



TITLE: Conservation Technician **POSITION TYPE:** Full-time non-Exempt (40 Hours/Week)
LOCATION: Bedford Hills, New York **REPORTING TO:** Preserve Manager
Primarily field-based

BACKGROUND:

Westchester Land Trust (WLT) is a conservation organization dedicated to preserving and restoring natural landscapes to benefit the communities we serve. We work with public and private partners to protect land in perpetuity in Westchester and eastern Putnam counties—a densely populated region under persistent threat from the pressures of development. WLT has protected more than 9,660 acres of open space. We work across urban, suburban, and exurban areas to promote environmental stewardship, land preservation, and connections to nature. More than 1,360 acres of land are owned by the organization across a preserve network of 34 properties, many of which are free and open to the public year-round.

WLT is committed to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable culture of care while expanding the reach and impact of our programs through innovative partnerships, and impactful land conservation and stewardship. As a result, we are adjusting our organizational systems, structures, and policies to address opportunities for growth, and to expand spaces in our organizational culture for those who have not been historically included. WLT is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status. Diverse candidates and candidates with nontraditional backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Overview

Visiting Westchester Land Trust's preserves are the most common way for people to engage with our mission to protect and restore our community landscapes. Our culture of care calls for us to care for both our land and the communities we serve, and the Conservation Technician is integral to that calling. With a strong focus on visitor experience and habitat management, the position works with a small professional stewardship team and offers exposure to land conservation, nonprofit operations, and the opportunity to develop practical field skills.

Work Locations

Approximately 75% of the work is outdoors at our network of 34 preserves across Westchester and eastern Putnam counties. When in the field, this position may require situational awareness and working in variable weather conditions under physically demanding circumstances.

About 25% of the work is office-based and includes ArcGIS, reporting, trainings, and meetings. Indoor work may be at the WLT office or at a remote location consistent with WLT's remote work policy.

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BEDFORD HILLS, NY 10507

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Visitor Experience and Habitat Management (85%)

- Provide a safe, welcoming, and enjoyable visitor experience at preserves through timely monitoring and maintenance of preserve assets like signs and kiosks, parking areas, trails, and bridges.
- Conduct annual preserve monitoring and reporting, including inspection of property boundaries. Identify and document encroachments and work to resolve them with the Preserve Manager and Vice President of Conservation.
- Assist with property boundary surveys.
- Continue our culture of care through the modification/construction of trails, data collection, and preserve/trail mapping to improve access to nature.
- Care for WLT's preserves as model properties for habitat management, including establishing and managing ecosystem restoration areas. This includes but is not limited to constructing and maintaining deer fencing, invasive species management, and installing and maintaining native plantings.
- Maintain accurate, timely documentation of field work through field reports, photos and video, and maps.
- Prepare GIS maps for land protection, habitat management, presentations, and documentation.
- Manage the day-to-day use and maintenance of stewardship tools and equipment.

Community Engagement and Relationship Building (10%)

- Foster community support by nurturing relationships with school, corporate, and community groups. Assist with volunteer events and engage with stewardship volunteers of all ages and abilities on visitor experience and habitat improvement projects; educational programming; and meeting participation.
- Generate story narratives, photos, videos, and maps and collect data to support messaging for social media, newsletters, and other brand collateral.

Organizational Capacity (5%)

- Maintain compliance with Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices.
- Meaningfully contribute to Westchester Land Trust's culture of care for people and land.
- Assist WLT staff with outreach, education, and fundraising events as needed.
- Support WLT staff with other projects as needed.

SKILLS and QUALIFICATIONS:

- High school or college graduate with strong interest in land management, ecology, environmental science, recreation management, or related field. ***Relevant experience or nontraditional training may be accepted in place of academic degrees.***
- Ability to prioritize safety and situational awareness in the field.
- Ability to identify common native and invasive plants is strongly preferred.
- Basic landscaping and carpentry experience, or the willingness to learn and master, using hand tools and power equipment (i.e., chainsaws, trimmers, hand drills, etc.).
- Trail maintenance or building experience is a definite plus.

- Requires considerable physical exertion and/or muscular strain including hiking for several miles alone over uneven, wooded, and wet terrain; standing, bending, twisting, lifting, and pushing/pulling.
- Proficiency in GIS data collection and management and using ArcGIS (ESRI), Microsoft Office, and Adobe products.
- Frequent travel within WLT's mission area; a valid driver's license is required.
- Ability to work some evenings and weekends.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- Enthusiasm and dedication for conservation. Prior experience with land stewardship or closely related activities preferred.
- Robust work ethic and ability to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Strong interpersonal skills with interest in engaging with the public.
- Problem solver adaptable to changing environments, conditions, a fast-paced work environment, and differing perspectives.
- A sense of humor.

WLT is committed to cultivating a staff that is representative of the communities we serve. We are open to the possibility that a great candidate for this job may not precisely meet all the above criteria; if you believe you're the right person for this job, we encourage you to apply.

SALARY and BENEFITS:

Compensation for entry-level positions at Westchester Land Trust ranges from \$50,000 to \$55,000, based on experience. Competitive benefit package includes health insurance, retirement plan/employer match, 12 paid holidays, and generous PTO.

TO APPLY:

Send resume and cover letter to info@westchesterlandtrust.org.

Your cover letter should answer the following: *Describe your connection to conservation. What strategies do you use to approach and overcome challenges, and how might you apply a similar approach in this role?*

No phone calls or emails, please. Applicants will receive a notification to confirm receipt of their application. Notifications will be sent on a weekly basis. Successful candidates will be invited for an interview. Applications without a cover letter **will not be reviewed**. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Westchester Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer and acts in accordance with applicable laws in all of our hiring and employment practices.