



Westchester Land Trust

Job Title:	Conservation Apprentice	Position Type:	Part-time, Temporary, Non-Exempt
Location:	Bedford Hills NY	Reporting To:	Preserve Manager

About Westchester Land Trust

Westchester Land Trust (WLT) is the leading land conservation organization prioritizing Westchester County and eastern Putnam County. Founded in 1988, WLT was one of the first land trusts in the nation to be accredited through the independent Land Trust Accreditation Commission. WLT has protected more than 9,250 acres across 217 conservation easements and preserves. We have a professional staff of 12 and work together as a team to achieve WLT's mission to protect and to steward our region's priority conservation lands.

Westchester Land Trust is committed to persistent learning, educating, and training about race, bias, and systemic racism. We are proactively adjusting our organizational systems, structures, and policies to increase equity, address opportunities for growth, and expand the spaces in our organizational culture for those who have not been historically included. Westchester Land Trust is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be 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

Westchester Land Trust's Conservation Apprenticeship program is designed to provide high school graduates and college students an authentic paid experience to explore and pursue careers in conservation. In particular, the program focuses on welcoming young people who may otherwise feel excluded from conservation work due to race, socioeconomic status, and geography.

The broad goals of the Conservation Apprenticeship are to:

- Introduce Apprentices to the nonprofit conservation sector, and land trusts specifically.
- Practice communication skills, which may include professional presentations, reports, video, and social media.
- Build leadership skills by supervising volunteer events and coordinating youth work crews on our preserves.
- Develop critical thinking and project management skills through completion of a final project.

For 2024, Westchester Land Trust is seeking three passionate high school graduates or college students with field or outdoor education experience. Students with experience working in crews to accomplish stewardship projects, such as Groundwork Hudson Valley's Green Team, or similar field-based experiences, are especially encouraged to apply.

Work will primarily focus on land stewardship (trail maintenance, invasive species management, meadow and forest restoration, and our organic farm) under the mentorship of the WLT Preserve Manager and Conservation Technician. Additionally, Apprentices will shadow several WLT staff responsible for other aspects of WLT's work, such as urban conservation, land protection, communications, and fundraising.



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In 2024, the Apprentices will focus on implementing Westchester Land Trust's new Forest Health Initiative. This initiative is an ambitious landscape-scale approach to forest restoration. Much of the work will be centered on removing invasive species, promoting natural regeneration through deer enclosures and tree tubing, maintaining restoration sites, and creating GIS maps of forest stands.

Additional work will include visitor experience and accessibility improvements at preserves, field-based and office-based work at Sugar Hill Farm, and supporting our urban engagement programs.

Work Locations

Field/Outdoors

Most of the work is outdoors at Westchester Land Trust's nature preserves throughout Westchester and eastern Putnam counties.

Indoors

Plan to report to the office every morning. Office space will be provided at our headquarters in Bedford Hills, NY. Indoor work includes research and report writing, attending pertinent staff meetings, and training, and shadowing WLT staff from the development, administrative, and land protection departments.

Duties and Responsibilities

Goal: Develop a professional understanding of land management.

- Implement forest health improvements.
- Assist in trail mowing and maintenance.
- Efficiently identify and remove invasive plants.
- Maintain and help develop ecological restoration projects.
- Engage with preserve hikers and neighbors.
- Help lead volunteer or educational programs and events.
- Engage with WLT's urban conservation work.
- Learn about the different roles and responsibilities of land trust staff.
- Complete and present a final project with guidance from the WLT preserve manager.
- Produce photos and written content to support WLT communications, including social media, newsletters, and other outreach material.
- Assist WLT staff with other projects as needed.

Requirements

- High school graduate or college student with strong interest in land management, ecology, botany, horticulture, sustainable agriculture, environmental education, recreation management, or related field.
- Enthusiasm and dedication to environmental conservation.
- Support for the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in the field of conservation.
- Experience with land stewardship or transferrable activities.



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- Ability to successfully complete projects in field conditions under tight timelines.
- Interest in learning and quickly becoming proficient in new skills.
- Comfort working both independently and on teams.
- Willingness to prioritize safety and situational awareness in the field.
- Facility in communicating with people of all ages and backgrounds.

Other Requirements

- Ability to walk several miles per day over rough terrain in all weather conditions.
- Willingness to learn to safely use power equipment like weed whackers and hand drills.
- Candidates should be at least 18 years of age by the start of the Apprenticeship.

Compensation

Pay

\$21/hour, 32 hours per week (Monday through Thursday).

Job Term

9 weeks, roughly mid-June 2024 through mid-August 2024.

To Apply

Please send cover letter and resume to info@westchesterlandtrust.org. The cover letter should focus on the two questions below:

- (1) Why are you interested in a career in conservation, and
- (2) What is an example from your life of working on a team to accomplish a goal?

No phone calls please. Applications without a cover letter will not be reviewed. Applications will be accepted until the positions are filled. Candidates selected for interviews will be notified.

WLT encourages candidates to apply even if they do not feel that they fulfill all the requirements of the position.

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

Date: 3/1/2024