

Smeja Homestead Foundation, Inc.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Land Manager

Indian Hill Manor & Farm

Job Summary: The Land Manager is responsible for maintaining and rehabilitating the historic landscape, farm, conservation areas and archeological sites owned by the Smeja Homestead Foundation, including Indian Hill Manor and Farm, a site that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Smeja Homestead Foundation is a private operating foundation that owns 560 acres of land located along the Kishwaukee and Rock rivers southwest of Rockford, Illinois. It includes the 26-acre Manor grounds that were laid out in 1918-1920 by O. C. Simonds, one of the leaders of the natural landscaping movement of the early twentieth century, that are being rehabilitated to recreate the original plat and native plantings. The foundation also owns a 160-acre historic farm, 40 acres of wooded bluffs along the Kishwaukee River, 30 acres of land that is enrolled in the USDA Conservation Reserve Program, 285 acres of floodplain forest, and an 18-acre archeological site that is a designated Land & Water Reserve. The Land Manager is responsible for implementing the rehabilitation plan for the manor grounds, developing a model sustainable farming plan for the farm, managing the natural land along the Kishwaukee and Rock rivers, including the land being restored to wetland, prairie and riparian forest through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and developing management plans and policies for the archeological site in cooperation with the Ho Chunk Nation and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

Supervisory Responsibilities: The Land Manager plans and oversees the work of contractors and vendors of work projects on the Foundation's grounds, CRP sites, natural areas and cultural sites. This includes securing contractors, adhering to the contracted scope of work and timelines, high quality control, and proper and safe use of work materials, tools, and equipment. The Land Manager also will supervise paid seasonal workers, volunteers, hunters, students, and other persons, as assigned, to ensure proper and safe use of tools and equipment and adherence to work plans.

Duties/Responsibilities:

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential function satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

An individual is required to physically perform many of the following Duties/Responsibilities, in addition to overseeing and supervising others who are performing them.

Landscape Restoration and Maintenance

- Oversee and perform cyclical, seasonal, and emergency maintenance of the gardens, grounds and natural resources.

- Develop and implement detailed project restoration, preservation, or maintenance plans for the Foundation's historic, character-defining landscapes.
- Develop and implement a sustainable farming plan for Indian Hill Farm to regenerate soil organic matter, maintain wildlife habitat and demonstrate conservation practices.
- Maintain lawns, flower beds, planters, borders, trees and other plantings.
- Maintain all related records including use of plant material, scheduled maintenance, and documentation of results.
- Stake, prune or remove trees and shrubs using acceptable methods.
- Operate tools including lawnmowers, tractors and mowers, weed eater, shovels and rakes, chain saw and hand tools.
- Apply pesticide to control weeds in flower beds, borders, windbreaks and CRP areas.
- Ensure clean, well-kept gardens and grounds free of weeds, litter and debris.
- Oversee the restoration and management of property enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, archeological sites and natural areas.
- Assist Caretaker in maintaining vehicles, tools and equipment.

Management and Administration

- Participate in the formation of the annual budget and make decisions regarding spending where authorized. Track actual expenditures for assigned projects, operations, and accounts and reconcile with budget.
- Initiate and/or supervise purchase of supplies, plant material and equipment.
- Contribute to annual long-range budgeting and planning efforts, gathering cost estimates for capital improvement projects and ongoing operations.
- Ensure that seasonal employees and volunteers complete appropriate training in fire safety, disaster preparedness, hazardous communication, and safety.
- Arrange for and manage contractors as needed. Assist with negotiating contracts and licenses for professional services and review invoices from contractors for accuracy.
- Managing hunting leases on Foundation land and overseeing required stewardship projects.

Community Engagement

- Monitor the use of the grounds for events and programs to ensure proper and safe use.
- Work with staff on logistics related to tours, events and special property uses to ensure safe and rewarding experiences for audiences and visitors.
- Interact with visitors, students and teachers in a professional, courteous manner.
- Lead groups on tours of the grounds when needed to explain the concepts of a natural landscape as designed by O. C. Simonds.

Required Skills/Abilities:

- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Excellent time management skills with a proven ability to meet deadlines.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Strong supervisory and leadership skills.
- Ability to prioritize tasks and to delegate them when appropriate.

- Must meet and adhere to all State requirements for supervision of individuals under 18 and 21 years of age.

Education, Licenses and Experience:

Bachelor's degree in Horticulture, Sustainable Agriculture, Ecology, Forestry, Natural Resources, or a similar field of study. Several years of experience can be suitable substitute for an academic degree.

A minimum of 3-4 years of professional or volunteer experience in the field of natural resource management and restoration, natural landscaping or sustainable farming preferred.

Working knowledge of native plants indigenous to northern Illinois, and ability to identify and manage invasive species.

Required pesticide applicators license and/or certifications, or ability to attain a license.

Previous experience working with the public and volunteers is desired.

Proficient in the use and maintenance of power tools, tractors and other heavy equipment.

Experience conducting prescribed burns and/or S130/190 certification.

Possess a valid driver's license and own vehicle.

Physical Requirements:

The job requires physical demands that must be met by an employee to successfully perform essential functions. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job the employee must be able to frequently lift/carry up to 50 lbs. unassisted. The employee will frequently perform moderate physical activity and occasionally somewhat strenuous daily activities that require considerable use of their arms and legs, moving their whole body, climbing, lifting, balancing, walking, stooping, bending and handling of tools and chemicals. The employee must have the ability to move their hands, together with their arm, or two hands to grasp, manipulate tools or assemble objects. Manual dexterity sufficient to work using the fingers is required.

Working Conditions:

Work will be performed mostly outdoor, and the employee will be exposed to changing weather conditions (rain, sun, wind, snow, heat, humidity etc.) and certain types of pollen, strong scents and allergens. The job requires that the employee follow standard safety procedures, be alert and take necessary precautions (e.g. wearing/using protective clothes, gloves and equipment, hearing and eye protection, respirators) to avoid possible injuries or health problems that may result from: walking on irregular ground; exposure to irritants and chemicals; working around moving equipment and power tools; working at heights and elevations; exposure to extreme cold and heat for periods of more than one hour; noise; atmospheric conditions that may affect the respiratory system or skin; fumes, odor, dusts, mists, gases, or poor ventilation. Work schedules may include weekends and evenings.

Salary and Benefits: This is a full-time, (40 hours a week) permanent position located at Indian Hill Manor, Rockford, Illinois. The starting salary range is \$35,000 - \$45,000 depending on qualifications and experience. Benefits include up to 3 weeks paid vacation, one-half (1/2) of

FICA and Medicare taxes, Workers Compensation Insurance and Unemployment Compensation Insurance. A portable health insurance policy and retirement plan may be provided, with Board approval. Out-of-pocket expenses and travel expenses are reimbursable as prescribed in the Foundation's Reimbursement Policy.

To Apply: To apply, submit a cover letter and resume to:
Jerry Paulson, President, Smeja Homestead Foundation at: info@indianhillmanor.net.
by April 30, 2022. For information about this position contact:

Jerry Paulson
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The Foundation does not discriminate due to age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin or disability when making decisions regarding employment.

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