



**Aspen Valley Land Trust is seeking a
Director of Science, Restoration & Land Management /
Land Steward**

Announced July 20, 2022

Applications accepted until August 15, 2022 or until filled

Aspen Valley Land Trust (AVLT), a regional land conservation organization located in Carbondale, Colorado, has been protecting open space and special places for the benefit of wildlife, agriculture, and community in the Roaring Fork and middle Colorado River valleys for more than 50 years. We are seeking a motivated team member with experience in natural resource science, ecological restoration, project management, and partner relationship management to help manage our growing portfolio of conserved lands. This position will lead the active and hands-on management of land owned or co-managed by the Trust, and provide technical direction and assistance to conservation easement owners and other partners in land management as part of a dedicated and talented team of eight staff, guided by a nine-member volunteer board of directors.

THE ORGANIZATION

In 2019, the Trust completed a comprehensive strategic planning process that included a robust community engagement element and is in a phase of transformational growth. Our strategic plan identifies four pillars of our work: 1) protecting land; 2) stewarding conservation easements and land; 3) engaging with our diverse community; and 4) building organizational capacity and resilience to carry out our mission in perpetuity.

Our conservation priorities and goals are guided by a recently adopted [Strategic Conservation Plan](#) that establishes processes for selecting projects that advance landscape-scale conservation to protect climate resiliency, biodiversity, and agriculture, as well community-focused conservation that responds to community needs within and around communities.

AVLT owns several properties that we physically manage, including one high-mountain outdoor education retreat (Marble Basecamp), a 140-acre working ranch near Carbondale (Coffman Ranch), and several small parks. We provide management assistance on other community-owned parcels, all of which would fall within the purview of this position.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Director of Science & Restoration (or Land Steward) is a fundamental to the long-term success of the Trust and essential to maintaining strong relationships and coordination with the Trust's many partners, private landowners, and the public. This is an opportunity to play a key role on our conservation team and to develop and maintain the highest standards for stewardship of the Trust's assets, while also helping grow and maintain the important relationships we value with our landowners, partners, and the public. This position will help guide the stewardship team and advance the strategic goals of the organization, and will shape the future of conservation in the region by protecting and enhancing the long-term resilience and health of conserved lands.

This is an upper-level, full time position dedicated to:

- Stewarding and managing AVLT's fee-owned lands and co-managed conservation properties for ecological and/or agricultural health *as well* as for public access and outdoor education using a science-based and collaborative approach;
- Assisting landowners with the stewardship of conservation easements (primarily for agriculture and natural habitat) by providing technical advice and connection to available resources;
- Assisting Stewardship Director with annual conservation easement monitoring;
- Leading and facilitating all land management, planning, and ecological restoration efforts for the organization.

This position will also be the science lead for the team and may help develop a Landowner Resource Hub and new tools and strategies for incentivizing sustainable and climate-friendly land management through science-based approaches, such as payment for ecosystem services. It reports to the Executive Director but will work closely and collaboratively with the conservation team (Conservation Director, Stewardship Director, and Ranch Manager). This position may be asked to supervise additional stewardship staff in the future.

This position will:

- Work closely with partners, consultants, and advisors as necessary to develop and execute land plans and project visions;
- Foster relationships with regional and statewide resource partners to advance regional conservation and restoration efforts;
- Understand, interpret, and apply AVLT's Strategic Conservation Plan data and priorities to help select and design conservation projects;
- Write grant applications and administering funds for stewardship and restoration projects;
- Provide general support of events, fundraising, communications, and other AVLT duties as appropriate.

THE CANDIDATE

To be successful in this position, applicants should be self-motivated and adaptable, with a positive, team-oriented attitude. This position requires attention to detail and ability to approach landowner and partner relationships with tact, empathy, care, and utmost discretion. Applicants must be comfortable working independently and in coordination with our Conservation Team to help design and execute stewardship and conservation projects for multiple uses. A spirit of collaboration, problem-solving, creative and nimble thinking, and a sense of humor are all very useful qualities.

Our partners, landowners, and community members bring diverse backgrounds and perspectives to our work and are highly valued by our team—therefore a successful candidate will approach this work with an open mind, desire to learn, willingness to experiment, and willingness to help.

Skills and Qualifications

- Excellent communication skills;
- Sense of tact, awareness, empathy, and humor when working with others;
- Strong background in natural resource sciences, ecology, or similar fields;
- Demonstrated experience in ecological restoration and land management;
- Familiarity with agriculture or range management helpful;
- Project management experience; ability to coordinate multiple partners and goals;
- Ability to work efficiently alone and in small groups towards a larger goal;
- Ability to manage staff and interns as appropriate;
- Highly proficient writing skills with an eye for detail and accuracy; ability to communicate scientific complexities to the public in a clear and engaging way;
- Ability to interpret and comprehend complex land planning and legal documents;
- Highly organized; able to track and work on multiple projects simultaneously;
- Proficiency with Geographic Information Systems (GIS);
- Comfort with speaking and presenting in public on behalf of the Trust as appropriate;
- Ability to provide a personal vehicle for transportation is helpful (we are currently looking to buy a company vehicle for project-related site visits, but some personal vehicle use will most likely be necessary);
- Bilingual fluency (English/Spanish) preferred but not required.

Other Details and Expectations

Occasional travel within and outside of AVLT's service area (Aspen to De Beque) and occasional work during evenings and weekends is expected. Flexible work hours and partial-remote working options may be arranged; however, the candidate must live in or be willing to relocate to the area as the position requires regular site visits and in-person

meetings. Candidates that do not fulfill most of the skills or qualifications listed may be considered for a mid-level Land Steward position.

- Start date flexible, ideally on or before October 1.
- Starting salary \$60,000-\$75,000 per year commensurate with experience; salary range \$60,000-\$90,000 per year.
- Generous benefits include 15 days paid vacation, paid holidays and sick time, paid health insurance, retirement plan with 3% employer match, flexible schedules and emphasis on work/life balance, mileage and expense reimbursements, and ongoing training and growth opportunities.
- AVLТ's region is currently facing a housing shortage. Please take the time to explore living options before applying.

TO APPLY

Please send your application via email to melissa@avlt.org with the subject line "Science Director Application." Applications may be reviewed on a rolling basis; candidates are encouraged to submit materials prior to **August 15, 2022**.

Applications should include:

- Cover letter describing your skills and personal connection to land and water conservation
- Resume
- Up to three personal and/or professional references
- One to three writing samples or other examples of your work that you believe showcase your qualifications for this position (excerpts from grant applications, scientific papers, blogs, professional letters, etc.)

Aspen Valley Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer and committed to increasing organizational diversity and equity in conservation. All applicants will be considered for employment without attention to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, and veteran or disability status. Women, BIPOC (Black, indigenous, persons of color), and LGBTQAI+ individuals are encouraged to apply.