



MAINE FARMLAND TRUST

JOB DESCRIPTION – Land Steward, Southern and Western Maine

Summary: A Land Steward (LS) is a member of MFT's Stewardship Department and is responsible for monitoring and enforcing conservation easements, cultivating good relationships with owners or lessees of protected farms, overseeing amendments and establishment of building envelopes, and managing leases, maintenance, and other property management needs for MFT-owned farms. Specific territories are defined annually based on existing properties and projects anticipated to close in the coming year. This position is based out of MFT's Portland office, with occasional travel to MFT's other offices as required, and travel to project sites as necessary.

Reports to: Stewardship Program Director (SPD)

Duties:

- **Easement Stewardship.** Annually monitor 100+ conservation easements in southern and western Maine, working closely with the SPD. Areas of responsibility include: 1) ensuring easements are monitored annually; 2) reporting any issues related to those easements, and working with the SPD to develop and implement a plan for resolution; 3) responding to questions and requests related to easements held by MFT; 4) maintaining strong relationships with owners of land protected with MFT easements and with organizations that have partnered with MFT on these projects; 5) preparing conservation easement amendments and supplements; and 7) conducting deed research and marking boundaries of building areas. The LS is authorized to sign, on behalf of MFT, estoppel certificates and certifications of compliance, when such documents have been approved by MFT counsel. The LS is further authorized to sign approval letters as outlined in MFT's Approvals/Notifications Policy.
- **Data and Record Keeping.** Document all monitoring activities, critical correspondence, and other irreplaceable or important documents in accordance with MFT's Record Keeping Policy and Stewardship Procedures. Contribute timely and pertinent project information to MFT's comprehensive farm database. Maintain and store current GIS parcel information and provide updates as needed to GIS staff. Maintain secure file storage system in the Portland office for irreplaceable documents that will eventually be stored off-site in keeping with MFT's Records Policy.
- **Fee Stewardship.** Manage stewardship and property maintenance needs for MFT-owned farms in southern and western Maine, in coordination with the SPD and the Buy/Protect/Sell (BPS) Team. Areas of responsibility may include: 1) visiting properties annually; 2) assisting with preparation of management plans and annual budgets; 3) implementing management needs identified in approved management plans; 4) managing leases; 5) researching and marking boundaries; 6) applying for permits as required by local or state ordinances; and 7) scheduling and coordinating property maintenance tasks, including contractor management, when necessary. The LS is authorized to sign approval letters as outlined in MFT's Approvals/Notification Policy.
- **Baseline Documentation.** Prepare supplemental baseline reports. Areas of responsibility include: 1) conducting field work to document existing conditions, 2) preparing the baseline narratives and maps, 3) compiling completed reports for filing and storage, 4) conducting any necessary deed research.

- **Foster Broad Relationships with Landowners and Land Trusts.** Cultivate good relationships with stewardship program staff at other Maine land trusts, contribute towards statewide agricultural stewardship knowledge base, and encourage use of MFT's technical services and grant programs.
- **Prospecting.** Identify possible land protection projects by pro-actively seeking leads (from landowners, municipal leaders, other land trusts, etc.) as opportunities arise. Such projects will be passed off to a Project Manager to manage.
- **Other tasks.** Participate as needed in activities such as outreach events, annual meeting, etc. Be an ambassador for MFT, and reach out consistently to help build the membership base.

Requirements:

- 2+ years experience with easement monitoring and enforcement
- Proficiency with GIS software (ESRI ArcMap) to produce monitoring maps, baseline maps, and amendment exhibits

Desired Qualifications:

- Ability to listen and to communicate effectively in writing and in person, to build rapport and develop effective relationships with others, and to work well with a wide variety of people, including farmers.
- Ability to work with minimal supervision, but also within a team.
- Ability to use field technology apps, handheld GPS, compass, and surveys or maps in the field for data collection.
- Ability to juggle many projects successfully and independently, keeping all tasks organized and meeting all deadlines.
- Ability to partner successfully with other members of Stewardship and Lands Staff, or others within MFT, where appropriate.
- Ability to effectively educate landowners about MFT's stewardship responsibilities, and explain complex easement restrictions and options for exercising reserved rights.
- A positive attitude, a commitment to customer service, and an appreciation that you are an ambassador for MFT in all that you do.
- Willingness to travel as needed and to work occasionally on evenings and weekends. Ability to provide transportation for self and other staff.
- Commitment to farmland protection and the future of farming in Maine.