



Title: Community Open Space Manager
Date Posted: February 27th, 2026
Location: Missoula, MT
Reports to: Associate Director
Status: Full-time/Exempt
Salary: \$60,000-65,000
Benefits: 25 days of paid time off a year, with longevity increases
9 paid holidays/year
403(B) Retirement Plan with match and employer contribution
100% coverage of employee’s health insurance with a dental option
FSA/HSA Options
Short and Long Term Disability
Sabbatical Opportunities

Five Valleys Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer and values candidates who bring diverse perspectives to our work.

About Five Valleys Land Trust

Five Valleys Land Trust works to protect the western Montana landscapes that shape our lives—clean rivers, working ranchlands, wildlife habitat, and the open spaces people return to again and again. Based in Missoula, we’ve been a trusted local partner in conservation for more than 50 years.

We work alongside private landowners, communities, and partners across the Bitterroot, Blackfoot, Upper Clark Fork, Missoula/Lower Clark Fork, and Mission–Jocko valleys to protect land in ways that respect both people and place. Through more than 200 conservation easements, we’ve helped safeguard over 83,000 acres of private land, ensuring working lands stay productive, wildlife has room to move, and water stays clean.

Five Valleys also owns and manages more than 3,000 acres of land open to the public, including well-loved places like the Rock Creek Confluence near Clinton and Lincoln Community River Park. Our work extends to community-driven projects such as the Mount Dean Stone Community Forest in Missoula, where conservation, access, and long-term stewardship come together.

At our core, Five Valleys is a community institution—rooted in place, grounded in expertise, and committed to protecting land in perpetuity as western Montana continues to grow and change.

Position Overview

Community open spaces are how Five Valleys shows up for people—right where they live, recreate, and connect with the land. The Community Open Space Manager helps ensure that the lands Five Valleys owns and cares for, as well as partner lands, are welcoming, well-managed, and resilient, supporting both healthy ecosystems and meaningful public experiences.

The primary responsibilities of the Community Open Space Manager are to manage and implement day to day operations for Five Valleys-owned lands, as well as the Community Open Space Program at Five Valleys, and to advance Five Valleys Strategic Plan goals including: 1) invest in partnerships and build support to manage sustainable use of open-space lands, 2) improve the quality of existing open-space for ecological outcomes and human benefit, and 3) help people connect to the land to expand public support for community open space. This work primarily revolves around land and public access management on community open spaces owned by Five Valleys, public access management where it is guaranteed through Five Valleys-held conservation easements, and management of the Front Country Stewardship Program to improve user experiences and management outcomes across the Missoula front country. The Community Open Space Manager is a core member of the Five Valleys' conservation program team and also works closely with Five Valleys' lands, stewardship, outreach, and communications staff to support coordinated, effective management of community open spaces. The Land Manager's work will be guided by Five Valleys' Strategic Business Plan, policies and procedures, mission, and core values of excellence, integrity, cooperation, and patience.

Responsibilities

The major responsibilities associated with the Community Open Space Manager position are listed below. The time allocation provided is approximate. The Associate Director, in consultation with the Community Open Space Manager, will determine allocations during annual work planning.

Community Open Space Program Management (40%)

The Community Open Space Program focuses on the day-to-day leadership and coordination required to care for Five Valleys-owned lands and support safe, welcoming public access.

- Manage the implementation of the fee lands and Community Open Space Program at Five Valleys by collaborating on the budget and managing staff, contractors, and volunteers to advance organizational and program goals
- With support from the Associate Director, develop and manage the Front Country Stewardship Program, working across jurisdictions with front-country recreation partners to advance shared land and public access management goals
- Participate in programmatic funding proposals including identifying sources, grant writing and partner development
- Directly manage, support, and evaluate Community Open Space Program staff; model and support land stewardship best practices; and lead by example by participating in and coordinating hands-on stewardship activities throughout the year, including routine tasks such as trash and dog-waste pickup, vandalism repair, and wayfinding maintenance
- Participate and make recommendations for Fee Lands and Community Open Space segments of annual operating budget
- Coordinate with Associate Director to ensure that Community Open Space Program follows Five Valleys policies and procedures and Land Trust Alliance Standard 12: Fee Land Stewardship

- Represent Fee Lands and Community Open Space by providing operational input to support organizational strategic goals and outcomes

Land Management (40%)

Land management at Five Valleys focuses on translating strategic goals into on-the-ground stewardship, restoration, and public access outcomes.

