



## **JOB DESCRIPTION – Land Steward**

**Summary:** A Land Steward (LS) is a member of MFT’s Farm Network 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 long-term 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. The Land Steward can be based out of either of MFT’s offices or remotely in Lincoln, Knox or Kennebec county, with occasional travel to MFT’s offices as required, and travel to project sites as necessary.

**Reports to:** Stewardship Program Manager (SPM)

### **Duties:**

- **Relationship Management.** Land stewards manage a portfolio of 60-85 protected farms and are MFT’s frontline relationship managers with our network of farmers and landowners of protected properties. Stewards listen to farmer needs, maintain familiarity with farmers’ circumstances, identify ways MFT or other organizations may assist farmers and support the success of protected farms.
- **Easement Stewardship.** Annually monitor conservation easements in assigned territory, working closely with the SPM. Areas of responsibility include: 1) ensuring easements are monitored annually; 2) reporting any issues related to those easements, and working with the SPM to develop and implement a plan for resolution; 3) responding to questions and requests related to easements held by MFT; 5) preparing conservation easement amendments and supplements; and 6) conducting deed research and marking boundaries of building areas.
- **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 Belfast or Portland office.
- **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.
- **Fee Stewardship.** Manage stewardship and property maintenance needs for long-term fee ownership farms in assigned territory, in coordination with the SPM and the Buy/Protect/Sell (BPS) Team. Assist Project Managers with management tasks on short-term fee ownership properties as requested by the SPM.
- **Workplan and Strategic Plan Implementation.** Prepare an individual workplan annually and carry out those duties in support of the Farm Network workplan. Support strategic planning by participating in education/training opportunities or other activities as requested by the SPM.

- **Broker Connections to additional MFT programs and support.** Works closely with the Farm Network team to support the overall mission and vision of Maine Farmland Trust by ensuring that easement landowners are aware of the technical resources that MFT offers and facilitate connections with appropriate staff.
- **Prospecting.** Remain alert for possible land protection opportunities and pass on information to Farmland Protection Program staff as opportunities arise.
- **Other tasks.** Participate as needed in activities such as outreach events, annual meeting, etc. Be an ambassador for MFT and help build the membership base.

**Required Qualifications:**

- Experience with easement monitoring and enforcement.
- Familiarity with Baseline Documentation Reports or similar.
- Proficiency with GIS software (ESRI ArcMap or equivalent) to produce monitoring maps, baseline maps, and amendment exhibits.
- Excellent communication skills in writing and in person.
- The ability to build rapport and develop effective relationships with others, and to work well with a wide variety of people, including farmers.

**Desired Qualifications:**

- Experience with farming practices, local food systems, and/or natural resources management.
- Ability to work outdoors alone in a variety of conditions.
- Ability to work independently or with a team.
- Experience using field technology apps, handheld GPS, compass, and surveys or maps in the field for data collection.
- Ability to juggle projects successfully and independently, keeping all tasks organized and meeting deadlines.
- Ability to partner successfully with other members of Stewardship and Farmland Protection 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 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.
- Commitment to farmland protection and the future of farming in Maine.

MFT is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, size, national origin, disability, or any other protected characteristic as established by law. Additionally, MFT strives to foster an inclusive workplace. People from diverse backgrounds, including those traditionally underrepresented in agricultural leadership, are encouraged to apply.

**Salary Range:** \$40,000-\$45,000