



## Job Description

### Conservation Director

Saratoga PLAN is a not-for-profit land trust dedicated to preserving the rural character, natural habitats and scenic beauty of Saratoga County so that these irreplaceable assets are accessible to all and survive for future generations. We help landowners conserve their farmland, woodlands, trails, and natural habitats to sustain the county's "quality of place" and the environment, economy, and public health. Saratoga PLAN helps communities create plans that balance growth with conservation to sustain the Saratoga Region as a great place to live, work, visit and farm.

#### ***Major Functions***

PLAN's Conservation Director oversees and provides day to day management and strategic direction for PLAN's land conservation and stewardship program. This includes, as major functions:

- Develops and implements Saratoga PLAN's Conservation Plan;
- Promotes the vision and objectives of Saratoga PLAN's Strategic Plan and Conservation Plan to stakeholders and the community at large;
- Supervises stewardship staff and land transaction service providers;
- Develops and implements annual conservation program work plan;
- Helps raise funds for planning, stewardship, acquisition, and educational programming; and
- Originates and reports on land conservation and stewardship initiatives and projects in collaboration with the Executive Director, Board of Directors, landowners, funders, and partners.

#### ***Major Duties***

Guided by the Conservation Plan and Business Blueprint, the Conservation Director serves on the leadership team for Saratoga PLAN by working closely with the Executive Director, the Constituent Engagement Director, the Conservation Committee, and community partners to:

- Implement and secure resources for strategic initiatives of the organization;
- Identify and evaluate new high priority conservation opportunities and consults with landowners, municipalities and other organizations on conservation options;
- Structure and oversee land conservation and trail projects including negotiating terms of easements, acquisitions and partnerships; completion of pre-acquisition due diligence; and preparation and oversight of grant applications for conservation projects;
- Assist communities with developing conservation plans and municipal land use plans to accomplish their goals for natural resource protection, recreation, and farmland conservation;
- Integrate and foster connections with key constituents into the Conservation Program;
- Develop long term stewardship plan or disposition plan for conservation projects;

- Oversee management of conservation lands and conservation easements;
- Facilitate the development of baseline documentation reports and oversee annual monitoring of conservation lands by Stewardship Coordinator;
- Serve as staff liaison to the Conservation Committee, Countywide Trails Committee, and other relevant groups advancing conservation;
- Interpret easements, resolve violations, and evaluate requests for easement amendments, consulting as needed with the Stewardship Coordinator, Executive Director, legal counsel, and Board of Directors.

### ***Qualifications***

- At least 5 years' experience in real estate transactions for undeveloped land
- Relevant natural resource non-profit or conservation experience, including managing collaborative projects, programs, staff.
- Experience with grant writing and management, preferably familiar with foundations and government agricultural and conservation grants and acquisition funding programs such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' Farmland Protection Implementation Program, and the Forest Legacy Program.
- Undergraduate degree in related field (conservation, environment, natural resources management, ecology, land planning, etc.). Advanced degree preferred.

### ***Skills and Competencies***

- Demonstrated experience in land conservation project development and conservation easement stewardship
- Proven leadership skills and ability to motivate, manage and train colleagues and volunteers
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Demonstrated experience in developing and implementing strategic plans, programs, systems, policies, and documentation
- Strong skills in project planning, financing, management, implementation, and evaluation
- Demonstrated ability to assess conservation values of a property
- Excellent interpersonal skills including the ability to develop and maintain relationships at all levels including with landowners, communities, government agencies and the not-for-profit sector, and the ability to work both as a team player and independently
- Ability to use GIS and GPS to display and analyze spatial information
- Proficiency with a variety of software including Excel, Microsoft Office, and PowerPoint
- Ability to perform strenuous physical activities such as hiking in steep terrain

***October 3, 2017***