



Conservation Easement Counsel

Organization

Bluegrass Land Conservancy is a community-supported, nonprofit, accredited land trust working to protect land in Kentucky's Bluegrass region through permanent conservation easements.

We envision a thriving community where land is protected to sustain our identity, economy, and quality of life.

We seek to ensure a future where the region's distinctive soils, cultural heritage, scenic vistas, natural resources, and farms are preserved forever. By working with landowners who want to place conservation easements on their land, providing technical expertise to other conservation programs, and educating and engaging the public regarding the value of land conservation, we fulfill our mission.

For more information, please visit www.bluegrasslandconservancy.org

Objective/Role

Reporting to the Director of Conservation and the Executive Director, the Conservation Easement Counsel plays a vital role in the implementation and advancement of Bluegrass Land Conservancy's mission to protect land. The Conservation Easement Counsel will be responsible for cultivating relationships with potential conservation easement donors and representing, in conjunction with the Director of Conservation, Bluegrass Land Conservancy in the conservation easement transaction. The Conservation Easement Counsel's objective is to secure new conservation easements for the organization by growing and assisting in the management of the organization's portfolio of potential conservation easement donors and protected lands. Working collaboratively with the Board of Directors, Executive Director, Director of Conservation, other staff, and outside advisors, the Conservation Easement Counsel is responsible for identifying conservation easement prospects, cultivating donor relationships, drafting legal documents to effectuate the conservation easement transaction, and assisting with stewardship and enforcement of conservation easements within our portfolio.

Desirable Leadership Attributes

The Conservation Easement Counsel should be an experienced, enthusiastic attorney of high integrity and a passion for the mission, who has demonstrated persistence and his/her ability to be creative, solve problems, listen, collaborate, and be able to represent the organization in appropriate situations while engaging and participating with the staff team to provide a unified front. The Conservation Easement Counsel will be a smart, decisive, legal strategist with diverse interests and an amiable personality.

The Conservation Easement Counsel must excel in the following areas:

-Legal skills – The Conservation Easement Counsel must have a background and understanding of real estate, tax, and transactional law and should have worked in a professional position for at least 2 years. The candidate must feel comfortable communicating complex information with grace and ease and willing to learn new legal skills in a multi-faceted and quickly evolving field.

- Judgment/Creativity/Entrepreneurial Savvy – The Conservation Easement Counsel must be adept at overcoming challenges regularly and is responsible for making quick, sound decisions in collaboration with the Director of Conservation, ED, Board, and staff. It is imperative that the candidate possess the analytical skills that enable him/her to rapidly assess the situation, pursue and evaluate input from staff and stakeholders, and develop creative solutions. He/she must have the ability to find ways around significant obstacles and to envision solutions that have not previously been tried.

- Trustworthiness and Respect for Others – Every landowner, individual, and business gives Bluegrass Land Conservancy their support voluntarily. This support is directly tied to the trust they have in the organization and its leadership and staff. The Conservation Easement Counsel must sincerely respect the perspectives of every individual with whom he/she engages in the line of work.

- Commitment to the End Goal and BLC– Clarity in selecting the goal, and commitment to reaching it and overcoming the challenges are essential to our work and are characteristics for which Bluegrass Land Conservancy is known. The Conservation Easement Counsel must have the confidence and ambition to persevere, even after a string of rejections. A commitment to the organization and its mission, rather than individual interests, is a must.

- Engaging Personality and Communication Skills – The Conservation Easement Counsel will represent Bluegrass Land Conservancy in public and to existing and potential conservation easement donors and supporters. It is imperative that he/she have the skills needed to speak with passion and knowledge of land conservation and its benefits, the Bluegrass region, Bluegrass Land Conservancy, and the importance of donating conservation easements on land. The Conservation Easement Counsel must interact with others and communicate in a charismatic way that inspires support, confidence, and public trust.

