OPACUM
LAND TRUST

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Position Description: Executive Director, Opacum Land Trust

Opacum Land Trust (OLT) is a nonprofit organization founded in 2000 to protect the natural and cultural resources in south-central Massachusetts. OLT has helped to permanently protect more than 3,400 acres of land, including 2,011 acres that we directly own or hold conservation easements on. We are committed to protecting our current properties and providing opportunities for passive recreation, while proactively pursuing new opportunities to protect additional land, wildlife, and natural resources. Opacum has 2 full-time staff (including the E.D.), part-time staff on grant-funded projects, and is headquartered in a rented office in the historic Hitchcock Free Academy community center in Brimfield.

After six years of dedicated service, our first Executive Director stepped down to pursue a new opportunity in the conservation field. OLT is seeking a new leader with a passion for conservation to lead OLT into and through its next phase of growth. This position will also play an important leadership role in the regional conservation efforts of the MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership, helping to coordinate and implement several federally funded, multi-state projects.

Position Summary

The Executive Director (ED) is responsible for advancing the mission of OLT through leadership in the areas of land protection and stewardship, development, community relations, regional partnership coordination, and board development. The ED will bring vision, energy, and creativity to develop strategies and new opportunities for Opacum in service to its host communities and partners. In collaboration with an active and dedicated Board of Directors and an experienced Assistant Director, the Executive Director will develop and carry out the strategic and programmatic goals for Opacum Land Trust. Specific responsibilities include:

Management & Leadership

1. Actively engage and energize OLT volunteers, board members, committees, partners, and funders.
2. Develop, maintain, and support a strong board of directors. Work in partnership with the board to recruit new directors who bring a variety of perspectives and experience, engage, and strengthen board committees, and promote effective governance practices.
3. Maintain the confidence and trust of OLT's members, volunteers, partners, and community.
4. Supervise, hire, and evaluate all staff members including the full-time Assistant Director (AD), part-time Tree Planting Crew Coordinator and part-time Landowner Technical Assistance contractor.
5. Establish the annual operating budget with the Assistant Director and Finance Committee.

Land Protection & Stewardship

1. Coordinate OLT's active conservation projects which seek to conserve more than 1,500 acres of land through multiple regional projects, in collaboration with towns, and private landowners.
2. Identify and pursue new land conservation opportunities in collaboration with the Land Conservation Committee, and part-time staff.
3. Oversee a multi-year tree planting project in Southbridge, MA, an initiative focused on improving community health and growing our community conservation impact in an urban community.
4. Provide general oversight to the AD and Stewardship Committee for monitoring and stewardship of Opacum's 27 properties and conservation restrictions.

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5. Assist as needed in resolving property violations and disputes diplomatically; support the efforts of the AD, Stewardship Committee, and other property stakeholders.

Development

The ED will build and cultivate relationships to secure the resources needed to carry out OLT's annual and long-term goals. This includes:

1. Establishing an annual development plan in collaboration with the AD and Board Fundraising Committee. Work closely with the AD to implement the plan and divide responsibilities effectively.
2. Playing a leading role in major gift fundraising including identifying new OLT partners and donors.
3. Deepening existing relationships with OLT partners and donors while cultivating new ones.
4. Identifying and seeking funding through foundations and government grants.

Community Relations

1. Serve as the lead spokesperson for the organization to supporters, the public, and media, projecting a clear and professional persona for the organization.
2. Advocate for federal/state/regional land conservation initiatives and related legislative activities.
3. Work with the AD to develop newsletters and communicate updates and opportunities to partners and supporters.
4. Work with the AD and Board to host educational and recreational activities in the community.

MassConn Coordination

Opacum Land Trust is the fiscal sponsor for the MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership (MassConn), a partnership of more than 25 land trusts, towns, state agencies and conservation organizations in the southern Massachusetts- northern Connecticut region. Member groups identify key areas of the region for conservation, collaborate on land protection efforts, promote sustainable forestry practices, and organize public outreach and education efforts to increase the pace and efficacy of conservation in the MassConn area. The ED will also serve as the coordinator for MassConn. This includes:

1. Working with the MassConn Steering Committee to develop and carry out the strategic priorities of the partnership.
2. Helping to implement a multi-state, multi-million-dollar NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program project, along with an upcoming multi-town U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy project.
3. Coordinating and leading partnership meetings.
4. Disseminating information about MassConn projects, resources, and opportunities to members.
5. Overseeing and implementing grants awarded to MassConn.

Required Qualifications

- Enthusiasm for Opacum's mission and personal commitment to natural resource protection.
- Able to communicate effectively and with authenticity in all settings and with diverse groups.
- Integrity, diplomacy, positive-attitude, mission-driven, and self-directed.
- A commitment to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of conservation work.
- A record of effective relationship building.
- A team player who can work effectively alongside staff, volunteers, and board members.
- Willing to learn, adapt, be flexible; incorporate feedback constructively.

- Able to manage multiple projects and complete work in a conscientious and timely manner, while prioritizing long-term strategic goals.
- Computer proficiency, including word processing, spreadsheets, and email.

Desired Experience and Skills

- Leadership and management experience at a nonprofit organization.
- Fundraising experience, especially with individual donor cultivation and major gifts.
- Experience working with a land trust or other land conservation organization.
- Familiarity with the south-central Massachusetts region.
- Past success working with a board of directors and demonstrated skill in cultivating existing board member relationships.

Position Details and Benefits

- This is a full-time salaried position, with an anticipated salary range of $60,000- $75,000. The salary offered to the successful candidate will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.
- Flexible work schedule. Some evening and weekend work required.
- Location: OLT's office is in Brimfield, MA, but the ED may work remotely as appropriate, especially during the pandemic. Free onsite parking. Must have access to transportation for periodic local travel.
- Paid time off: 12 holidays, vacation/personal days starting at 14 days, 9 sick days with rollover, bereavement leave. Eligible for paid family and medical leave through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts's PFML program.
- Health insurance is not currently offered.
- Supportive staff culture committed to providing our employees with the support and accommodations they need to be successful.

TO APPLY

Submit cover letter and resume to: Amy Connery, Assistant Director, HR@OpacumLT.org
Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. No phone calls, please. We are a small organization and will respond to any questions you may have through email as soon as we can.

Opacum Land Trust provides equal employment opportunities to all employees, contractors and applicants for work and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.