

SONOMA COUNTY

**AGRICULTURAL
PRESERVATION
+ OPEN SPACE
DISTRICT
GENERAL MANAGER**


Annual Salary

\$153,966 - \$187,152*

Accepting Applications
Through February 28, 2021

County of Sonoma

Sonoma County offers a rare and compelling array of scenic, recreational, and geographic characteristics – including over 200 award-winning wineries, inspiring coastline and beaches, the Russian River, and majestic redwoods. The County encompasses over one million acres of land and water, rich with agriculture, parks, campsites, lakes, and open space. Sonoma County is also home to a wide variety of art and music festivals, farmers' markets, and concert venues. Local schools continually rank high on California's Academic Performance Index, and the Santa Rosa Junior College and Sonoma State University offer higher education opportunities. The County is an increasingly diverse region and home to approximately 500,000 residents. The Latino population has grown by almost 230% within the last 25 years and is approximately 27% of the population. In 2016, slightly over half of Sonoma County's population was between 25 and 64 years old; however, between 2007 and 2016, the fastest growing age range in the county were those aged 65 to 74.



From conservation and stewardship to road maintenance and social services, the County works to improve the lives of all residents


Sonoma is a general law county, governed by a five member Board of Supervisors. The Board is fully committed to a mission and vision that values high quality services to support and enrich the community, provides strong leadership, engages citizen participation, and provides transparency and accuracy in information and an efficient and fiscally sustainable government. The County Administrator leads a team of dedicated department heads who work collaboratively to address and strategically prepare for County challenges and initiatives. The County has 29 departments, agencies, offices, and special districts, employing over 4,000 regular personnel with an annual budget of approximately \$1.9 billion for fiscal year (FY) 20-21. Please visit www.sonomacounty.ca.gov and www.sonomacountyconnections.org for additional information about Sonoma County, the place to live, work, and build your career legacy.

Sonoma County Ag + Open Space

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space) permanently protects the diverse agricultural, natural resource, and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations. Formed in 1990 for the purpose of preserving agricultural land and open space in Sonoma County, Ag + Open Space is responsible for stewarding land protected by conservation easements as well as lands held in fee. Since its inception, Ag + Open Space has protected over 122,300 acres with an acquisition cost of \$431.2 million. The District ranks as one of the top open space and farmland conservation programs in the nation.

Sonoma County voters approved Measures A and C to create the District and enable a quarter-cent sales tax to fund District operations until 2011. In 2006, with 76% of the vote, Sonoma County residents approved Measure F to extend the quarter-cent sales tax through 2031. Ag + Open Space is a separate legal entity from the County, governed by its Board of Directors, which is the County Board of Supervisors, ex officio (California Public Resources Code 5506.5(b)). The Board is responsible for all decisions related to the Expenditure Plan, oversight of operations, and the long-term stewardship of Ag + Open Space-owned land and easements. Ag + Open Space's General Manager reports directly to the Board of Directors and oversees an operating budget of approximately \$55 million for FY 20-21. The goals of Ag + Open Space's General Manager and team of 29 employees are to:

- Maintain the county's rich rural character and the unique qualities of each city and areas throughout the county that help provide our sense of community
- Support the economic vitality of working farms to preserve the agricultural heritage and diversity of the county
- Protect the ridgetops, coastal bluffs, hillsides, and waterways that create the county's striking natural beauty
- Provide connections between urban areas, parks, and natural areas throughout the county for both people and wildlife
- Preserve diverse natural areas that provide habitat for wildlife
- Protect the waterways and natural lands that maintain water quality and supply
- Partner with local agencies and organizations to leverage funding for land protection, foster stewardship, and provide opportunities for recreational and educational experiences



Our land feeds our bodies and souls, and is the most important legacy we can pass on to our children and grandchildren



For more information about Sonoma County Ag + Open Space, please visit www.sonomaopenspace.org.

