



Nova Scotia Nature Trust Science and Stewardship Specialist Position Description

About the Nova Scotia Nature Trust

The Nova Scotia Nature Trust is a land conservation charity dedicated to protecting Nova Scotia's most important natural areas, through private land conservation. Our mission is positive and action-oriented protection and stewardship of our most special natural places, and educating and engaging Nova Scotians in nature conservation. With more than 20 years of experience in land conservation, we have a proven track record in protecting Nova Scotia's natural legacy, with over 10,000 acres of outstanding conservation lands protected across more than 80 conservation sites throughout the province.

The Nature Trust works with private landowners and other partners to protect significant natural areas throughout the province. We have an active program of management and stewardship for our protected areas network and protect these lands primarily through acquisition (donation, purchase, bequest) and conservation easements. The Nature Trust is operated by a skilled professional staff under the guidance of a volunteer Board of Directors. Our work would not be possible without the dedicated support of donors, volunteers, province-wide membership and cooperation from local landowners, land stewards and our conservation partners. The Nature Trust is recognized throughout Nova Scotia as the province's pre-eminent conservation organization for privately owned lands.

About the Position

The Science and Stewardship Specialist is a new position that will deliver a key leadership role in all stewardship and science related activities within the Nature Trust. This position will work closely with other members of the organization and key partners, including landowners.

The Science and Stewardship Specialist contributes to the development and delivery of all aspects of the Nature Trust's stewardship and science program. The Science and Stewardship Specialist develops and coordinates the conservation science, stewardship, and field volunteer programs to advance the Nature Trust's conservation mission and to maximize conservation impact. The Science and Stewardship Specialist leads a small, dedicated team that provides guidance and delivers programs for the ongoing stewardship and management of the Nature Trust's conservation lands network. This position reports to the Director of Conservation.

The Science and Stewardship Specialist is a seasoned conservation ecologist with exceptional field skills in both assessing ecological values and overseeing protected areas management. The Science and Stewardship Specialist possesses excellent verbal and written communication skills and is passionate about the mandate of the Nature Trust. The position requires a highly organized, results-driven individual who is a professional representative for the organization, as well as a well-respected and trusted partner for our landowners, volunteers, community, and our scientific and government partners. The ability to prepare and manage timelines, goals and expectations efficiently and effectively is crucial for this position.

This position will appeal to those wanting to work with a small group of people who are passionate about protecting conservation land in Nova Scotia. The Science and Stewardship Specialist will have a direct influence on the planning and delivery of the organization's stewardship policy and the management of the Nature Trust's land assemblage portfolio. You will be the senior science advisor within the organization with the opportunity to develop and assist in the implementation of a science based decision making

process that will place the Nature Trust at the forefront in best practice within the conservation land trust community. This is a position where you can see the direct results and benefits of your efforts and where working together as a team can make a real difference in the conservation of our special places.

Core Duties and Responsibilities

Under the direction of the Director of Conservation, the Science and Stewardship Specialist is responsible for the Nature Trust's stewardship and science program including the following specific duties and responsibilities:

1. Land Stewardship (55%)

Ecological Assessment

- Complete detailed site reviews, including ecological and risk assessment surveys for potential new Nature Trust conservation lands
- Prepare and/or ensure the completion of comprehensive baseline documentation reports, photographic records and maps for new Nature Trust conservation lands.
- Contribute to the decision making process on whether to advance properties for possible securement

Planning

- Contribute to the development, implementation and review of all Nature Trust land stewardship and science related procedures, programs, initiatives and policies.
- Prepare, review and update stewardship/management plans for Nature Trust conservation lands.
- Oversee all aspects of implementing stewardship plans on Nature Trust properties (monitoring, inventory, threat assessment, record-keeping, tax exemptions, neighbour and community relations, boundary disputes, boundary maintenance, site clean-ups or stewardship planning).
- Provide input during the preparation of conservation easement agreements and other land protection strategies.
- Assist with the development of recreation management planning for all Nature Trust properties.
- Assist in the development of budgets for land stewardship projects, and contribute to or prepare grant proposals.

Management and Enforcement

- Coordinate all aspects of ongoing stewardship and management of Nature Trust conservation lands and conservation easements that includes program development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Establish and maintain strong and effective relationships with landowners, neighbours and the local community.
- Develop and deliver an annual property monitoring program of all Nature Trust conservation lands and conservation easements.
- Manage the enforcement of conservation easements and the implementation of Nature Trust policies and procedures as it relates to conservation lands.
- Coordinate and deliver habitat restoration work and removal of exotic species on Nature Trust properties.
- Liaise with and report to the Properties Committee, Board of Directors and the Executive Director as required regarding property stewardship and planning.

