



WHATCOM
LAND TRUST
EST. 1984

Working to preserve special places for future generations

Posting Date

June 6, 2024

Applications submitted by
July 11, 2024 will be given
full consideration

Location

Bellingham, WA

Partial hybrid remote from
within Whatcom County

Salary

\$115,000 -

\$140,000

includes a generous
benefits package

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Job Opportunity

Whatcom Land Trust seeks a visionary Executive Director to lead the organization into its next chapter of growth and impact. The ideal candidate will bring a deep commitment to conservation, proven nonprofit leadership experience, and a track record of success in developing organizational strategy, inspiring teams, and building strong relationships with stakeholders.

As the Trust's leader, the Executive Director will drive strategic initiatives to expand land protection and stewardship efforts, increase community engagement and fundraising, and ensure the organization's long-term resilience and effectiveness. They will foster a collaborative culture and work closely with the dedicated staff and board to advance the mission of protecting and stewarding Whatcom County's vital lands.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced conservation leader to make a lasting impact on Whatcom County's natural heritage. If you are passionate about conservation and ready to guide a dynamic organization to new heights, we encourage you to apply.

[APPLY NOW →](#)

[REFER A FRIEND →](#)

WHATCOM LAND TRUST: OUR PURPOSE AND APPROACH

MISSION

To preserve and protect wildlife habitat, scenic, agricultural and open space lands in Whatcom County for future generations by securing interests in land and promoting land stewardship.

VISION

Whatcom County has an abundant tapestry of lakes, rivers, farms and forests—all of which are vital to our way of life and sense of place. Whatcom Land Trust is committed to both protecting these special places and ensuring that their abundant diversity of life flourishes. Together with our many community partners we continue to build relationships to protect these rich and vibrant lands for a healthy, thriving Whatcom County for generations to come.

HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO

For 40 years, Whatcom Land Trust has worked to conserve our county's natural heritage in perpetuity. We employ a three-pronged strategy to accomplish our mission: legal securement of land, land stewardship and restoration, and community engagement in conservation action. Permanent land protections are secured through purchases, gifts, and conservation easements. Through our work we have created parks and preserves and established conservation easements on farmland and diverse types of wildlife habitat. As trusted local leaders in conservation we have achieved landscape scale land protection that increases habitat connectivity, fosters biodiversity and helps to restore natural systems that support the recovery of key fish and wildlife species. We engage the people of Whatcom County in conservation work that fosters long-term commitment to the ecological health of the land and our community. Learn more about Whatcom Land Trust: <https://whatcomlandtrust.org/>

26,894 ACRES

Protected through
ownership, conservation
easement, and facilitation

18 PARKS

Protected, hosting
thousands of visitors
every year

450 VOLUNTEERS

Helping us care for the land
we love

OUR FUTURE

We see significant opportunities for growth and impact in the coming years. Key priorities include expanding land protection and restoration efforts, increasing community outreach and engagement, diversifying funding sources, and strengthening partnerships. The Trust aims to invest in long-term land stewardship, attract diverse and dedicated board members, and enhance staff support and development. Our new Executive Director will play a pivotal role in guiding the strategic plan to ensure sustainable growth, resilience, and effectiveness. They will lead the organization in navigating the challenges and opportunities ahead, while building upon our strong foundation of success and commitment to conservation.



Explorations Academy students

WHATCOM LAND TRUST: WHO WE ARE

OUR TEAM AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The Whatcom Land Trust is composed of a staff team of 14 (including the ED) and a fifteen member Board of Directors. The organization fosters a passionate, collaborative, and mission-driven culture, with a dedicated team committed to protecting critical lands including forests, rivers, shorelines, and wetlands. The close-knit staff enjoys working together to leverage opportunities and address challenges to achieve the Trust's goals. The Board is highly engaged and supportive of the organization's success, and works in close collaboration with the staff in a variety of ways. As the organization navigates the ED leadership transition, the Board and staff are committed to building trust, clarifying roles, and aligning priorities to create a cohesive and resilient organization that is set up for success in this next phase of growth. The Whatcom Land Trust is also dedicated to cultivating a culture of equity and inclusion, both within the organization and in its work with the community.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

As a conservation organization, it is not enough to simply state that the lands we work to protect are for the benefit of everyone. We need to actively work to ensure that our entire community feels safe and welcomed in our work. We acknowledge the historical foundation that has perpetuated inequality in the outdoors and actively work to break those barriers down to rebuild a new foundation. Whatcom Land Trust's mission is to serve our community and to serve "future generations to come."



Volunteers restoring riparian habitat along California Creek

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Whatcom Land Trust respectfully acknowledges that the territory where we live and work are the ancestral homelands of the Coast Salish people, which includes the Lhaq'temish (Lummi Nation) and Noxws'a?aq (Nooksack Indian Tribe).

As an organization entrusted to protect and preserve wildlife habitat, scenic, agricultural, and open space lands in Whatcom County for future generations, we honor the indigenous people who are and continue to be the original stewards of this land. Although there has been significant loss in natural and cultural resources since European settlement, their work as guardians for what remains inspires us.



