

Stewardship Director Position Description

Full-Time Position with Benefits

Shirley Heinze Land Trust (SHLT) protects and manages 4,000 acres in Lake, Porter, LaPorte, St. Joseph, Marshall, and Starke Counties in northwestern Indiana and engages communities in conservation and nature. The Stewardship Director (SD) position is an integral role within an organization that has 12 full-time staff and an operating budget of \$1.5 million. Responsibilities include: leading a well-established stewardship program; managing a stewardship team (4 full-time equivalents); advancing the strategic plan in close collaboration with the Leadership Team and Board of Directors; securing and administering large-scale stewardship and capital project grants; advancing regional initiatives in collaboration with stakeholders (nonprofits, agencies, local municipalities, industry, and developers); and being a part of the Leadership Team (executive, deputy, conservation, and stewardship directors). This is a full-time, salaried position with an annual salary range of \$65,000-\$80,000. This position includes a competitive benefits package.

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Develop, oversee, and manage restoration projects and tasks for SHLT's conservation areas and nature preserves, e.g., habitat improvement, invasive species control, controlled burns, trail maintenance, sign placement, and fencing.
- Assess, monitor, and document ecological management needs and update management plans for preserves, including tracking management metrics for grant and board reporting.
- Secure, manage, and administer grant funding to advance land management priorities and large-scale restoration projects.
- Lead and advance conservation planning and land management initiatives in close collaboration with partners.
- Participate and represent the organization in regional partnerships and collaborations.
- Advise the Land Strategy Committee regarding ecological quality and management needs of potential land acquisitions.
- Develop and manage the annual budget and annual workplans for the stewardship program.
- Manage, hire, train, and evaluate Stewardship Program employees.
- Regularly communicate with the Leadership Team regarding work in progress and contribute to advancing the strategies and tactics set forth in the four-year strategic plan.
- Deliver presentations, hikes, and field trips.
- Assist the Engagement Team with developing stewardship programming priorities, especially volunteer stewardship opportunities on preserves.
- Assist with developing trails, public access amenities, and capital projects.
- Assist with maintaining and filing accurate land records and maps.
- Observe employee policies and ensure policies are followed by all stewardship staff.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in Natural Sciences, Biology, Environmental Science or similar. Master's Degree preferred.
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in ecological restoration or related field. Experience working for a land trust preferred.

- Demonstrated experience in writing, securing, and administering grants to perform land management activities. Federal grant application experience preferred.
- Working knowledge of techniques to preserve, restore, and maintain forests, uplands, wetlands, shoreline areas, wildlife habitat and habitat for threatened or endangered species.
- Ability to work independently.
- Organized with excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- A team player with an understanding and interest in cultivating donors and volunteers.
- Physical ability to work outdoors in all weather conditions and hike several miles.
- Valid driver's license.
- Working knowledge of GPS units and GIS programs such as ArcGIS Pro and ArcGIS Online preferred.
- Management experience, including supervising a work crew preferred.
- Training in wildland firefighting and experience conducting prescribed burns preferred.

Work Location and Environment

SHLT offices are located at Meadowbrook Nature Preserve (109 W 700 North, Valparaiso, IN 46385). This position is in-person. The position requires occasional evening and weekend availability.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Shirley Heinze Land Trust is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All decisions to recruit, hire, promote, and release from employment are made without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical or mental disabilities, or veteran status.

To Apply

Please email a cover letter and resume to Shirley Heinze Land Trust Deputy Director, Bridget Harrison, at bharrison@heinzetrust.org. Applications will be accepted until November 15, 2025. Interested applicants are encouraged to submit materials as soon as possible.