The Position, Key Challenges & Objectives

The Ag + Open Space General Manager is appointed by the Board of Directors and works under their general policy direction. As an integral member of the County's executive leadership, the General Manager also works effectively and collaboratively with the County Administrator and County department heads, landowners, ranchers and farmers, citizen groups, private entities, and advisory bodies. The General Manager has full responsibility for planning and directing the activities and operations of Ag + Open Space. This includes developing standards for land acquisitions and plans for future acquisitions; acting as the District's agent for negotiations and consulting with land owners and potential donors to obtain gifts of land; and working with various agencies, community, and nonprofit groups to coordinate mutual goals for land planning and resource management. Additionally, the General Manager has responsibility for applying for federal, state, and private funds to supplement tax resources and donations, and analyzing and advocating changes in legislation affecting the District. The Ag + Open Space General Manager is supported by a four-member executive management team, with programmatic responsibilities in the areas of conservation planning, acquisitions, stewardship, and administration and finance.

Some of the key challenges and objectives that the new Ag + Open Space General Manager will be addressing include:

- Leading the District's efforts in achieving the goals set forth in the Vital Land Initiative, a long range comprehensive plan that prioritizes conservation activities through 2031
- Engaging and developing strong partnerships with agricultural organizations and landowners, including farmers, ranchers, and tribal communities, land trusts, non-profits, Sonoma County Regional Parks and other recreational partners, Sonoma Water and other water agencies, resource conservation districts, cities, and community and business groups
- Identifying and implementing process improvements to increase acquisitions, including greenbelts; evaluating dated easement restrictions to determine if amendments are necessary to be consistent with modern, best practices; streamlining the conservation easement process; and evaluating ways to enhance the customer experience
- Working with partner organizations to identify technical and financial resources available to easement landowners, and connecting agricultural producers to available Ag + Open Space agricultural land
- Integrating climate change and extreme event resiliency into all aspects of the District's work, including project prioritization, easement design, and fee land management
- Developing plans to transfer the Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve and Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve to Sonoma County Regional Parks
- Updating the District's Strategic Plan and developing strategies to seek reauthorization of the District's funding measure before 2030
- Ensuring the District's investments and day-to-day operations support the County's objectives on racial equity and social justice



The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate for the Ag + Open Space General Manager will be an experienced professional with strong communication skills along with the interpersonal and relationship building skills to cultivate and maintain harmonious relationships with community stakeholders, subordinates, representative from County departments and agencies, local leaders, and the public. They will be an innovative visionary, who can anticipate issues, thinks analytically, and acts strategically to meet the current and future needs of the District. A decisive leader, who possesses integrity and is diplomatic and politically astute, but apolitical, would be ideal.

The next General Manager will be a responsive leader, someone who is even-tempered, collaborative, open, and committed to fostering a team environment, in which ideas and feedback are valued and supported. They will also encourage professional growth, development, and training of staff, and be an agent for change, evaluating and seeking to improve District processes. Additionally, the next General Manager will have a demonstrated awareness of Sonoma County culture to advance the District's mission of ensuring equity, diversity, and inclusion in both open space and land conservation investments and the District's day-to-day operations.

The successful candidate will have knowledge of the principle objectives of a public open space programs, including land conservation, public land use, zoning, acquisition, and stewardship; and the principles and practices of real estate law and contract negotiations, and tax laws relating to income and charitable contributions. They will also be knowledgeable of organization and management principles, including personnel and fiscal management; the preparation of ordinances, regulations, contracts, and grant applications; and program planning and project implementation. Experience working with natural resources and agriculture, and knowledge of the impacts of climate change and wildfire mitigation are highly desired. The ability to establish and maintain effective personal working relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders is essential to success in this position.

To be considered for the position, minimum qualifications must be demonstrated. Overall education, training, and experience will be evaluated. Most typically, a qualified candidate would have a degree in planning, public administration, business administration, park management, natural resources, economics, recreation, or a closely related field; and 5+ years of management or administrative experience in governmental program analysis and planning, open space acquisition and management, or park management.

