



Volunteer
OPPORTUNITIES
with

Shirley Heinze Land Trust





Shirley Heinze Land Trust Area of Operations

Shirley Heinze Land Trust is a vibrant partnership of volunteers, donors, professionals, agencies, and businesses, working together to accomplish our mission to preserve, protect, and restore significant natural areas in Northwestern Indiana.

Volunteers are the heart of our organization. People from various walks and stages of life, generously donate their time and talent to help us accomplish all aspects of our work.

Volunteer opportunities are available for individuals as well as groups from companies, environmental clubs, community groups, churches, or youth organizations. All volunteers work under the supervision of the staff. There are projects to fit your availability and schedule, from occasional events to seasonal and year-round activities.

This booklet describes a variety of volunteer opportunities. If you have any questions, or are ready to step up and volunteer now, please contact us at 219-242-8558 or via email at volunteer@heinzetrust.org.

Thank you!

Shirley Heinze Land Trust
 109 W 700 N
 Valparaiso, Indiana 46385
 219-242-8558
www.heinzetrust.org

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Types of Opportunities

Stewardship

Shirley Heinze Land Trust is committed to enhancing and restoring our nature preserves using wise management practices. This requires a continued commitment of resources, staff time, and many volunteers.

Education and Outreach

As part of our mission, we have a responsibility to help the public understand the value of land conservation and stewardship. Consequently, we provide conservation awareness programs for children, young adults, and community organizations in which volunteers may play a role.

Fundraising

A variety of fundraising activities support the work of the organization. There are a number of opportunities in which volunteers can play a role in our fundraising efforts and events.

Administrative Operations

Shirley Heinze Land Trust's operations require administrative coordination, data management, and clerical work. A variety of opportunities exist for administrative volunteers.

Leadership

While leadership opportunities are not addressed in this booklet, it should be noted that volunteers are critical when it comes to the leadership of the organization. All board, committee and advisory council members are volunteers. The board maintains the vision of Shirley Heinze Land Trust, conducts strategic planning, is responsible for the financial health of the organization, and directs the staff. The various committees, composed of both board members and non-board members, conduct much of the detail work of the board. The advisory council consists of volunteer community members who provide direction and advice to the board.

Stewardship

Stewardship Workday Volunteer

Workday events are generally conducted monthly. Volunteers meet at specific locations. Some physical labor may be involved. Proper work attire, sun block, insect repellent, and sometimes water repellent boots are recommended. Tools and materials are provided by Shirley Heinze Land Trust.

Volunteers may engage in the following activities:

- Establish and clear trails
- Remove invasive plant species
- Clear brush
- Collect seeds
- Plant trees and wildflowers
- Construct bridges and boardwalks
- Perform office work such as organizing, compiling data files, and managing data

Volunteer Workday Leader

Workday Leaders assist staff by providing leadership for volunteer workday events. With sufficient training and guidance, Volunteer Workday Leaders may lead workdays without the presence of staff.

Leaders may engage in the following activities:

- Develop management or preserve improvement projects (with approval of SHLT staff)
- Write workday descriptions and outreach materials
- Promote events and recruit volunteers
- Ensure all tools and resources are available
- Orient volunteers to the specific project
- Provide hospitality during the event
- Fill out workday report and provide data and feedback to staff

Preserve Steward

Preserve Stewards assume oversight responsibility for a specific Shirley Heinze Land Trust preserve. They work mostly independently of staff.

Stewards may engage in the following activities:

- Visit and monitor sites
- Provide staff with routine updates on the current conditions and needs of the preserve
- Replenish visitor materials provided at the trailheads
- Cultivate a “Friends of the Preserve” support group for the preserve
- Help maintain trails and parking lots
- Participate in workdays, events, and training opportunities associated with the preserve
- Track volunteer hours and communicate to staff about work performed
- Assist with ecological management (requires training)
- Remove invasive species
- Monitor and report native species, interesting plants, bird counts, frog monitoring, etc.
- Collect and distribute native seeds, plant trees, etc.

Citizen Scientist

Citizen scientists collect valuable resource data from preserves. They may use knowledge and skills they already have or can be trained by Shirley Heinze Land Trust staff and/or partners. Data collection may occur during specific time periods or over a long term.

Citizen Scientists may engage in the following activities:

- Conduct bird surveys (upload preserve sightings to eBird, Audubon seasonal bird counts, etc.)
- Conduct plant surveys (GPS plant location, Plants of Concern [POC] monitoring, etc.)
- Invasive species monitoring/mapping (EDmaps app, Great Lakes Early Detection Network [GLEDN], etc.)
- Reptile surveys/frog monitoring
- Water level and flow monitoring

Stewardship, continued

Native Plant Propagator

Native Plant Propagators play an important role in the restoration of preserves. They use knowledge and skills they already have or can be trained by Shirley Heinze Land Trust staff and/or partners over time. Projects may occur during specific time periods or over a long term.

Native Plant Propagators may engage in the following activities:

- Collect native seeds from Shirley Heinze Land Trust nature preserves
- Clean, weigh, and package seeds for future dispersal
- Distribute native seeds in restoration areas
- Germinate native seeds, grow plant plugs, and plant in restoration areas

Trades Specialist

Trades Specialists are involved in projects that improve preserves, facilities, and grounds. Generally they use skills that they already have.

Trades Specialists may engage in the following activities:

- Build boardwalks, bridges, stairs, fences, and signs
- Construct, improve, and maintain trails, drives, and parking lots
- Construct and/or maintain Shirley Heinze Land Trust buildings, lodges, barns, and other structures

Maintenance Mechanic

Maintenance Mechanics are involved in repairing and maintaining equipment. Generally, they use skills that they already have.