Superstar "Field Friday" volunteers

OPPORTUNITIES AND ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors, manages 5 direct reports, and oversees a staff team of 14. They will play a pivotal role in driving Whatcom Land Trust's (WLT) vision and strategy, ensuring the organization's continued success in land conservation, partnership development, and community engagement. They will collaborate closely with the Board and staff to develop and implement strategies and action plans that align with WLT's mission and values, while fostering a cohesive and collaborative culture that capitalizes on the organization's existing strengths.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

- Provide visionary leadership to guide WLT's future direction, building upon the organization's successes and identifying opportunities for growth and improvement
- Collaborate with the Board and staff to develop and execute strategic plans
- Ensure WLT's commitment to equity is integrated into all aspects of the organization

EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

- Serve as a key spokesperson of WLT, building and maintaining relationships with partners, community leaders, and stakeholders
- In collaboration with the board and staff, cultivate and solicit donors and institutional funders to secure financial support
- Oversee revenue planning and strategy to ensure sustainable and diversified funding sources

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Foster a positive, collaborative, and inclusive staff culture that promotes stability and growth
- Provide oversight, guidance, and support to staff, promoting professional development and empowering them to excel in their roles
- Build and maintain strong relationships between staff, board, volunteers, and the wider community to foster a cohesive and collaborative culture
- Oversee administrative planning and processes to ensure efficient organizational operations
- Ensure sound financial management, including budgeting, financial reporting, and risk management, to maintain the organization's financial health, accountability and sustainability



Volunteer Coordinator Madeline at the annual "Orca Recovery Day" work party



Stimpson Family Nature Reserve and Geneva Pond Trailhead

IDEAL CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

Our ideal candidate will bring an unwavering commitment and passion for the organization's mission of protecting and stewarding land in Whatcom County. This dedication will be the foundation upon which they build their leadership, guiding the organization with a unique combination of skills, expertise, and vision. Key qualifications include:

NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

- Proven track record of successful organizational leadership in a nonprofit setting, ideally as an Executive Director or senior-level leader
- Demonstrated ability to inspire, motivate, and lead staff and board members with curiosity, humility, and openness to listen and learn
- Skilled in nonprofit management, including operations, budgeting, and financial oversight
- Experience managing and mentoring staff and fostering a positive workplace culture
- Commitment to advancing equity and inclusion within an organization and its programs

FUNDRAISING EXPERIENCE

- Experience cultivating and soliciting individual and institutional donors
- Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with funders and donors
- Knowledge of diverse fundraising strategies and revenue sources
- Experience developing and implementing comprehensive fundraising plans that align with organizational goals and priorities

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to build trust and rapport with diverse stakeholders across the region
- Demonstrated experience in leading groups of people towards a common mission and elevating the profile of an organization to promote greater community engagement
- Compelling public speaker and effective advocate for an organization's mission and vision

CONSERVATION AND LANDTRUST EXPERTISE

- Strong understanding of conservation principles and practices, through prior work or lived experience
- Familiarity with land trust operations and experience working within or in partnership with land trusts preferred, but not required
- Ability to speak passionately and knowledgeably about the work of land trusts and conservation

The ideal candidate will be a visionary leader with a collaborative, supportive, and approachable leadership style. They will bring a genuine passion for conservation, a strong work ethic, and the ability to lead WLT into its next chapter of growth and impact. While prior executive leadership experience is preferred, exceptional candidates with transferable skills are encouraged to apply.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

This is a full-time, salaried position with an anticipated salary range of **\$115,000 - \$140,000**.

Whatcom Land Trust's headquarters are located in Bellingham Washington, a vibrant coastal city nestled between the Cascade Mountains and the Salish Sea, offering breathtaking natural beauty and endless outdoor recreation opportunities. With its thriving arts and culture scene, excellent schools, and strong sense of community, Bellingham provides an exceptional quality of life for those seeking a balance between professional growth and personal well-being.

The Executive Director is expected to reside in Whatcom County and effectively manage a team. They will engage in frequent key stakeholder meetings, lead and participate in events, host onsite meetings with staff and board, regularly travel to locations throughout the county, and participate in speaking engagements. A willingness to work some evenings and weekends is required.

Whatcom Land Trust offers generous medical, dental, and vision benefits, a flexible work schedule, a 3% IRA match, and sick leave. We also offer an eight-week sabbatical every six years.

HOW TO APPLY

Apply here: <https://cloversearchworks.hire.trakstar.com/jobs/fk0v47e>

Online applications only, please no email or paper submissions. You will be asked to upload a cover letter and resume. In your cover letter, please describe as specifically as you can how your experience, interests, and values are a fit with Whatcom Land Trust's goals, mission, and vision for the future as described in this announcement.

Applications received by July 11, 2024 will be given full consideration; early applications are strongly encouraged! All applications will be acknowledged via an email receipt. Consideration will be given to applications as soon as they are received; phone and in-person interviewing is anticipated to begin in mid-to-late July.

Questions regarding this opportunity are welcomed and can be directed to:

Julie Edsforth, Search Consultant

Email Julie with questions about the position

Schedule a call with Julie to learn more about the position.



Clover Search Works facilitates leadership searches for nonprofit organizations whose missions strengthen communities. Clover is honored to be partnering with Whatcom Land Trust in this search.