



## SCMTS Job Description

# Trails Planner

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### **About SCMTS**

Santa Cruz Mountains Trails Stewardship (SCMTS) is a nonprofit trail stewardship organization dedicated to trail building, responsible land management, and education. We work to support, preserve, and expand sustainable trail access throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains area. We're trail builders, resource management experts, and outdoor enthusiasts who are driven to provide legal, equitable, and sustainable trails for all users. The organization offers a generous four-day workweek, supporting work-life balance while maintaining high-impact results.

### **Position Summary**

SCMTS' Trails Planner is a mid- to senior-level planning and project development role, responsible for advancing trail projects both existing and prospective, from early concept through "shovel-ready" status. This role serves as SCMTS' primary point of contact with land managers, public agencies, and partners, and plays a central role in developing new business, managing the project development pipeline, coordinating planning processes, and developing cost estimates and scopes to support project decision-making and fundraising.

The Trails Planner works closely with the Planning Director, Executive Director, Construction Project Manager, Superintendent, and project staff to translate partner needs and planning requirements into well-scoped, feasible projects. While this role does not perform trail layout or design, it supports and coordinates planning efforts by navigating land manager and agency planning requirements, reviewing planning documents, analyzing permitting and environmental review requirements for trail projects, managing consultants and staff resources, and preparing proposals, reports, budgets, and agreements for approval.

This position is ideal for a highly organized, proactive relationship-builder who is comfortable navigating private and public-sector planning environments, managing multiple stakeholders, and representing SCMTS in planning and project development conversations.

This is expected to be on a hybrid arrangement including, at least, Monday and Wednesday in the office in Santa Cruz. Must have reliable personal vehicle for travel to various job sites in Santa Cruz and surrounding counties (company vehicles available periodically).

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### **Responsibilities**

#### **Project Development & Planning Coordination (50%)**

- Serve as the primary driver and project manager for developing new trail and trail-related projects where SCMTS supports project planning or delivery (e.g., new trail systems, pump tracks, self-funded trail work, and fee-for-service projects)
- Responsible for the project development from initial concept through approval, including stakeholder outreach and engagement, environmental review, permitting, and other required project approvals by regulatory agencies or public land partners, to then hand off to construction or implementation teams
- Coordinate planning resources, including subconsultants, internal technical staff, and partner collaborators to drive project development
- Track land manager and partner planning processes (e.g., management plans, trail plans, access planning and long-range visioning efforts) and provide organizational input on behalf of SCMTS
- Serve as the primary administrative and project-level communications contact for planning project partners and clients including land managers, public agencies, consultants, and community partners
- Regularly communicate project schedules, budget status, deliverables, and anticipated changes to partners
- Translate partner goals and constraints into clear internal direction for SCMTS' planning and implementation teams

#### **New Projects & Business Development (40%)**

- Represent SCMTS in meetings, site visits, and planning discussions with external stakeholders and clients
- Drive cost estimate development and project scopes for fee-for-service and self-funded work for review and approval with the Trails Planning Director and Construction Project Manager
- Act as SCMTS' primary point of contact for incoming project inquiries and new partnership opportunities
- Monitor bid boards, RFPs, and other sources to identify potential fee-for-service and planning work
- Building and maintaining project pipeline to track new business opportunities and support forecasting
- Respond to RFPs and assist in preparing written proposals, scopes of work, schedules, and budgets
- Support SCMTS grant applications

#### **Contract & Project Administration (10%)**

- Contract review, development and administration for planning and project development work in coordination with SCMTS leadership
- Develop and manage MOUs, planning agreements and pre-construction contracts
- Manage planning-phase subcontractor administration, including obtaining quotes, certificates of insurance and bonds, etc. as required
- Ensure reporting, documentation, and compliance requirements for grant-funded and public projects are fulfilled.

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- Maintain organized project records and documentation in SCMTS' shared systems (e.g., Google Drive), including accurate tracking of in-kind support

### **Qualifications**

#### Required

- 3-5+ years of professional experience in trail planning, parks or recreation planning, natural resource management, land use planning, project development, or a closely related field
- Enthusiasm and interest in SCMTS' work and mission
- Experience with trail systems, outdoor recreation, or active transportation planning
- Demonstrated experience coordinating projects with public agencies, land managers, consultants, or nonprofit partners
- Strong project management, organizational, and time-management skills, with the ability to manage multiple projects concurrently
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, particularly for proposals, reports, and partner communications
- Proven ability to build trust-based relationships and navigate complex, multi-stakeholder environments
- Comfort working independently with a high degree of initiative and judgment
- Proficiency with common workplace tools (Google Workspace, project management platforms, spreadsheets)

### **Additional Desired Skills**

- Familiarity with environmental review, land management planning processes, permitting or regulatory frameworks relevant to public lands, including experience with local/regional permitting agencies
- Experience supporting grant-funded projects or public-sector contracts
- Background in natural resources, environmental studies, landscape architecture, recreation planning, or a related field
- Experience coordinating consultants or managing subcontracted work

### **Physical Requirements**

This job requires prolonged sitting and use of a computer and mouse. It may require participation in field trips on uneven trails with variable grades. The job also requires the ability to attend meetings and conduct site visits. These requirements are representative, and reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions.

### **Additional Information**

- Work location is at the SCMTS office in Santa Cruz, California, or remote, depending on circumstances.
- Work time is generally Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Flexible schedules are possible.

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### **Status, Compensation, and Benefits**

This is an exempt full-time staff position with a salary range of \$85K – \$115K per annum depending on experience, with a possibility of part-time arrangement. The probationary period is 6 months. For full-time positions, SCMTS provides:

- A generous 4-day week working pattern running from Monday to Thursday for full-time employees (32 hours/week).
- A comprehensive benefits package paying 100% of employee premiums for health, dental, and vision insurance with competitive family coverage options.
- A 401K retirement plan and matches for each dollar contributed up to 3.5% of employees' salary per year.
- Annual paid leave benefits include 7 holidays, 5 sick days, 12 vacation days and week of Christmas off.

### **Equal Opportunity Policy**

The Company is an equal opportunity employer, drug-free workplace, and complies with ADA regulations as applicable. We particularly encourage applicants from minority and underrepresented groups.

All applicants are considered for all positions without regard to race, religion, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, ancestry, physical/mental disability, medical condition, military/veteran status, genetic information, marital status, ethnicity, alienage or any other protected classification, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws. By completing this application, you are seeking to join a team of hardworking professionals dedicated to consistently delivering outstanding service to our customers and contributing to the financial success of the organization, its stakeholders, and its employees. Equal access to programs, services, and employment is available to all qualified persons. Those applicants requiring accommodation to complete the application and/or interview process should contact a management representative.

### **To Apply**

Submit a cover letter and resume [jobs@santacruztrails.org](mailto:jobs@santacruztrails.org) and quote the job title in the subject line. Please include any pertinent information, including professional and personal experience, that is relevant to the position. The position is open for applications until filled.