2. Science (15%)

The Science and Stewardship Specialist serves as the lead scientist for the Nature Trust. In this critical role, the Science and Stewardship Specialist ensures that sound science informs and guides all aspects of the Nature Trust's conservation activities and contributes to the scientific vision for the Nature Trust through

the anticipation of opportunities, challenges, and threats that have the potential to affect and impact our work.

Research

- Evaluate, select, and apply scientific methods to collect independent research to inform conservation priorities, decision making, develop restoration approaches, and evaluate results.
- Design, implement or approve requests for scientific research on Nature Trust properties.
- Deliver GIS and mapping services for all Nature Trust programs.

Partnerships

- Collaborate with staff, scientists and partners to develop and disseminate sound scientific standards and methodologies, best practices and to foster implementation of adaptive management in Nature Trust projects.
- Collaborate with Nature Trust partners to set and achieve goals consistent with biodiversity conservation objectives identified through conservation planning and ensure that new initiatives are implementable, practical and appropriate.
- Cultivate relationships with universities and partner/agency scientists and managers that ensure information exchange, collaborative conservation planning, implementation of adaptive management and that address climate change.
- Work closely with public agencies, other environmental organizations, universities and other organizations to build partnerships and develop research focused on solving real conservation challenges and innovative approaches to dealing with emerging conservation issues.

Policy and Planning

- Develop plans for conserving landscape-scale project areas and provide advice and guidance on issues such as monitoring, adaptive management and ecosystem resilience.
- Collaborate with staff on applied conservation science and provide technical support and guidance on conservation planning activities.
- Help to guide the conservation efforts of the Nature Trust by participating in long-term planning and prioritization of programs, projects and specific properties, ensuring compliance with the scientific policies and procedures of the Nature Trust.
- Advise the Director of Conservation on the development of sound, science-based policies and other information needs.
- Communicate scientific concepts clearly to scientists and non-scientists alike, especially audiences such as the Board, staff, decision-makers, funders and partners.
- Contribute to land assemblage prioritization process

3. Community Engagement and Partnerships (10%)

- Contribute to public communications, fund-raising and liaison functions associated with the stewardship and science programs.
- Engage with communities in the vicinity of Nature Trust conservation lands in order to maintain good relationships and promote the work of the Nature Trust.
- Participate in the establishment and maintenance of effective external relationships with all levels of government, community groups, other land trusts, landowners, business and non-profit leadership to achieve conservation outcomes and secure public investment and political support.
- Represent the Nature Trust at public meetings and in meetings with partners.
- Work with Nature Trust staff, project committees and volunteers in the development of land conservation projects.
- Administer and coordinate fieldwork and logistical support for research, project development and monitoring.

- Assist with research, preparation and publishing of communications associated media (booklets, letters, newsletters, press releases, articles, stewardship manual, training materials for volunteers, social media).

4. Volunteers (15%)

The success of the Nature Trust would not be possible without the dedication of our volunteers. Through the Nature Trust's volunteer programs, including the Property Guardian and Birds Eye View program, volunteers contribute to all activities critical to our work to preserve Nova Scotia's wild spaces and special natural areas. The volunteer program provides meaningful, hands-on experience in the conservation of ecologically significant natural areas. Volunteers help the Nature Trust to accomplish on-the-ground land management goals.

- Oversee all aspects of the Nature Trust's volunteer Property Guardian and Birds Eye View program, including recruitment, training, coordination and communications.
- Develop and maintain partnerships with organizations in the stewardship of Nature Trust conservation lands.
- Organize public events and science/stewardship activities and liaise with local community organizations and residents as required to foster effective stewardship of conservation lands.

5. Human Resources (5%)

- Directly supervise the Stewardship Assistant, contractors, volunteers and any seasonal or other stewardship or science staff.
- Manage and motivate a team of conservation professionals (staff, volunteers)
- Develop an annual work plan for the stewardship assistant and other staff and ensure its effective and efficient implementation and delivery.
- Ensure that staff meet required performance standards and apply performance management actions when necessary.
- Ensure that all stewardship and science programs are fully compliant with applicable occupational health and safety legislation, policies and procedures.
- Comply with all Nature Trust human resource policies and procedures.

Requirements:

Education

- Essential: University undergraduate degree in conservation, science or other relevant field of study.
Desirable: Masters degree or higher in a relevant field of study.

