



Position: Rural Lands Attorney

Reports to: Deputy Director

Status: Permanent, Exempt, 1.0 FTE

Hours: 37.5 hours per week. Primarily weekdays, some evenings and weekends required.

Compensation: Salary = \$60,000 to \$80,000 DOE

Benefits: Medical plan. Dental plan. Vision plan. Retirement plan. Paid holidays. Accrued PTO and Sick Days. Sabbatical plan.

Location: TBD, Oregon

Help shape Oregon's future!

Founded in 1974 by Governor Tom McCall, 1000 Friends was created as a watchdog organization to protect Oregon's land use system. Now, 45 years later, we are responsible for the protection of the 61.3 million acres of our state's spectacular natural areas, rivers, lakes and streams, and our thriving working lands that contain some of the most productive lands in the world. Additionally, within the 800,000 acres inside of the urban growth boundaries of our 241 cities and towns, we work to increase housing and transportation options and investments in parks and natural areas to maintain livability for an increasing population statewide. Join our team today!

Our Mission

Working with Oregonians to enhance our quality of life by building livable urban and rural communities, protecting family farms and forests, and conserving natural areas.

Our Vision

The ultimate outcome sought by 1000 Friends is an Oregon in which all people share in the economic and ecological benefits of great communities and healthy working landscapes.

Our Values

We believe in the uniqueness of Oregon and a livable state for all Oregonians.

A state that sustains with fruitful working lands and breathtaking iconic places.

A state that thrives because of great communities that welcome all.

A state we call home.

Equity Statement

We know that land ownership, as well as land use policies and processes, have not always been equitable. Land ownership has been racially restricted, land use entitlements have favored those with access to decision-makers, and public engagement in land use planning has not reached communities of color and communities with low incomes. Our work at 1000

Friends carries a special responsibility to address equity, diversity, and inclusion because we deal with land and the land use planning system. We think 1000 Friends must consider equity in the land use system while simultaneously working to accomplish our mission. We will work to achieve equity in the decisions that govern 1000 Friends and in the policies for which we advocate and use equity as one of our core metrics for evaluating the effectiveness of our work.

Our Investments in Our Team

1000 Friends of Oregon offers competitive compensation, 403(b)k or savings-plan matching for eligible employees, excellent benefits, flexible/family-friendly work schedules, generous paid vacation and sabbatical plan, and a collaborative work environment. We also provide professional development opportunities. As a result, you will find a culture that supports and inspires achievement and personal development.

Background

For almost fifty years 1000 Friends has marshaled the land use movement. Driven by a passion for protecting Oregon's farmland, forests, iconic landscapes, and the sustainability of rural communities, Oregonians championed a different approach to land — a community-based approach within a statewide legal structure. 1000 Friends seeks to add a staff attorney to our team, whose focus will be working with Oregonians to protect farm and forest lands and natural resources in rural Oregon.

People appreciate the power of Oregon's land use system when they see it properly implemented on local issues they care about, which often requires the assistance of 1000 Friends. Rural issues in which we engage include protecting coastal dunes, preventing nonfarm development on farm land, ensuring proper conditions are placed and enforced on permitted activities in rural areas, limiting development in wildfire-prone areas, protecting forested areas for multiple resource values, working with rural communities to support sustainable economic development, and more.

Position Description

The Rural Lands Attorney will work with individuals and organizations across the state to ensure that Oregon's land use laws protecting farm, forest, and ranch lands and natural resources are implemented legally at the local and state level. This will involve providing technical and legal advice and, when appropriate, legal representation. The position will also oversee and grow the 1000 Friends' Cooperating Attorney Program, to increase the breadth of enforcement of land use laws. Among other things, these collaborative efforts will help the Rural Lands Attorney to identify fact-patterns calling for strategic litigation. These efforts will also strengthen and grow 1000 Friends' understanding of and relationships with rural communities across Oregon.

The Rural Lands Attorney will work with the Rural Lands Legislative Advocate and the Food Systems Program Director to identify existing laws and administrative rules that should be changed because they are failing to protect Oregon's farm and forest lands and natural resources, and will help conceptualize new statutes and rules to improve the land use program. As part of this, the Rural Lands Attorney will provide technical assistance to the Legislative Advocate as needed in drafting any proposed legislation and rules.

The Rural Lands Attorney will also collaborate with the 1000 Friends Communications Manager and Working Lands Engagement Coordinator to publicize when land use laws are being abused, to demonstrate the benefits of the land use program in rural communities, and to advocate for proper implementation of the land use program.

Job Duties

- Engage with rural land use activists, 1000 Friends' affiliated organizations, Farmer Advisory Committee (FAC), and other allies to understand how the land use program is being implemented at the local level, primarily by counties. Learn where it is working and where it is not, and why not.
- Review land use plan amendments proposed by counties on rural lands and provide technical and legal comments where appropriate, often working with and/or representing local activists, the Farmer Advisory Committee, and organizations.
- Strategically appeal local land use decisions on farm, forest, and resource lands that do not comply with land use laws, often representing local activists, the Farmers Advisory Committee, or organizations. Appeals are to the Land Use Board of Appeals and occasionally to the Oregon Court of Appeals, and less often, to the Oregon Supreme Court.
- Develop strategic impactful cases that will help change the land use system by confirming the meaning and purpose of land use laws.
- Look for opportunities to use the land use program to protect iconic Oregon landscapes.
- Reinvigorate and grow the 1000 Friends Cooperating Attorneys Program (CAP), which is made up of attorneys and law firms who agree to handle an occasional land use case pro bono. Manage the CAP program as a complementary enforcement tool against illegal local government land-use decision-making in rural areas. This will involve:
 - Growing the list of attorneys and law firms who agree to join the CAP program.
 - Working primarily with 1000 Friends affiliated organizations to connect local clients with a CAP attorney for cases that are winnable and further the objectives of both 1000 Friends and the CAP client.
 - Providing support to CAP attorneys as necessary.
 - Ensuring the CAP program and cases follow all legal and professional liability requirements.

- Work with the 1000 Friends Communications Manager to publicize the importance to Oregon and Oregonians of enforcing the land use planning program.
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with local and state government staff and officials.
- Develop and present, with the staff team, training for activists, affiliates, and FAC on substantive and procedural land use issues.
- Respond as appropriate to questions on rural lands from members, activists, and media.

Required Qualifications

- Familiarity with land use law and the Land Use Board of Appeals.
- J.D. and active membership in the Oregon State Bar.
- Land use litigation experience.
- Commitment to the goals and vision of 1000 Friends of Oregon.
- Knowledge of legal research methods.
- Strong analytical ability and technical and persuasive writing skills.
- Self-directed, self-motivated, organized, and attentive to detail.
- Strong public speaking skills.
- Assertive, persistent, and effective in working and with public officials and staff.
- Valid driver's license and safe driving record.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience working in the non-profit sector.

How To Apply

To apply, submit a résumé, 3 professional references, and a cover letter describing how your experience and skills match the needs of the organization. **Provide these materials as a single PDF document** and email them to jobs@friends.org with “Rural Lands Attorney” in the subject line. This position will remain posted until filled.

1000 Friends is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Our commitment to diversity includes the recognition that our mission is best advanced by the leadership and contributions of men and women of diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and culture. Recruiting and mentoring staff to create an inclusive organization that reflects our character is a priority and we encourage applicants from all cultures, races, colors, religions, sexes, national or regional origins, ages, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity, military, protected veteran status or other status protected by law.

The successful applicant must meet the requirements of 1000 Friends background screening process.