Champlain Area Trails

Position: Director of Trails and Land Management

Champlain Area Trail (CATS) seeks a Director of Trails and Land Management to lead our program that creates and maintains hiking trails and manages conserved properties in New York’s Champlain Valley. This is a full-time year-round position requiring trail and land management skills including orienting, carpentry, managing conserved lands, planning, mapping, and supervising interns, trail stewards, and volunteers. Seventy-five percent of this position is outdoor activity, with a flexible, independent work schedule and opportunities to be involved in public programs and outdoor education activities.

Champlain Area Trails is an accredited land trust that incorporated as a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation in 2009 with the mission to make trails, save land, connect people with nature, and promote economic vitality in New York’s Champlain Valley. As of early 2022, CATS has developed and manages 42 trails totaling more than 67 miles and has protected a total of 983 acres including five conservation easements and five properties that are now nature preserves.

Summary of Responsibilities: The Director of Trails and Land Management will create and maintain hiking trails, monitor conservation easements, manage CATS’ nature preserves, recruit, train, and work with volunteers, stewardship interns, and trail stewards, interact with landowners, help manage outdoor education programs, and participate in community affairs. The Director of Trails and Land Management will be supervised by the Executive Director.

Trail Management:
- Create new hiking trails - meet with landowners, explore, decide on and map trail routes, design and estimate infrastructure and signage needs and costs, schedule and complete infrastructure projects.
- Maintain hiking trails including pruning branches, cutting and removing fallen logs, mowing grassy areas, developing trailheads and parking areas, installing trail markers and signs, building bridges, boardwalks, and fences, and removing trash and trail hazards.
- Develop and implement a trail maintenance program to manage an increasing number of trails.
- Coordinate, train, supervise, and work with interns, trail stewards, and volunteer trail adopters, work crews, and “occasional volunteers” who help with trail development and maintenance.
- Create and update maps of trails and conserved properties.
Land and Conservation Easement Management

- Monitor conservation easements, complete monitoring reports, and communicate with landowners about the reports. Train and supervise volunteers and staff who assist with conservation easement monitoring.
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with landowners of conservation easement properties and neighbors to conserved properties.
- Assist in easement drafting.
- Prepare or assist in preparing baseline documentation reports for conservation easements.
- Inspect and manage CATS nature preserves.
- Develop and update management plans for CATS nature preserves.
- Assist with evaluation of potential conservation projects using CATS selection criteria.
- Work with office staff to ensure all record keeping is completed in a timely manner and in accordance with Land Trust Accreditation Commission requirements.

Qualifications/Preferences:

- Must have Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent work experience. Master’s degree preferred.
- At least five years of working in a similar role. Experience in conservation land management and/or trail making preferred.
- Two years of supervising employees and/or volunteers preferred.
- Trail and land management skills (orienting, carpentry, planning, mapping, etc.)
- Experienced with using hand and power tools including chain saws, brush cutters, heavy-duty lawn mowers, and digging tools.
- Ability to work independently and with a team.
- Ability to train and manage volunteers and trail/land management staff.
- Able to read and interpret surveys and topographical maps.
- Professional attitude and demeanor, highly motivated and responsible.
- Ability to remain flexible under pressure.
- Map-making abilities using appropriate technology strongly preferred
- Must have a valid driver’s license, reliable transportation (preferably a pickup truck), and a good driving record.
- Comfortable with emerging technology including Microsoft Word, Excel, social media, and GIS technology (preferred).

Salary and Benefits:

- Salary: $48,000 - $55,000 depending on qualifications
- Health insurance, retirement, paid time off, discount on outdoor gear, work from home as needed, fresh air and beautiful views.

To Apply: Submit resume and cover letter by May 6 describing how you are a good fit for this position including the ways you can contribute to CATS mission. Please email to info@champlainareatrails.com.