



**Nova Scotia Nature Trust
Stewardship Assistant
Position Description**

About the Nova Scotia Nature Trust

The Nova Scotia Nature Trust is a land conservation charity dedicated to protecting Nova Scotia's most important natural areas, through private land conservation. Our mission is positive and action-oriented protection and stewardship of our most special natural places, and educating and engaging Nova Scotians in nature conservation. With 25 years of experience in land conservation, we have a proven track record in protecting Nova Scotia's natural legacy, with over 11,000 acres of outstanding conservation lands protected across more than 100 conservation sites throughout the province.

The Nature Trust works with private landowners and other partners to protect significant natural areas throughout the province. We have an active program of management and stewardship for our protected areas network and protect these lands primarily through acquisition (donation, purchase, bequest) and conservation easements. The Nature Trust is operated by a skilled professional staff under the guidance of a volunteer Board of Directors. Our work would not be possible without the dedicated support of donors, volunteers, province-wide membership and cooperation from local landowners, land stewards and conservation partners. The Nature Trust is recognized throughout Nova Scotia as the province's pre-eminent conservation organization for privately owned lands.

About the Position

Reporting to the Land Stewardship Manager, the Stewardship Assistant plays a key role in all stewardship related activities within the Nature Trust. This position will work closely with other members of the Nature Trust and its volunteers and with key partners, including landowners.

The Stewardship Assistant contributes to the delivery of all aspects of the Nature Trust's stewardship program including the development and delivery of stewardship and field volunteer programs that will advance the Nature Trust's conservation mission and maximize its conservation impact. The Stewardship Assistant is a part of a small, dedicated team that delivers programs for the ongoing stewardship and management of the Nature Trust's conservation land network.

The successful candidate will possess strong field skills to assess ecological values and, ideally, have experience in the development, implementation and monitoring of stewardship plans. The Stewardship Assistant should have a strong background in the biological sciences and be familiar with conservation land trusts and, more specifically, conservation land stewardship. You should possess excellent verbal and written communication skills and be passionate about the mandate of the Nature Trust. The position requires a well-organized, results-driven individual who is a professional representative for the organization, as well as a well-respected and trusted partner for our landowners, volunteers, community, scientific and government partners. The ability to prepare and manage timelines, goals, and expectations efficiently and effectively is crucial for this position.

This position will appeal to those wanting to work with a small group of people who are passionate about protecting conservation land in Nova Scotia. The Stewardship Assistant will be the lead field operative in the stewardship of the Nature Trust's lands and will be a key member of staff who develops and maintains strong

collaborative partnerships with landowners. The Stewardship Assistant will work closely with the Land Stewardship Manager to develop and deliver an annual stewardship work plan that ensures the continued ecological integrity of our conservation land assemblage.

Position Summary

The primary responsibilities of the Stewardship Assistant include:

- The on-going monitoring and management of Nature Trust conservation lands.
- The preparation of baseline documentation reports (ecological and risk assessment) and property management plans.
- Maintaining relationships with landowners, neighbours, conservation partners, and local communities.
- Maintaining and mentoring volunteers for the Nature Trust's Property Guardian program.

As the ideal candidate, you are energetic, personable, physically fit, and self-motivated with strong, practical experience in land and biodiversity conservation and science. You are passionate about conservation, with a demonstrated aptitude for working in a fast-paced environment and managing priorities and deadlines. Strong planning, organizational skills and writing skills, attention to detail and the ability to prepare and manage timelines, goals, and expectations efficiently and effectively are crucial for this position. You are comfortable spending time in the field, oftentimes on your own.

Duties and Responsibilities

Under the direction of the Land Stewardship Manager, the Stewardship Assistant is responsible to assist in the delivery of the Nature Trust's stewardship program including the following specific duties and responsibilities:

A. Planning and Management (50%)

- Complete detailed site surveys and prepare ecological and risk assessment surveys for potential and existing Nature Trust conservation lands.
- Prepare, review and update management plans for all Nature Trust conservation lands.
- Implement stewardship activities on Nature Trust conservation lands as described in the property management plan.
- At agreed sites, provide excellent standards of property presentation (including signage, control of garbage, care of trailheads and trails)
- Manage and document ongoing visitor use of Nature Trust properties (e.g. recreational, scientific research, educational activities).
- Where required, and in consultation with the Land Stewardship Manager, document and implement ecological monitoring, habitat restoration and recreation management on Nature Trust conservation lands.
- In collaboration with the Land Stewardship Manager, identify existing or potential threats, stewardship priorities and appropriate action(s) to ensure a high standard of conservation of natural values across Nature Trust properties and easements.
- Assist the Land Stewardship Manager with the review of requests for easement amendments or the exercise of reserved rights.
- Prepare baseline documentation reports, photographic records and maps
- Support the Land Stewardship Manager in the securement of new conservation lands.
- Provide input to the development of conservation easement agreements.
- Keep up-to-date on Land Trust standards and best practices, stewardship and recreation management.
- Administer property monitoring and maintenance records.

