



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Land Stewardship Manager

Santa Barbara/Ventura/Kern Counties, California (Hybrid)

Los Padres ForestWatch, one of the premier land and wildlife advocacy organizations along California's central coast, is seeking a Land Stewardship Manager. The role is responsible for overseeing our 157-acre nature preserve and working with partners and volunteers to plan and execute habitat restoration and other field work throughout Los Padres National Forest. This full-time exempt position is based in Santa Barbara, California with a substantial amount of field work coupled with a flexible combination of remote and office work.

Our impact area spans 220 miles of some of California's most spectacular landscapes, from the famed Big Sur shoreline to the rugged backcountry of Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Luis Obispo, and southwestern Kern counties. We protect these public lands from development, mobilize volunteers to clean up trash and restore wildlife habitat, and engage underserved youth and their families to build connections with nature.

ForestWatch welcomes diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable work environment for all employees that encourages and celebrates differences. ForestWatch's staff and Board strive to incorporate inclusive practices in the performance of all duties and responsibilities, on a consistent and ongoing basis, and continually work to increase awareness and sensitivity to the needs and concerns of individuals from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and orientations.

Overview of Position

The Land Stewardship Manager works closely with other team members to effectively and responsibly manage our new 157-acre nature preserve in the San Emigdio Mountains. Primary responsibilities include conducting plant and animal surveys, preparing and implementing a management plan, coordinating requests for public and tribal access, natural resources mapping and data collection, biological monitoring, assisting with the establishment of a conservation easement, and ensuring the long-term ecological health of the property.

The role also entails planning and executing an exciting lineup of habitat restoration projects on public lands throughout the region, in coordination with land management agencies, partners, and volunteers. These may include trash cleanups, invasive plant eradication, barbed wire fence removal, and rare plant and animal surveys.

The ideal candidate is rooted in the sciences with a background in natural resource management, has knowledge of and curiosity about local ecology, thrives on the interplay of field and office

work, can work independently (sometimes in remote areas) and collectively as part of a team, and has excellent written and verbal communication skills. Specific duties include:

Nature Preserve Management (65%)

- Oversee all aspects of our 157-acre nature preserve including documenting and managing natural resources for long-term ecological health.
- Provide field labor for biological surveys, invasive species control, habitat restoration, and construction and maintenance of signage, fencing, and other infrastructure.
- Collect information about the property using GPS and other mapping tools, biological surveys, photos (handheld and trail cams), and field logs.
- Prepare a long-term management plan for the property in coordination with ForestWatch staff and environmental consultants.
- Oversee completion of a baseline survey and assist with the establishment of a conservation easement on the property.
- Maintain relationships with land and wildlife management agencies, neighboring landowners, tribes, and other key stakeholders.
- Facilitate requests to access the property and organize occasional public programming to highlight the recreational and ecological value of the area.

Field Restoration & Volunteer Coordination (35%)

- Maintain a schedule of regular projects including trash cleanups (including spent lead ammunition and shells), invasive plant removal, barbed wire fence removal, graffiti removal from rocks and trees, and replanting/restoration.
- Collaborate with federal, state, and local land management agencies to identify potential projects and needs.
- Keep detailed records of accomplishments.
- Maintain database of volunteers.
- Work with other team members to communicate volunteer opportunities and accomplishments to the press, social media, and other digital channels.

General

- Solve problems independently and implement creative solutions for complex projects with support and guidance from the ForestWatch team
- Communication with the team about weekly tasks, unusual problems, unique opportunities, and progress towards project goals.

- Procure, organize, and maintain equipment, tools, and instruments.
- Periodically assist in communication about stewardship and restoration projects via press interviews, website and newsletter articles, presentations, and video.
- Assist with budget preparation for specific projects and the overall stewardship and restoration program, track expenses, and work within approved budget goals.
- Help our development team apply for grants to support ongoing field work.
- Participate in community events and engage with the public to highlight our land stewardship and volunteer programs.
- Ensure that all aspects of our work continually reflect principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Minimum Qualifications

- Deep personal connection and commitment to land and wildlife protection.
- Excellent work ethic, team attitude, and commitment to collaboration.
- Bachelor's or master's degree and 2+ years of work experience in biology, ecology, or related sciences.
- Strong attention to detail with proven ability to take initiative, follow instructions, and solve problems.
- Organizational skills for managing multiple projects to timely, quality completion on budget.
- Physically able to work and thrive in remote outdoor environments with variable conditions including heat, cold, wind, dust, rain, snow, ticks, and poison oak. Awareness of wildlife presence including bears, mountain lions, and snakes.
- Occasionally work long field days in excess of 8-10 hours including bending, squatting, digging, gripping and wielding a variety of manual and power tools, and hiking rugged terrain both on and off trail with uneven footing, sometimes in brushy and steep conditions. May sometimes require lifting of up to 50 pounds.
- Safe and responsible operation of vehicles on paved and dirt roads where you may encounter physical hazards such as fallen trees/branches, rocks, ruts, water crossings, mud, snow, and erosion. Experience with 4WD vehicles is preferred.
- Willingness to travel long distances. Our nature preserve is 2+ hours from Santa Barbara in the Frazier Park area. Most other field work will occur in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, with possible travel to San Luis Obispo on a less frequent basis.

- Acclimation to frequent work at an elevation of 5,000 to 9,000 feet. The nature preserve requires regular work at 7,000 feet in elevation.
- Experience with use, maintenance, and repair of small power equipment such as chain saws, weed whips, and other tools. Commitment to safety including wearing personal protective equipment like safety glasses, gloves, and safety shoes/boots and following established field safety protocols.
- Comfortable working in a remote environment (sometimes alone) near publicly accessible areas used by hikers, hunters, and off-road vehicle enthusiasts.
- Knowledge and understanding of equipment and techniques used to perform plant and wildlife surveys and habitat restoration. Basic GPS and GIS capabilities are preferred.
- Proficient with computers and a working knowledge of Microsoft applications (e.g., Outlook, Excel, and Word) with an ability and willingness to embrace new technologies and learn new computer programs as necessary.
- Knowledge of local ecosystems and processes including chaparral, sagebrush, pinyon-juniper woodland, oak woodland, and mixed conifer forests.
- Experience working with unpaid volunteers.
- CPR and first aid certified is a plus.
- Personal commitment to fostering diversity and a sense of belonging within the organization and the larger conservation movement.

Compensation

This role offers a fulfilling opportunity to use your skills for the greater good and make a tangible, positive impact. The salary range for this position is \$64,000 to \$78,000 based on experience. ForestWatch offers an excellent benefits package including 100% employer-paid health insurance with top-tier coverage for employees, dental and vision benefits, a flexible office and remote work schedule, a generous paid holiday and vacation package, and a pre-tax retirement savings plan with employer match. Employees also enjoy significant pro discounts from leading outdoor apparel and equipment companies.

Application Procedure

To apply, send a cover letter describing your qualifications and your personal connection to land and wildlife conservation, along with your resume, contact information for three professional references, and written samples from your conservation-related work. Please combine all documents into a single pdf file and email it as an attachment to apply@forestwatch.org with Land Stewardship Manager in the subject line. The hiring committee will review applications on a rolling basis. No phone calls, please.