



Director of Conservation Job Description

Summary of Position:

The Dutchess Land Conservancy (DLC), located in Millbrook, New York, protects 48,000 acres throughout Dutchess County.

The DLC is seeking a Director of Conservation to join our team based in Millbrook, NY. The Director of Conservation works under the direct supervision and guidance of the Senior Director of Conservation and Stewardship to further the DLC's mission to preserve the scenic, agricultural, and environmental resources of Dutchess County and the surrounding areas. Working to implement the DLC's land conservation program, the Director of Conservation will lead complex land conservation projects that advance the DLC's mission by managing donated and purchased conservation easements, fee-simple acquisitions, strategic partnership initiatives, and completing transactions in accordance with DLC policies and the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices.

The Director of Conservation will facilitate the leadership of the conservation team on strategies to increase conservation successes by working with landowners, federal, local, and state governments, and private partners throughout the conservation process, coordinating with appraisers, attorneys, other consultants, working with municipalities to review public policy and zoning laws, and generally representing the DLC among its broad network of partners.

Reports to: Senior Director of Conservation and Stewardship (SDCS)

Supervises: Land Projects Manager

Responsibilities Include:

Conservation Projects

- Working with the SDCS on annual and long-term protection strategies and implementation of these strategies.
- Evaluating potential land protection projects for individual properties and large contiguous areas within DLC's Priority Resource Areas and throughout its service area.
- Having a sound understanding of natural and agricultural resources and being able to identify, map, and analyze resources with an eye toward conservation site planning.
- Creating maps using ArcGIS and other technologies, as applicable.
- All aspects of conservation easement and fee-simple acquisition negotiation and transactional due diligence, including drafting conservation easements.
- For purchased conservation easements, identifying, evaluating, and coordinating with funding sources (federal, state, county, municipal, foundation, and private), grant-writing and administration, budgeting, and serving as liaison to landowners.
- Preparing easement outlines, maps and information, and presenting to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for project approvals.
- Coordinating baseline documentation site visits with the stewardship team.
- Ensuring all transactional due diligence is completed in accordance with current IRS requirements, Land Trust Alliance (LTA) Standards and Practices and Land Trust Accreditation requirements.
- Coordinating and overseeing meetings of the DLC's Conservation Committee.
- Implementing the DLC's Trade-Lands program in accordance with the Gift Acceptance Policy.
- Working with local officials and other groups to identify protection opportunities for land considered important for passive recreation and conservation purposes.

Advocacy, Public Relations, and Outreach

- Keeping abreast of state and federal legislation, regulatory issues, and trends that affect land conservation through LTA resources and participation in advocacy coalitions.
- Representing the DLC in multi-stakeholder initiatives, working groups, public meetings, and delivering presentations when appropriate.

- Reviewing public policy documents, zoning regulations, and large-scale and open space development projects when public comment opportunities arise regarding conservation options and incentives.
- Speaking to municipalities and other stakeholders about land conservation options and opportunities and working with them on projects when goals align.

Assorted Responsibilities

- Supervising and mentoring the Lands Projects Manager
- Supporting and assisting with organizational events as needed.
- Reviewing and editing copy pertaining to land projects for DLC's publications.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in landscape architecture, planning, law, environmental sciences, or another related field.
- A minimum of five years of direct experience as a project manager for a land conservation organization, or other equivalent combination of related education and work experience.
- A minimum of three years of supervisory experience
- A proven track record of completing diverse land conservation deals and land transactions, including conservation easements, purchase of development rights, bargain sales, and fee acquisitions, for an established non-profit organization.
- Detailed knowledge of a variety of land conservation and planning tools.
- Experience working on the legal aspects involved in land conservation projects
- Knowledge of land trust best practices and the standards for adhering to and maintaining Land Trust Accreditation.
- Experience working with federal, state, local, foundation and private funding partners to engage in conservation initiatives and complete purchase of development rights and fee acquisition projects.
- Experience reviewing zoning, comprehensive and open space plans as they relate to land conservation tools and techniques.
- Experience working with a Board of Directors and committees on project-related topics.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to assist with writing compelling grant proposals and speaking in a public forum.
- Proven ability to manage a workload with multiple, often competing priorities, to develop budgets and work within project deadlines.
- Well organized, self-motivated, detail-oriented, friendly, hardworking, dedicated, excellent management and follow-up skills, and an ability to work as a team player in a small office environment.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, ArcGIS, and making maps, GPS technologies, and Apple iOS (for the use of iPads in the field).
- A genuine interest and enthusiasm for land conservation and the environment.
- Willingness to occasionally work outdoors, sometimes hiking over rugged terrain.
- Valid driver's license and personal vehicle.

Location

This full-time position will be based out of the DLC office in Millbrook, New York.

Compensation

This is a full-time salaried position with benefits package. Salary range: \$80,000-\$85,000 commensurate with experience.

Please apply by submitting a cover letter and resume to Jennifer Krauss at jen@jenniferkrauss.com by June 1, 2026.