B. Relationships (20%)

- Establish and maintain positive and productive relationships with landowners, partner conservation organizations, and local communities to aid in the effective stewardship of Nature Trust conservation lands.
- Under the guidance of the Land Stewardship Manager, undertake community engagement and education initiatives related to stewardship of Nature Trust conservation lands.
- Identify opportunities for developing new partnerships and relationships to further the stewardship program.
- Undertake broad community-based management planning and consultation where required to resolve long-standing or challenging stewardship issues.
- Identify and take advantage of opportunities to promote a positive stewardship ethic in Nova Scotia
- Represent the Nature Trust at public meetings and in meetings with partners.

C. Volunteers (25%)

- Work with the Volunteer Program Coordinator to assist with the recruitment, training and ongoing maintenance of the Property Guardians and other volunteer programs.
- Provide technical guidance & encouragement to Property Guardians over all aspects of Land Stewardship
- Promote a culture of safe working amongst Property Guardians
- Provide guidance & support for other volunteer programs such as the Birds Eye View as required.

D. Communications and Fundraising Support (5%)

- Support outreach, communications, and public relations efforts of the Nature Trust
- Support on-going fundraising efforts to raise public and private funds for the Nature Trust's conservation work

- Other duties as assigned.

Requirements

Education:

- Essential: Diploma in an applicable conservation, science or other relevant field of study.
- Desirable: University undergraduate degree in conservation, science or other relevant field of study.

Experience:

- A minimum of two years related experience. Equivalencies may be considered.
- Experience conducting field work and data collection in a variety of terrains, habitat types and adverse conditions, and documenting and presenting findings.
- Experience working outdoors for extended periods in variable weather/all seasons in remote locations, over difficult hazardous terrain and under physically demanding circumstances.
- Experience working with volunteers

Skills:

- Well-developed, demonstrable written communication skills, including report and proposal writing skills; an ability to organize and present information clearly and ability to compile, interpret and clearly present information.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including: ability to communicate clearly and to actively listen, mentoring, diplomacy, problem solving and conflict resolution skills. Demonstrated ability to build and support effective relationships with relevant partners and stakeholders

- Demonstrated ability to build and support effective partnerships with relevant conservation organizations, government agencies and other partners, stakeholders and supporters to advance conservation goals and impacts.
- Field Skills: competent in flora and fauna identification habitat classification and Landscape and ecological interpretation,
- Possess a range of practical skills such as signage or trail maintenance & construction, ditch / culvert digging, chainsaw work.
- A valid Class 5 Driver's Licence and able to rent vehicles in Nova Scotia.
- Ability to use a GPS and compass.
- Geographic data skills: Able to prepare and produce maps and organize field GPS and other spatial data, produce GIS mapping (ideally using ESRI ArcGIS 10 software); able to interpret aerial photography, topographic and other field/ecological maps
- Strong computer skills, including proficiency with MS Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), internet, email, social media and databases.

Knowledge

- Knowledge of Nova Scotia's natural landscapes, habitats, natural communities and species, particularly rare and outstanding ecological features.
- Knowledge of best practices in protected areas planning, management and stewardship.
- Knowledge of threats, liabilities and risks to conservation lands and appropriate prevention, management and mitigation options.
- An understanding of land trusts, private land conservation, and land trust standards and practises related to land securement, stewardship and management.
- Knowledge of active land management and stewardship activities (such as erosion control, bridge-building, trail-building, habitat restoration)
- Knowledge of/familiarity with relevant provincial legislation and regulations

Personal Attributes

- Demonstrated ability to work independently, seek assistance and input as required, and to work in interdisciplinary teams.
- Outgoing, confident and friendly personality.
- Comfortable working alone in the field.
- Willingness and ability to travel and work flexible hours at times, including multi-day overnight trips.
- Passion and dedication for environmental conservation.

Desirable Skills & Knowledge

- Familiarity with property transactions (land ownership & title, land claims, registration, Properties Online, etc.)
- Experience working on water (lakes, rivers, ocean) and undertaking wilderness travel by canoe/kayak.
- Standard First Aid Training (Wilderness First Aid).
- Other field related certification / training (such as boat operator, chainsaw operator, trail building, recreational leadership)

Terms of Employment

- This position is offered as a full-time two year contract.
- Start date is as early as possible
- The position is based in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia but will involve working extensively throughout the province.
- The Nova Scotia Nature Trust offers a competitive compensation package.

- Salary commensurate with experience.

How to Apply

The closing date for applications is **Thursday 21st February**

Please send a cover letter, resume and the name and contact details for 3 references merged into one pdf to:

Christina Nunn, Office Coordinator
Nova Scotia Nature Trust
PO Box 284 Station Main, Dartmouth, NS B2Y 3Y3
Email: employment@nsnt.ca

Due to the anticipated volume of applications, we will only be contacting shortlisted candidates. We do greatly appreciate your interest in the work of the Nature Trust