

## Position Opening Conservation Manager

### Who We Are

CFT is the only nonprofit land trust in Connecticut exclusively focused on farmland. Since 2002, CFT has protected 75 farms (6,100+ acres) and helped our partners conserve over 1,500 additional acres. CFT also has a robust Farmland Access program, working with beginning farmers around the state to get secure tenure on farmland. CFT is a leader in Connecticut on farmland conservation and access, and its growth in recent years has set the stage for more innovation. CFT has been accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission since 2012.

CFT is undergoing an exciting period of programmatic and organizational development. The Board and staff are undertaking an extensive planning process with a racial equity lens, which will result in comprehensive 5-year strategic organizational and conservation plans.

### What You Will Do

The Conservation Manager manages CFT's Farmland Conservation and Stewardship Programs, while working cooperatively with CFT staff and Board to influence CFT's strategic direction. The Conservation Manager supervises the Conservation and Stewardship Coordinator and reports to the Executive Director. This position has the opportunity for advancement.

CFT's conservation work is deeply entwined with the work of our partners. In this role you will work closely with the USDA and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, as well as peer land trusts, municipalities, and other partners, to accomplish CFT's conservation goals. You will need to build trusting relationships with farmers and farm owners throughout the conservation process.

### Your Specific Responsibilities

- Serve as project lead on all aspects of CFT's Farmland Conservation Program: project evaluation, relationship building with farm owner(s), easement drafting in collaboration with attorneys, due diligence, and closing.
- Oversee CFT's Stewardship Program, including enforcing easement terms, in collaboration with Conservation and Stewardship Coordinator.
- Provide oversight, guidance, and training for Conservation and Stewardship Coordinator.
- Assist Executive Director in implementing a 5-year strategic organizational plan.
- Assist Executive Director in developing and implementing a strategic conservation plan (in its final stage of development) with Acquisition and Stewardship Committee.
- Work with Executive Director in implementing Buy-Protect-Sell and piloting new-to-CT conservation tools (ex. Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value).
- Engage in learning, reflection, and relationship-building activities to bring a racial equity lens to CFT's work.
- Collaborate with Conservation and Stewardship Coordinator and Farmland Access Coordinator on outreach to farmers and farm owners to grow CFT's conservation programs and increase access for beginning farmers.

- Assist in developing and executing special projects such as the Soil Health Stewards Program and the Land Trust Alliance's Land and Climate Programs, including developing CFT's solar policy with Executive Director and Acquisition and Stewardship Committee.
- Participate in statewide organizations, working groups, initiatives that influence laws and policies that impact agriculture and conservation in Connecticut.
- Assist Executive Director in developing and implementing policies in alignment with Land Trust Accreditation Commission standards.

### **Qualifications of the Ideal Candidate**

The Conservation Manager must be a creative, self-motivated, and detail-oriented leader with a passion for farming and land conservation. The ideal candidate is an experienced land conservation professional with the knowledge and confidence to manage CFT's conservation and stewardship programs and implement new conservation tools. Project management experience and strong organizational skills are essential to this position. At a small nonprofit like CFT, being a team player is also an essential asset. The ideal candidate is comfortable working with farmers and understands the unique challenges they face in New England. The ideal candidate must be committed to contributing to CFT's journey to build a more equitable and inclusive organizational culture.

### Experience and Qualifications

- Passion for working with farmers and preserving farmland.
- Minimum of 3 years of relevant professional experience in land conservation, land use planning, real estate, or related fields. Preference for conservation experience in a land trust or public agency. A college degree or master's degree in a related field may substitute for 1 year of work experience.
- Expertise in topics such as land conservation, land use, farmland access, real estate law, regional land use planning, conservation planning, farming, food systems, and/or related issues.
- Experience with conservation easement transactions, including working knowledge of easement language, easement drafting in collaboration with a lawyer, and real estate closings. Experience working with transactions funded by NRCS is a plus.
- Experience using GIS mapping software (preference Esri ArcGIS) as well as database software.
- Self-motivated, resourceful problem solver who is comfortable working independently as well as effectively within team environments and with partners.
- Ability to pay attention to details and manage multiple projects.
- Strong organizational and interpersonal skills and skillful communicator (oral and written).
- Technology savvy and proficiency with Zoom, Microsoft Office products, and Office 365 programs.
- Embrace justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion as personal values.
- Knowledge of issues facing New England farmers and New England geography.
- Ability to work cooperatively with diverse types of people.
- Reliable internet connection for remote work.
- Ability to carry and lift up to 25 lbs. over short distances, tolerate inclement weather for field visits, traverse uneven and sometimes hilly terrain, and work on a computer for several hours at a time. Must be comfortable spending several hours outdoors on farm visits and navigating in remote areas.

- Ability to provide own car, insurance, and valid driver's license for travel in Connecticut. Mileage for work travel is reimbursed at the federal rate.
- Patience, persistence, and sense of humor are a big plus!

### Salary and Benefits

The salary range is \$65,000 - \$72,000 depending on experience and qualifications. If a candidate is extremely qualified and meets identified criteria, they may qualify for a position as Senior Conservation Manager with a starting salary of up to \$82,000.

The position is based in Hartford, CT, with opportunities for hybrid/remote work. Frequent travel around Connecticut is required.

CFT offers a collaborative, dog-friendly work environment. Generous benefits package includes:

- Comprehensive health insurance
- Paid short-term and long-term disability insurance
- 5% employer retirement match, after 6 months
- Paid sick leave – 8 days first year, 10 days thereafter
- Paid personal leave – 3 days
- Paid vacation leave – 10 days first year, 15 days 2-4 years, 20 days 5 years
- Paid holiday leave – All Federal holidays (11), week between Christmas and New Year, and 2 floating holidays
- Work travel reimbursement
- Paid professional development opportunities
- Opportunity for advancement
- Opportunity to work remotely part of the week

CFT provides equal opportunity and prohibits discrimination against all employees and applicants for employment based upon race, color, sex, gender, religion, creed, national origin, ethnic origin, age, citizenship, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other legally protected status.

### To Apply

- Please submit a cover letter and resume *combined in one PDF document* to [CFTApplicant@gmail.com](mailto:CFTApplicant@gmail.com). *Please put your name in the document title.*
- Please include in your letter where you learned about the job.
- No phone inquiries, please.

### Timeline

While applications will be accepted and reviewed until the position is filled, applicants who apply with a resume and cover letter by **November 25, 2024**, will be reviewed first.

Posted: 10/10/24