

# HEART OF THE ROCKIES INITIATIVE

*A land trust partnership working together to conserve clean water,  
iconic Western landscapes, and the communities that depend upon them.*

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Position Announcement

May 2019

<b>Hours:</b>	1.0 FTE
<b>Status:</b>	Non-Exempt
<b>Location:</b>	Remote – Western Montana
<b>Reports to:</b>	Executive Director
<b>Salary:</b>	Commensurate with western land trusts and experience
<b>Benefits:</b>	9 paid Holidays per year 15 paid Vacation Days per year 10 Sick Leave Days per year Health Insurance in accordance with employee policy for part-time employees Employer contribution SIMPLE IRA

### **Heart of the Rockies Initiative Background**

The Heart of the Rockies Initiative (HOTR) is a partnership of 22 local, state, and national land trust and conservancy members that work along the Central Rocky Mountain corridor in Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Alberta, and British Columbia. The Mission of the Heart of the Rockies Initiative is to increase the pace and durable impact of conservation for both the continentally irreplaceable landscapes of the central Rocky Mountain corridor and the communities that depend on them. Land trusts formed HOTR in 2002 to meld the incredible power of community-based conservation in communities across the Rocky Mountains into a partnership that conserves and restores land and water at ecologically meaningful large landscape scales while respecting local community values. Our members work primarily with private landowners to voluntarily conserve the most ecologically and agriculturally valuable private lands in the Rocky Mountain West. HOTR also partners with many public land managers for landscape goals. Our vision is big picture, strategic conservation that supports local communities and leads to intact and functional ecosystems and successful and resilient communities.

### **Position Overview**

This position seeks to support rural development in western Montana and its communities that are facing changes in land use, wildlife populations, weather, and economic stability. The creation of this position is a deliberate effort to acknowledge that economic and social issues are often at the heart of rural community concerns.

The Rural Development Coordinator is a new position in partnership with the USDA Rural Development (USDA RD) office in Montana to promote key programs to communities in

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western Montana, with a focus on the High Divide. The Coordinator will present a selection of USDA RD program opportunities to rural communities, and will assist communities with development of project proposals and securing loans, grants, or agreements for projects.

Conservation of natural resources relies on retaining working land and people, and supporting thriving rural communities that are directly dependent on natural resources. By marketing and implementing USDA RD programs in high conservation interest areas, this new staff member will work to bridge the gap between conservation, economic, and social values.

## **Essential Functions**

- Explore potential USDA RD programs for applicability in High Divide and western Montana rural communities.
- Establish relationships with key rural western Montana communities through association with the High Divide Collaborative, land trusts, watershed groups, conservation districts, economic development organizations, and other local points of contact.
- Develop opportunities in coordination with community leaders, and, where applicable, partner with local or regional economic development organizations to coordinate and avoid duplicating efforts, and instead support rural access to USDA RD programs and other public and private resources.
- Assist in writing and assembling specific elements of USDA RD program applications.
- Investigate additional funding opportunities to assist in USDA RD applications.
- Monitor and report successes, best practices, and lessons learned to USDA RD and HOTR leadership.
- Investigate opportunities to promote rural develop during national forest plan revisions.
- Identify themes or trends in community priorities to support application of this approach outside of western Montana.
- Other duties as assigned.

## **Supervision**

The Rural Development Coordinator is directly supervised by the HOTR Executive Director. The work of the Rural Development Coordinator is guided by HOTR's Strategic Plan, and HOTR's agreement with USDA RD Montana office.

## **Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

- Skills and interest in collaboration with people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, interests, and experiences.
- Commitment to the mutual goals of sustaining working farms and ranches, and maintaining biological diversity and functioning ecological systems at the landscape scale.

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- Knowledge of the science and practice of large landscape conservation, conservation collaboration, and working with entities engaged in landscape conservation.
- Ability to work independently.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office and Google applications, and capacity to learn new software programs.

## **Desired Education and Experience**

- Bachelor's degree in related field, and a minimum of 5 years of experience in natural resources conservation, rural development, or work directly in rural communities.
- Experience with working in rural communities, relationship building, public speaking, program development, and community outreach.
- Interest in Montana's rural towns and understanding their community visions.
- Experience with USDA Rural Development Programs and applying for federal grants.

## **Working Conditions**

This position may be located anywhere in, and will involve travel within, western Montana. It may be housed in an economic development organization as the program develops. Work will be in close association with rural communities and points of contact, economic development organizations with interest in the communities served, and the USDA RD Montana office to ensure program development follows USDA RD protocols.

## **Application Deadline**

We will start to review applications on June 3, 2019. Open until filled.

## **Application Process**

Applicants should submit a single PDF file containing their cover letter and resume to [gary@heart-of-rockies.org](mailto:gary@heart-of-rockies.org). Please indicate "Rural Development Coordinator Search" in the subject line. Only electronic applications will be accepted. More information about Heart of the Rockies Initiative can be found at our website: [www.heart-of-rockies.org](http://www.heart-of-rockies.org).

**Heart of the Rockies Initiative is an Equal Opportunity Employer**