

## **FCVC Stewardship Coordinator**

### Position Description

Join French Creek Valley Conservancy (FCVC), a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting the French Creek Watershed. FCVC is nationally accredited with a 40-year history of using a collaborative approach to protect and steward land throughout the five counties and two states of the French Creek watershed. FCVC permanently protects riparian areas, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and forests. Become part of a dynamic, dedicated team of conservation professionals, volunteers, and landowners that work together to protect and steward priority conservation lands. FCVC has permanently protected over 3,200 acres of land. FCVC works with hundreds of donors, members, and volunteers, and many conservation organizations to accomplish its mission.

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

We are looking for a team member with excellent time management skills that can help develop annual priorities for conservation and stewardship projects, solve problems, provide strong team leadership skills and work successfully with a diverse set of public and private landowners to implement habitat projects.

This position plays a key role in the stewardship of our conserved properties. The Stewardship Coordinator is a full-time position that reports to the Executive Director and is responsible for monitoring 3,200+ acres of conserved land throughout the year. Working independently and collaboratively with staff, volunteers and partners, the Stewardship Coordinator is responsible for day-to-day property management of a portfolio of FCVC-owned and protected lands. Duties include (but are not limited to) monitoring properties, resolving issues, managing stewardship projects, coordinating the work of stewardship volunteers and contractors, and keeping property records up to date. Good conflict management skills and the ability to work with a wide variety of individuals are very important.

Status: Full-time, exempt.

Location: Meadville, PA with work throughout the French Creek watershed.

Work environment: Work schedule is generally Monday-Friday. Flex-time and some level of remote work are available with approval. Occasional evening and weekend work required for volunteer work, property visits or FCVC events.

Salary: \$41,000 base pay (for 100% FTE, based on relevant experience), Simple IRA retirement plan, Federal Holiday schedule, generous paid time off, and training opportunities.

Reports to: Executive Director

## ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Stewardship (75%)

**Land Management:** Track and prioritize ongoing stewardship needs on conserved lands. Initiate and manage projects to achieve property management goals. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Tasks vary widely and include (but are not limited to) boundary marking, sign posting, site cleanups (including demolition contracting), invasive removal, trail maintenance, and planting.
- Coordinate with FCVC staff, volunteers, interns, contractors and partners to accomplish stewardship projects as appropriate. Lead volunteer work parties and manage conservation crews and contractors working on FCVC projects.
- Resolve encroachment or property misuse issues.
- Coordinate conservation area management planning, by writing new property management plans, tracking and completing management plan evaluations, and completing management plan updates on a regular schedule.
- Communicate with the public, neighbors, and partners about conservation areas. Respond to inquiries about conservation areas and FCVC policies (particularly access and hunting policies).
- Conducting occasional initial site visits on prospective fee simple acquisitions and conservation easements, meeting with new landowners, conveying basic conservation information.
- Assess and prioritize and implement habitat projects including:
  - Removal of invasive species
  - Increase early successional habitat
  - Conduct native plantings in a variety of ecosystems
  - Enhance and maintain important riparian and wetland areas
- Work with a variety of partners including landowners, conservation/civic groups, contractors, funders and regulatory authorities to accomplish habitat goals.
- Assist with the development of grants and work closely with other FCVC staff to ensure implementation is sound.
- Utilize GIS mapping to support land protection, habitat management, watershed and education programs.

**Monitoring:** Responsible for monitoring a portfolio of conserved and eased properties. Must ensure FCVC meets internal policies and accreditation standards for monitoring. This is not limited to but includes training and coordinating volunteer land stewards, completing regular staff field visits, and ensuring visits and property stewardship needs are appropriately documented via the completion of follow-up monitoring reports.

- Conducting regular onsite monitoring visits – by foot and by vehicle – taking photos and making observations about conditions and changes on the property.
- Completing monitoring reports following these visits, submitting reports for review, and filing final reports in LANDSCAPE database.
- Reading baseline reports and reviewing maps/notes to effectively monitor conserved properties
- Coordinating and interacting with conservation easement landowners or their property managers as necessary before, during, and after the visits.
  