What We Offer

Sonoma County offers an attractive and competitive total compensation package for this position. The General Manager's salary is \$153,966 - \$187,152*, depending upon the qualifications of the selected candidate. In addition, we offer:

- **Health Plan Choices** - County paid premium contribution to several health plan options
- **Benefits** - Excellent dental, vision, disability, life insurance, wellness, professional development benefits, and more are found at www.sonomacounty.ca.gov/HR/Benefits/Benefit-Directory-for-Employees
- **Paid Time Off** - Competitive vacation accrual and additional management leave annually; 12 paid holidays, and an additional 8 floating holiday hours per year; generous sick leave accruals and 100% of accrual balance converted to service credit at retirement
- **Retirement** - County Employees Retirement Law of 1937. Retirement is fully integrated with Social Security. With pension reform, new employees as defined and eligible will receive a 2.0% at 60 - 2.5% at 67 formula (subject to PEPRA compensation limits); individuals who meet certain criteria, including establishing reciprocity eligibility pursuant to PEPRA, will receive 3% at 60. More detail can be found at www.scretire.org/Active-Deferred/When-You-Are-Hired
- **Incentive Retirement Savings Plan** - A defined contribution 401(a) plan; a 3% County "foundation" contribution
- **IRS 457 Plan** - Pre-tax employee voluntary contribution up to the IRS annual maximum. Employee's contributing a minimum of 1% of base salary, will receive a match of 1% of base salary deposited into the 401(a) account
- **Retiree Medical** - County contribution to a Health Reimbursement Arrangement to help fund post-retirement employee health insurance/benefits
- **Vehicle Allowance** - \$215 per pay period
- **Relocation** - Relocation reimbursement may be authorized for distances greater than 50 miles (Note: For out of area candidates, the expectation of the Board is for the General Manager to relocate to Sonoma County within a reasonable amount of time if selected for the position.)
- **Additional details** - on employment for management employees may be found at www.sonomacounty.ca.gov/HR/EmployeeRelations/Labor

*The annual base salary range for the position is \$153,966 - \$187,152. In addition to the base salary, the position receives a cash allowance of approximately \$600 per month. Combined, the annual salary is \$161,124 - \$194,328. Salary is negotiable within the established base salary range. Benefits described herein do not represent a contract and may be changed without notice.

Selection Process & Tentative Dates

- Accepting application materials through February 28, 2021
- Application materials will be reviewed by March
- First round interviews will be held in mid-March
- Finalist interviews with the Board of Directors will be held in mid-March (tentatively scheduled for March 19th)
- Appointment date will be dependent upon final candidate

Please be mindful of the planned time-frame. Although it may be subject to some change, it would be wise to submit application materials as early as possible and plan availability around these dates and timeframes.

How To Apply

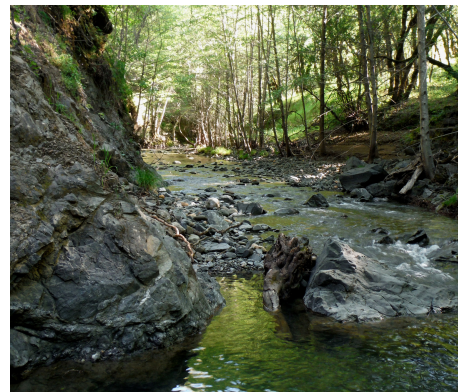
To be considered for this exciting career opportunity, please forward your cover letter and a resume that clearly demonstrates your qualifications, background, and education as they relate to this position's requirements, along with a list of five work-related references (who will not be contacted until mutual interest is established) to:

Spencer Keyword, Recruitment & Classification Manager
c/o Marissa Georges, Marissa.Georges@sonoma-county.org
County of Sonoma Human Resources Department
Attn: Marissa Georges
575 Administration Drive, Suite 116B
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Telephone 707-565-6195|Facsimile 707-565-3770

For additional information, visit www.sonoma-county.org, www.sonomacountyconnections.org



As part of Ag + Open Space's commitment to working with landowners to continue to steward their land, we connect landowners to resources that are helpful in caring for their land



Once Ag + Open Space and the landowner have successfully worked together to negotiate and establish a conservation easement, Ag + Open Space continues its commitment to this collaboration and partnership in perpetuity



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SONOMA COUNTY



**COUNTY OF
SONOMA**
Room to Move. Room to Grow.

County of Sonoma is an Equal Opportunity Employer