- Develop and implement management plans for properties owned and managed by Five Valleys
- Work with the Associate Director to develop, fund, and implement land management, stewardship, and recreation projects on Five Valleys-owned lands
- Oversee the development, restoration, and stewardship of Five Valleys' held public access and trail easements
- Manage Five Valleys staff, contractors, and volunteers to develop, restore, and steward Five Valleys' fee lands and public access and trail easements
- Lead grant writing initiatives, in coordination with Five Valleys staff and partners, to support work on fee lands
- Serve as the primary point of contact for landowners, community members, and partners regarding questions and work related to fee lands and public access management
- Build and maintain relationships with landowners, community members, and partners to advance the conservation initiatives outlined in Five Valleys' Strategic Plan
- Respond in a timely manner to documented issues, questions, comments, and concerns from stakeholders related to fee lands and public access

Outreach, Communications, and Events (10%)

This work supports Five Valleys' stewardship efforts by helping connect people to the land through communications, volunteer projects, and community events.

- Collaborate with Outreach staff to assist with Five Valleys' communications efforts using a variety of media, including email, photography, the Five Valleys website, and in-person trainings, gatherings, or workshops
- Work with stewardship and outreach staff to organize and coordinate Hands on the Land volunteer stewardship projects, education activities, and community events

Other Related Duties (10%)

- Assist with Land Protection Program tasks such as budgeting, filing, reporting, grant writing, and planning
- Complete administrative tasks such as time tracking and submitting expenses on time
- Other duties as assigned

Essential Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in natural resources and/or recreation related field or equivalent experience
- Five years of experience in land/public access management, conservation, or natural resource management relevant to western Montana
- Three to Five years of experience demonstrated experience in making management decisions that balance diverse community or resource interests
- Three to Five years of experience demonstrated experience developing, funding, and managing implementation of land management, recreation management, or related projects

- Three to Five years of experience demonstrated ability to make day-to-day land or recreation management decisions within established policies and to elevate complex or high-risk issues appropriately.
- Three to Five years of experience supervising or coordinating the work of staff, contractors, and/or volunteers, including setting expectations, providing guidance, and supporting successful outcomes
- Demonstrated experience working with stakeholders, partners and the public
- Excellent interpersonal skills and genuine interest in meeting new people and interacting regularly with members of the general public; tolerance for a wide range of perspectives, views, and ideas
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail
- Ability to build trust and maintain strong relationships with people
- Ability to lift up to 25 lbs. and use hand and power tools
- Ability to drive independently and possess a valid, insurable driver's license and verified acceptable driving record, or the ability to obtain driver's license within 30 days of hire
- Enthusiasm for private land protection, community open space, and Five Valleys' mission, goals, and values
- Desire to work in a highly collaborative, team-based environment, but able to work independently

Preferred Qualifications

- Master's Degree or equivalent experience in recreation management, botany, restoration ecology, wildlife biology, or other related natural resources field
- Experience contributing to and implementing land or recreation management plans, including taking primary responsibility for assigned sections or projects
- Demonstrated ability to take initiative, exercise sound judgment in day-to-day decision-making, and appropriately elevate complex or high-risk issues.
- Demonstrated ability to manage and resolve conflict
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office 365; ability to learn new computer programs and database management systems; Mac(iOS) experience
- Experience using ArcGIS and GPS technology
- Ability to work outdoors for extended periods of time in all weather conditions
- Ability to traverse steep, uneven terrain and up to several miles/day carrying a backpack and tools

Scope and Authority

The Community Open Space Manager is responsible for implementing and managing Community Open Space and fee land operations and for making routine operational decisions consistent with Five Valleys Land Trust policies and approved plans.

Workload and Time

The Community Open Space Manager will work closely with Associate Director and Open Space Program team. Job responsibilities are a mix of in-office and field work, and the ideal candidate will be comfortable in both settings. The position requires irregular hours at times, including some evenings and weekends, to attend meetings or events or to accommodate landowner, partner, or volunteer schedules. The position generally does not require overnight travel.

As a professional, exempt position, the Community Open Space Manager is expected to balance the responsibility and flexibility in the job through annual work planning and regular communication with team; be responsive to organizational needs for accountability and presence in the office; and complete work generally within the time

allocated for the job. The Community Open Space Manager should inform the Associate Director of difficulties in meeting the expectations of the job description.

Our Hiring Process & Timeline:

Please submit your resume and a cover letter explaining your interest in the position to Boston Wakeham, Finance and Operations Director (boston@fvlt.org). This position will remain open until filled. Applications will be reviewed starting March 18th. Selected applicants will be sent an email with details for the interviewing process.