- **Recordkeeping:** Manage records to ensure FCVC meets internal policies and accreditation standards for recordkeeping associated with stewardship of properties. Collaborate with other FCVC staff to ensure property records are kept up to date and well organized. Assist with grant writing and reporting. Position will provide administrative support as needed, this may include filling land management plans, conservation easements and baseline documentation reports, and scanning in documents to the correct files as needed
- Creating and maintaining records of stewardship activities and all communication with landowners in the appropriate databases and sharing pertinent information.

**Stewardship Team:** Take part in stewardship committee meetings as appropriate. Help with other stewardship tasks as part of committee work.

### **Organizational (25%)**

**Organization:** FCVC works towards carrying out the strategic direction as a close-knit team of staff, volunteers, board, members, and landowners. The Stewardship Coordinator takes part in organization meetings, events and programming as well as staff and meetings. They will regularly coordinate with and support the work of other staff and committees to meet organizational goals.

### **DESIRED EXPERIENCE AND ATTRIBUTES**

- A commitment to land conservation and the environment. Preferably an understanding of natural resource and land management issues as related to the northwest PA.
- Three or more years of relevant professional experience. Relevant (e.g. natural resource management, environmental planning, environmental science / studies, or park management) undergraduate and/or graduate degrees may each be substituted for up to one year of professional experience. An otherwise outstanding candidate with less professional experience may be hired at an entry level position with an intent

to promote them to Stewardship Coordinator at three years professional experience. A variety of life experiences will be considered for this position.

- Ability to work in the field and to complete hands-on stewardship work. Comfort with working in the field on hot, cold and wet days. Work may require hiking up to 5 miles through brushy and/or steep terrain, with uneven footing, occasionally crossing water, while carrying up to 25 lbs of tools and field equipment. Will need to lift heavier items for short periods of time on occasion. Prefer experience with anticipating hazards and managing risk in the field, either by working or recreating outdoors.
- Comfort with regular conflict management and resolution.
- Comfortable with using computers and utilizing common office software (such as the Office suite). Prefer professional or academic experience with ArcGIS.
- Ability to communicate clearly and professionally, in written form and orally.
- Strong organizational skills, such as good attention to detail and the ability to juggle multiple time-sensitive projects.
- Enjoys working both independently and as part of a team with people, including volunteers, contractors and partners, from varied backgrounds.
- Experience and comfort with using various hand tools (such as shovels, machetes, and hammers) or other mechanized equipment such as a weed whacker, chainsaws, augers and tractors is preferred but not required.
- Willing to engage and take part in FCVC's efforts to increase diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion throughout the organization.
- A valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle that can be used for field visits.

## **QUALIFICATIONS:**

### Required Skills:

- Commitment to conservation and experience/interest in land stewardship.
- Familiarity or willingness to learn about common threats to natural resources in the French Creek watershed, such as invasive plant & animal species, forest pests/disease, erosion, trespassing, and more.
- Strong and reliable work ethic, integrity, and attention to detail.
- Ability to work independently and be comfortable with working/traveling alone.
- Willingness to work in all kinds of weather conditions; walk for several miles over rough terrain; and endure biting and stinging insects.
- Completed bachelor's degree in biology, wildlife, natural resources, forestry or related field.
- Experience with GIS mapping programs and mobile GPS applications.
- Experience/interest in public outreach and volunteer events with some weekend or evening work may be required on occasion.
- Ability to prioritize tasks, develop timeframes, and complete tasks within timeframes.
- Ability to resolve problems independently as delegated.
- Ability to document, in writing, work performed.

- In addition to the competencies identified above, the Stewardship Coordinator must possess a valid driver's license.

**Physical Requirements:**

- Ability to do physical work related to various maintenance and fieldwork activities.
- Ability to lift and carry tools and heavy (40-60 pounds) field equipment.
- Ability to drive for local and regional travel.
- Ability to work in inclement weather

**SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- The position does not have any internal direct reports. Position will have regular interaction with the public and volunteers.