



Driftless Area Land Conservancy

SOUTHERN DRIFTLESS GRASSLANDS PROJECT MANAGER

The mission of the [Driftless Area Land Conservancy](#) (DALC) is to maintain and enhance the health, diversity and beauty of Southwest Wisconsin's natural and agricultural landscape through permanent land protection and restoration, and to improve people's lives by connecting them to the land and to each other. We have permanently protected over 8,000 acres of forests, savannas, prairies, farms and cultural resources by working with private landowners and conservation partners, and we deliver educational programs that connect kids and adults to the natural world. We also coordinate three diverse partnerships of landowners and conservation agencies/organizations: the Lowery Creek Watershed Initiative, Southern Driftless Grasslands, and the Driftless Trail project.



[Southern Driftless Grasslands](#) is a diverse partnership of government agencies, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders with a mission of actively supporting the conservation of grasslands in Southwest Wisconsin to benefit the region's wildlife, water, farms, and communities. We envision Southwestern Wisconsin to be a place rich with healthy grasslands, successful working farms, clear flowing streams, diverse wildlife, and people who value and enjoy this landscape.

The Southern Driftless Grasslands (SDG) Project Manager (PM) is an employee of DALC, but the position is funded by the SDG partnership (of which DALC is a contributing member), and is supervised by the SDG Steering Committee (on which DALC serves). DALC prides itself on being a supportive, collaborative, and flexible work environment and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Position Summary

This position will coordinate and implement grassland conservation initiatives in southwest Wisconsin's Driftless Area, a region that is crucial within the Upper Midwest for the conservation of prairie, oak savanna, idle grass, pasture, trout streams, and associated plant and animal species, including grassland birds, monarchs, and pollinators.

The Project Manager has two key functions to further the partnership and increase the amount of protected and well-managed grasslands in the project area:

- 1) Acting as a "conservation liaison" to landowners and land managers in the project area, connecting them to technical and financial assistance within the partnership that can help them establish and attain grassland conservation goals; and
- 2) Coordinating the partnership, both a) internally by regular communication with the steering committee and working groups to meet the goals of our strategic plan, and b) externally, acting as the "face" of the partnership, promoting awareness of SDG to the public, welcoming new partners, and building funding capacity.

Job Duties

Conservation liaison (60%)

Assist partners in promoting, coordinating, and delivering conservation programs, focusing on landowners in priority areas as determined by the steering committee. This work includes:

- Serving as initial contact with landowners in the partnership area to understand their goals for their land, providing information about how their land fits into broader landscape conservation initiatives, and connecting them to the people and programs that will help us meet both their goals and partnership goals in the project area (i.e. connecting them with individuals in the partnership);
- Promoting Farm Bill and other conservation delivery programs such as those managed by other partner organizations (e.g, US Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, WI Department of Natural Resources Stamp Funds, etc.);
- Working with conservation organizations such as land trusts to promote protection of grasslands through a variety of means (easements, fee-title acquisition, CRP, etc.);
- Working with partners to track program and event participation and leverage previous surveys and partner datasets to connect with unengaged landowners; and
- Staying abreast of current and emerging opportunities to help private landowners protect and manage grasslands, such as carbon credit markets, a potential new opportunity in our area.

Focus efforts on outcome-based accomplishments by promoting work on:

- Conservation targets (e.g., increased bird and pollinator abundance)
- Activities with measurable metrics (e.g., participation in outreach events that translates to increased stewardship of conservation targets)

Partnership Coordination (35%)

Work with partners to achieve goals of our strategic plan through

- Call and facilitate regular steering committee, working groups, and full network meetings, including recording minutes and identifying action items.
- With the Steering Committee, prepare and implement annual work plans and budgets for the partnership

Work with partners to secure funding for the partnership

- Continue building capacity to provide funding for staffing the project manager position and future staff allocations
- Coordinate with partners to identify leveraged funding to support grant matching contributions.
- Assist partners with securing funding for conservation delivery (management and protection of prairies/grasslands), outreach (landowner workshops, public field trips, etc.), and communications (mailings to promote specific programs, partnership events, etc.) and actively participate in successful grant awards when appropriate.

Build a louder voice for prairie in Wisconsin by telling the story of prairie/grasslands from the eyes of landowners/organizations through

- Social media presence – [Facebook](#)
- Interactive [website](#) designed to engage stakeholders
- Written communications such as mailings, press releases, newspaper articles, newsletters.

Performance metrics (5%)

- Develop annual work plan and report of conservation accomplishments.
- Complete grant reporting as required

Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree or equivalent professional experience in Natural Resources or other conservation-related field, and 1-2 years related experience
- Knowledge of and experience managing wildlife habitat on working lands
- Knowledge of the ecology and management of prairies and oak savanna
- Familiarity with USDA conservation programs administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency.
- Strong written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills, including presenting scientific and technical information in a fashion understandable to lay audiences
- Experience leading a partnership or group projects and facilitating meetings
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, stay organized, and follow through independently
- A commitment to rural people, working landscapes, and serving the greater public interest via conservation.
- Ability to actively listen to farmers, landowners, community members, and partners to understand needs and opportunities in promoting grassland management and protection.
- Proficiency with Microsoft programs including Word and Excel; ability to learn new programs including database software
- Must be able to work outdoors, including walking on steep terrain and in poor weather such as rain or heat.

The following qualifications are not required, but strongly preferred:

- Proficiency in commonly-used ArcMap tools
- Experience with typical agricultural concepts employed in Southwest Wisconsin, especially regarding soil health and grazing systems
- Experience with grant writing
- Experience in adult education, event planning, and outreach

Salary and Benefits

This is a full-time (40 hours/week) position located at our office at 206 S. Iowa St in Dodgeville, WI. A part time position may be possible and we offer flexibility with regard to telework. The salary range is \$40,000 - \$50,000 annually depending on qualifications. Benefits include a generous leave policy, including up to three weeks paid vacation in the first year; and retirement. DALC currently does not offer medical benefits but a revised benefits package is part of our growth plan.

An ability to travel (travel expenses are reimbursed) throughout Southwest Wisconsin and some evening and weekend work is necessary. Must provide current driver's license and own vehicle.

To Apply

Inquiries about the position should be directed to Cindy Becker at cindy@driftlessconservancy.org or 608/930-3252.

Final application materials - a cover letter and resume – should be emailed to Driftless Area Land Conservancy at info@driftlessconservancy.org.

NOTE: Please put the words “Grasslands Manager” in the subject line of your email. While this position will remain open until filled; please submit your application by 5pm central time on January 29 to be considered in the first round of evaluations. We hope to hire by the end of March 2021.