Responsibilities/Duties

Land Protection and Stewardship (90%)

- The Conservation Easement Counsel works to build and maintain productive relationships with existing, former, and future conservation easement donors to ensure that Bluegrass Land Conservancy (BLC) is recognized as a preferred, reliable, and productive conservation organization.
- Works with the Director of Conservation, Executive Director, Board, Land Protection and Stewardship Committee, and other staff to solidify the direction of BLC’s conservation easement and stewardship program.
- Assists in coordination of communications between prospects and BLC.
- Participates in all aspects of completing a conservation easement transaction and managing a portfolio of 137+ conservation easements:
 - o Initiates contact with potential conservation easement donors
 - o Develops appropriate cultivation strategies for each conservation easement donor
 - o Moves potential donors in an appropriate and timely fashion towards a commitment
 - o Drafts relevant documents to effectuate the conservation easement gift
 - o Works with outside counsel and landowner counsel to finalize conservation easement

- Maintains stewardship contacts with donors; adhering to the highest ethical, legal, and accreditation standards, demonstrating an empathetic disposition and perseverance, reflecting an optimistic and positive attitude, and conveying sensitivity to the needs of donors.
- Assists the Director of Conservation with preparing materials for Land Protection and Stewardship Committee meetings and Board meetings.
- Assists the Stewardship Coordinator and Conservation Manager, as needed.
- Supports outreach efforts, if needed, through event participation, grant strategizing and input, and other activities as directed.
- Works with the Executive Director and other staff to assist in developing appropriate communications relating to conservation easements and stewardship.
- Manages processes, deadlines, and people, when needed, while adhering to the policies and procedures of BLC.
- Gets along well with peers, subordinates, and management and maintain a positive and constructive attitude while solving problems.
- Protects the mission, goals, and values of BLC through actions and attitudes daily.

Community Outreach, Education, & Events (10%)

- The Conservation Easement Counsel assists during BLC events such as signature fundraising, partner, cultivation, and other events, as necessary.
- Works with communications and events staff to coordinate community outreach efforts and community programs in relation to conservation easements.

General Legal Assistance + Other (as needed)

- The Conservation Easement Counsel has the ability to assist with general legal work and function during times of transition and/or need.
- Bluegrass Land Conservancy is a cross-functional charitable organization in which all employees are expected to perform many tasks other than those for which they may be specifically hired. As an employee, you will be expected to perform such additional cross-functional tasks as may be assigned from time to time.

Qualifications

The Conservation Easement Counsel will be thoroughly committed to Bluegrass Land Conservancy's mission. The candidate should have concrete demonstrable experience and other qualifications including the following:

- Minimum of a Juris Doctor.
- Licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.
- Minimum of 2 years of experience working in a professional position.
- Understanding of transactions, contracts, and drafting.
- Working knowledge of the Bluegrass region.
- Ability and willingness to attend day-time, evening, and weekend events as needed.
- Ability to understand the needs and interests of farmers and farming trends in the region.
- Interest in all aspects of BLC and a dedication to promoting BLC's land protection and stewardship through developing excellent relationships with Board Members, staff, and donors.
- High comfort level with making cold calls, as well as developing cultivation and solicitation strategies.
- Excellent oral and written communications skills.
- Willingness and high comfort level with in-person meetings, making phone calls, and attending events alone at times.
- Impeccable organization and memory retention skills.

- Ability to interact well with a wide variety of people, including a diverse Board of Directors, donors, landowners, local, county, state and federal officials, business professionals, real estate and tax professionals, attorneys, scientists, and the general public.
- A capable professional with a style of open communications, accountability, and engagement in generating ideas.
- Ability to travel the Bluegrass region with a valid driver's license, have access to a reliable vehicle, and own a cellular phone with GPS service for use in the field.

Details

Administrative Support

Limited. This position must be prepared to handle his/her own correspondence, filing, records, and report formatting. This position will work closely with the Director of Conservation, Stewardship Coordinator, and Conservation Manager to complete projects.

Supervision

Reports directly to the Director of Conservation.

Salary, Benefits, and Schedule

Location

- The Conservation Easement Counsel may be based out of Louisville, Kentucky, or Lexington, Kentucky, with an understanding that the demands of the job may include regular travel to Lexington or Louisville and across the region for meetings and events.

Salary

- Annual salary commensurate with experience, with starting range of \$60,000-\$75,000.
- Salary increases based upon performance determined by the Director of Conservation, Executive Director, and/or the Board of Directors.
- Year-end bonus and retirement contributions at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Benefits

- Benefits include full employee health and dental insurance.
- Paid vacation, holidays, personal days, and sick days as detailed in the BLC Personnel Manual.

Schedule

- Full-time, salaried employment.
- The Conservation Easement Counsel will be expected to attend events and meetings that occasionally may occur during evenings or weekends.
- Flexible schedule and compensatory time off, at the approval of the ED.

Bluegrass Land Conservancy is an equal opportunity employer.

Please send cover letter and resume to Jessie Wilder at jwilder@bluegrassconservancy.org. Applications accepted through February 15, 2020. Position will remain open until filled.