Experience

- A minimum of ten (10) years relevant experience in land conservation, protected areas and/or ecology.
- Equivalencies may be considered.

Skills

- Well-developed, demonstrable communication skills, including:
 - i. Strong report and proposal writing skills
 - ii. Ability to organize and present information clearly
 - iii. Ability to compile, interpret and clearly present information from a variety of sources to different audiences
 - iv. Excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to communicate clearly and to actively listen
 - v. Competence in public speaking and education with diverse audiences from local community groups to conservation experts/partners

- Strong administrative, planning and organizational skills, with attention to detail and the ability to meet deadlines.
- Exceptional landscape and ecological interpretation, flora and fauna identification, habitat classification.
- Strong understanding of conservation science technologies including remote sensing, geographic information systems, modeling, and statistical analysis software.
- Strong computer skills, including proficiency with MS Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), internet, email, social media and databases.
- Ability to prepare and produce maps and organize field GPS and other spatial data.
- Cartographic and spatial analysis abilities using GIS, including experience using ESRI ArcGIS 10.x software.
- Ability to interpret aerial photography, topographic and other field/ecological maps.
- Excellent diplomacy, problem solving and conflict resolution skills especially those related to land management.
- Experience conducting field work and data collection in a variety of terrains, habitat types and adverse conditions, and documenting and presenting findings.
- Experience and comfort working outdoors for extended periods in variable weather/all seasons in remote locations, over difficult terrain and under physically demanding circumstances.
- Comfortable working alone in the field.

Knowledge

- Familiarity with Nova Scotia's natural landscapes, habitats, natural communities and species, particularly rare and outstanding ecological features.
- Knowledge of Nova Scotia's conservation priorities at a landscape, habitat and species level.
- Knowledge of protected areas and biodiversity conservation programs and initiatives generally, and specifically within Nova Scotia, as well as legislation, policies, programs, issues, trends and opportunities relevant to the Nature Trust's conservation planning, science and stewardship.
- Knowledge of best practices in landscape scale conservation, biodiversity conservation, protected areas planning, management and stewardship.
- Knowledge of threats, liabilities and risks to conservation lands and appropriate prevention, management and mitigation options.
- Sound understanding of land trusts, private land conservation, and land trust standards and practises related to conservation planning, land securement, stewardship and management.
- Experience working in the non-profit/non-government sector, and an understanding of the unique approaches, opportunities and challenges of this sector.
- Knowledge of active land management and stewardship activities (such as erosion control, bridge-building, trail-building, habitat restoration)
- Knowledge of/familiarity with relevant provincial legislation and regulations.

Personal Attributes

- Demonstrated ability to work independently, seek assistance and input as required, and to work on interdisciplinary teams.
- Outgoing, confident and friendly personality with the ability to meet new people and to earn trust and confidence.

Other Attributes

- A person who embodies the values of integrity, commitment to the cause and professionalism.
- Demonstrated ability to build and support effective partnerships and networks with relevant conservation organizations, government agencies and other partners, stakeholders and supporters to advance conservation goals and impacts.
- Passion and dedication for environmental conservation.

Other Relevant Skills / Assets

- Familiarity with property transactions (land ownership and title, land claims, registration, Properties Online, etc.)
- Experience working within the ecological/scientific community of Nova Scotia.
- Willingness and ability to travel and work flexible hours at times, including multi-day overnight trips.
- Experience working on water (lakes, rivers, ocean) and undertaking wilderness travel by canoe/kayak.
- A valid Class 5 Driver's License.
- Standard First Aid Training (Wilderness First Aid).

This position is based in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

The Nova Scotia Nature Trust offers a competitive compensation package.

Salary commensurate with experience.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please send a resume, three professional references (name/contact information—please indicate if you do not wish for us to contact any references until after screening interview) and a cover letter clearly articulating your relevant knowledge and experience, why you are interested in the position and what you believe you bring to this key leadership position with our organization.

You must show how you possess the essential qualifications (i.e. education, experience) for the initial screening through your resume and cover letter. It is not sufficient to only state that the qualifications are met or to provide a listing of current or past responsibilities. Rather, you must clearly demonstrate how, when and where the qualification was met through substantiation by examples.

If you have any questions, please contact employment@nsnt.ca or phone 902-425-5263.

Closing date: February 8, 2017

Please send your resume and cover letter to:

**Nova Scotia Nature Trust
P.O. Box 284, Station Main
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
B2Y 3Y3**

Or by email to: employment@nsnt.ca

We would like to thank all applicants for their interest in this position; however, only those selected for interviews will be contacted.