, reporting and grant writing, managing contractors, partnership development, and community engagement. The Conservation Steward will work closely with GTCD staff, and reports to the Director of Conservation.

Reports to: Director of Conservation

Supervises: Volunteers

Works with: Conservation Team, Education Team, Agricultural Team, and Volunteers

External Stakeholders: Municipalities landowners, park users, park neighbors, volunteers, and partner organizations

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develops and implements annual work plans, obtains necessary permits, easements, and approvals for projects on contracted properties and within the Grand Traverse Region
- Assists in the development of annual budgets with contracted partners
- Coordinates and manages restoration projects on managed parklands and within the Boardman River Watershed and Grand Traverse Region
- Coordinates in the monitoring and maintenance of managed parklands to ensure safe and accessible recreational experiences for users
- Plans and uses appropriate materials, labor, and contractors as necessary for project completion and success
- Often leads volunteers, service organizations, and school groups in field work activities
- Researches and applies to grant opportunities for the District and its managed parklands to support conservation and restoration efforts
- Manages citizen advisory committees for contracted properties, includes preparing agendas, meeting notes, correspondence and leading meetings
- Provides regular reporting for the District and its partners
- Develops maps, wayfinding and interpretive signage using tools such as ArcPro
- Promotes and implements best management practices for wildlife related efforts to ensure the safety of wildlife
- Collaborates closely with GTCD staff, organizational partners and contracted partners to achieve conservation and recreation improvements in the region

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

Formal Education or Equivalence:

- Undergraduate degree in Ecology, Biology, Conservation, Natural Resources, Wildlife, Forestry, Environmental Sciences, Fisheries or a related field.

Preferred Experience:

- Minimum of three years of professional natural resources management experience, including field work or trail work
- Experience with invasive species identification, treatment, or removal
- Knowledge of local trees, shrubs and forbs of the Northern Michigan region
- Knowledge and understanding of natural resources ecosystem processes of the Northern Michigan region
- Knowledge and understanding of watershed management and fresh water resources management in the Great Lakes region
- Experience with conducting or planning restoration activities such as: streambank erosion mitigation, forest restoration, native forbs and flower planting
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including public speaking, written reporting, and leading meetings
- Grant writing and grant management experience of any level
- Experience with motor powered tools such as mowers, chainsaws, blowers
- Experience with hand tools and construction equipment

Desired Skills:

- Strong organizational and operational skills, including strong project management skills
- Effective team member and collaborative partner
- Adaptable and able to effectively and efficiently problem solve
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite and Google Workspace
- Must be able and willing to work efficiently outdoors in varying weather conditions and terrain throughout the year
- Experience with hauling a trailer

Other

- Able to work flexible hours
- Must maintain a valid driver's license
- Must be at least 18 years of age

WORKING CONDITIONS

GTCD's offices are located at the Boardman River Nature Center in Traverse City, Michigan. The Conservation Steward will frequently be in the field, which may involve traversing uneven, boggy, rocky, and submerged terrain in wide ranges of air temperatures and weather conditions and may require lifting equipment and materials of up to 80 pounds. The Conservation Steward will frequently be using tools and power equipment that will require use of proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). *This position is primarily field based in spring, summer and fall, with some field work required in the winter. Employee must be able to perform all job duties with or without reasonable accommodation.*

COMPENSATION

- \$48,000 – \$51,000 salaried, full-time, 40 hrs/week, FLSA exempt. *Starting salary based on experience.*
- Benefits include: 18 days paid time off plus holidays, retirement plan provided by Michigan's Municipal Employees' Retirement System (MERS) , HSA contributions, comprehensive health, vision and dental insurance.

PREFERRED START DATE: June 1, 2025

TO APPLY

Please email completed Resume and Cover Letter in PDF format to Sara Vaughan, Director of Conservation at svaughan@gtcd.org. No calls please. The application can be found on the GTCD website at www.natureiscalling.org/about/employment.

Applications will be accepted from April 1, 2025 – May 1, 2025

The Grand Traverse Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate in employment, promotions, or compensation on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, disability status, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.