



## Landscape Conservation Attorney Job Announcement March 2022

Conservation Law Center seeks applications for the **Landscape Conservation Attorney** to join our team based in the beautiful Midwestern college town of Bloomington, Indiana.

### **Background: Conservation Law Center**

Conservation Law Center (CLC) is a nonprofit public interest law firm. We are lawyers, advocates, and educators who care deeply about the natural world and people's relationship to it. We work to protect and improve the health, diversity, beauty, and resilience of the planet and defend our shared natural heritage. CLC provides pro bono legal support to conservation nonprofits and agencies, and works with clients on a wide range of transactional, policy, and litigation matters pertaining to regional, national, and international conservation issues.

CLC has particular interest and expertise in several topics, including land protection, conservation easements, the Public Trust doctrine, species preservation, and the protection of freshwater ecosystems especially in the Great Lakes region. While we focus on land, water, and species, climate change is a factor in nearly all the issues we address. In addition to representing dozens of clients around the US, Conservation Law Center also supports conservation clients in Costa Rica, and we expect our international programs to grow. Conservation Law Center was founded in 2005 by attorney W. William Weeks, former EVP and COO of The Nature Conservancy, who currently serves as the Center's board chair.

CLC also operates the Conservation Law Clinic in partnership with the Maurer School of Law at Indiana University. In that capacity, CLC works with 2L and 3L student interns on its active projects, advising clients, and researching legal remedies and policy solutions on conservation issues.

### **Background: Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape**

CLC recently helped lead the effort to designate 3.5 million acres in southern Indiana as a federal Sentinel Landscape. ([www.sentinellandscapes.org](http://www.sentinellandscapes.org).) The U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Defense, and Interior established the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership in 2013. This program is a nationwide federal, state, and local collaboration dedicated to promoting natural

resource sustainability and the preservation of agricultural and conservation land uses in areas surrounding military installations. Agencies from the three Departments coordinate the partnership through the Sentinel Landscape Federal Coordination Committee.

The Sentinel Landscapes program seeks to incentivize private landowners to manage these landscapes in ways that are compatible to the nation's defense and healthy environmental stewardship. The local partnership connects private landowners within the Sentinel Landscape boundary with federal and state resources to enhance their land management practices in ways that preserve both economic and ecosystem health. For more background information on the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape, visit: <https://conservationlawcenter.org/sentinel>.

This Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape is one of only 10 such areas in the entire country. It is larger than Yellowstone National Park by over 50% and is roughly the size of the State of Connecticut. The project area focuses on landscape conservation on a scale not often seen, especially in the Midwest.

### **Job Description**

This is an exciting opportunity to join a growing public interest law firm working on some of the most important and challenging conservation issues in the US and beyond. The Landscape Conservation Attorney will focus primarily on land conservation and habitat protection projects, with a particular focus on the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape project. We are bringing landscape-scale conservation to the heartland, and the Landscape Conservation Attorney position will be a key player in the effort.

The Landscape Conservation Attorney will also assist with advocacy and support for the organization's other substantive focus areas as they relate to habitat conservation and the broader goals of landscape-scale conservation. Additionally, the Landscape Conservation Attorney will help teach students in the Conservation Law Clinic at Indiana University's Maurer School of Law. While CLC engages in multiple kinds of conservation advocacy, roughly one-third to one-half of CLC's work involves litigation. While we do not expect the Landscape Conservation Attorney to focus on litigation, we do expect this position to contribute to CLC's ongoing projects while also developing their own practice. This may occasionally include litigation in support of conservation easement defense, for example. CLC expects the Landscape Conservation Attorney to support the organization's existing projects and find creative and strategic ways to expand our land conservation practice, especially in support of Sentinel Landscapes. This full-time position is open to practicing attorneys with three or more years' experience.

## **Responsibilities:**

- Engage in team problem solving, project management, trial work, and legislative strategies where appropriate
- Work closely and collaboratively with the Sentinel Landscapes Program Coordinator to accomplish project objectives
- Develop and implement client relationships
- Work collaboratively with other CLC attorneys and staff, and help create a supportive and collegial work environment
- Help supervise and mentor junior and graduate fellow attorneys
- Help teach 2L and 3L students through active client matters in the Conservation Law Clinic
- Develop lectures and discussions on a wide variety of conservation topics to present in seminars and other forums
- Help cultivate strategic relationships with clients, partners, experts, and funders
- Help CLC communicate its work in support of its fundraising and marketing efforts
- Engage in professional development, including attending conferences and participating in opportunities to develop policy papers and articles
- Participating in conservation and environmental networks relevant to CLC's and the Sentinel Landscape program focus areas

## **Qualifications**

- J.D. and admission to the Indiana Bar (or willingness to take the Indiana bar) with a minimum of 3 years of legal experience
- Working knowledge of federal and state conservation programs
- Experience working with agricultural community, local governments, and/or private landowners on conservation projects
- Demonstrated ability to craft creative solutions to complex problems, and the ability to close mutually beneficial land deals
- Professional experience in partnership building and management
- Broad understanding of political, cultural, economic, and environmental issues within the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape boundary and the Midwest generally
- Strong legal research, writing, analytical, and oral advocacy skills
- Strong sense of personal initiative and work ethic, good judgment, creativity, flexibility
- Commitment and ability to be an exceptional teacher and mentor to early career attorneys and students
- Strong communication skills and the willingness to advocate for CLC's mission with media, partners, and funders

- Outstanding academic record
- Demonstrated commitment to CLC's core focus areas
- Strong interpersonal skills and the desire to be a member of a supportive team
- Ability and willingness to travel as necessary in support of CLC's work

### **Additional Background**

CLC is in a period of growth and we expect to add several other positions in the coming months. In addition to the Landscape Conservation Attorney position, CLC expects to hire at least two more positions, including a full-time Senior Attorney, as well as a Project Coordinator to work on the Sentinel Landscapes program. CLC also expects to add an additional full-time Associate Attorney in early 2023, bringing the number of staff to eight people (five attorneys).

We value applicants who have a broad range of interests and experience, along with a desire to advance innovative conservation strategies. Conservation Law Center is committed to equal opportunity for applicants from groups that are historically under-represented at professional levels within the field of conservation, including women and people of color, who are strongly encouraged to apply.

Bloomington, Indiana is located in the unglaciated hardwood hills of southern Indiana, and is home to Indiana University's flagship campus. The community celebrates its natural beauty, outstanding cultural offerings and food scene, high-quality schools, and convenient access to the outstanding Indianapolis International Airport. Bloomington is 1 hour drive to Indianapolis, 1.5 hours to Louisville, 3 hours to Cincinnati, 3.5 hours to St. Louis, and 4 hours to Chicago.

### **Application Process**

Interested candidates must submit a cover letter, C.V., references, and writing sample (10 pages max) to Office Manager, Melissa Berry at [berrym@indiana.edu](mailto:berrym@indiana.edu), Attn: Landscape Conservation Attorney. PDF format is preferred.

CLC hopes to fill this position as soon as possible. Applications received before April 30 will receive preference. We will accept applications until the position is filled.

### **Salary and Benefits**

Conservation Law Center offers salaries competitive with leading national environmental nonprofits including a benefits package for employees and their families that includes health, dental, vision, as well as a retirement match. Expected salary range for the Landscape Conservation Attorney position is \$75,000-\$85,000.

Special appreciation and thanks to the Sam Shine Foundation which helped make this position possible.

*We are an equal employment opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, ethnicity, color, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law.*

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