Maintenance Mechanics may engage in the following activities:

- Repair broken or failing equipment
- Assist with the winterization of equipment
- Tune up and repair equipment over the winter or before the summer season
- Provide advice and expertise with equipment purchases

Groundskeeper

Groundskeepers are involved in light seasonal maintenance and cleaning of buildings, signage and grounds at the Meadowbrook Conservation Center and Nature Preserve.

Groundskeepers may engage in the following activities:

- Mow the lawn around the office building and lodges
- Maintain the native plant gardens
- Seasonal and pre-event cleaning of lodges
- Remove snow from parking lot
- Maintain bird feeders and nest boxes
- Maintain through refinishing or resealing wooden preserve signs and benches on an annual or bi-annual basis
- Monitor buildings, staircases, boardwalks, fencing, etc., for maintenance needs



Education & Outreach

Educational Program Assistant

Educational Program Assistants work directly with staff to deliver on-site educational experiences for supplemental environmental programs.

Educational Program Assistants may engage in the following activities:

- Help to set up learning activities
- Assist staff during learning activities
- Manage hospitality for trainings

Hike Leader

Shirley Heinze has a long history of offering engaging hikes at our nature preserves. Hike leaders will lead small groups on hikes throughout the year. Hike leaders should have a passion for nature, have excellent communication skills with visitors of all ages and backgrounds, and be able to lead a hike over varying terrain. Hike leaders may already have a background as a general naturalist or in science or environmental education, but they will be provided sufficient additional information to lead hikes for the general public. Hike leaders also make great Preserve Stewards.

Hike leaders may engage in the following activities:

- Lead hikes on an occasional or regular basis throughout the year
- Communicate the mission and history of Shirley Heinze Land Trust to visitors, be able to answer questions about the history of the preserve
- Scout the hike route to verify trail accessibility and condition or points of interest along the trail
- Coordinate scheduling and advertisement of hikes with staff
- Share Shirley Heinze promotional materials with hike attendees
- Ensure that all hikers are recorded on a sign-in sheet
- Be familiar with directions to the preserve and set up event signs to help visitors find the trailhead



Speaker's Bureau Presenter

Presentations promoting Shirley Heinze Land Trust and the value of land conservation are given throughout the community. Speakers use a staff-approved and/or provided format. Presentations typically last 30 minutes, including questions.

Speaker's Bureau Presenters may engage in the following activities:

- Present to organizations such as parent groups, church groups, community service clubs, business groups, scouts, and governmental agencies
- Present topics such as the history of Shirley Heinze Land Trust, how it operates, and the value of land conservation
- Assist in the development of presentation topics

Speaker's Bureau Organizer

Speaker's Bureau Organizers solicit opportunities for Bureau Presenters to conduct their presentations.

Organizers may engage in the following activities:

- Recruit volunteer speakers
- Coordinate presentation calendar
- Reach out to new audiences

Fundraising

Fundraiser

Fundraising is a joint effort between the Fundraising Committee and staff. When possible, the Fundraising Committee includes members with expertise in areas such as estate planning, financial management, fundraising, and database management. Members with connections to corporations, local businesses, and/or professional foundations are greatly appreciated. Major fundraising events include the Fall Appeal and the Spring Benefit.

Fundraisers may engage in the following activities:

- Attend committee meetings, fundraisers, and networking events
- Design specific fundraising programs
- Draft appeal letters, case statements, and brochures
- Research corporations and foundations and write grant proposals
- Evaluate major gift prospects and assist with solicitations as appropriate
- Facilitate mailings
- Solicit sponsorships and donations

Fundraising Volunteers may assist with the Fall Appeal (in September/October) to:

- Organize materials
- Prepare packets
- Hand-address envelopes
- Write personal notes on letters
- Stuff envelopes

Fundraising Volunteers may assist with the Spring Benefit planning with the following activities:

- Attend monthly meetings (Sept – Nov; Jan – June) to help plan event
- Contact artists and business beginning in January, soliciting donations of artwork and other items for the Silent Auction, with follow up reminders in April if commitments have not yet been received
- Solicit local businesses and individuals for table sponsorships
- Promote ticket sales
- Pickup donations and deliver them to Meadowbrook

- Assist in the planning and creation of event décor and centerpieces
- Assist staff at Meadowbrook in preparation during the two weeks before Benefit, for example, by reviewing and labeling all auction items and packaging them up with display cards and bid sheets for transport to venue
- Assist staff at Meadowbrook in preparation during the week prior to the event by preparing materials such as table packets, programs and nametags
- Assist staff at Meadowbrook in preparation during the week prior to the event by purchasing frames and framing certificates and tickets for the Silent Auction
- Transport all materials and auction items to venue in vans and pick-up trucks the day before the event



Fundraising Volunteers may assist on the morning of the Spring Benefit to:

- Set up auction items
- Set dining tables with materials and centerpieces
- Set up all signs and banners

Fundraising Volunteers may assist during the Spring Benefit to:

- Greet attendees and provide instructions for registration
- Provide crowd control at registration
- Conduct check-in at workstations
- Provide guests with programs/nametags
- Sell raffle tickets
- Assist guests with mobile bidding
- Close silent auction
- Enter auction sales at workstations
- Conduct check-out at workstations

Fundraising Volunteers may assist following the Spring Benefit to:

- Box up all materials and transport back to Meadowbrook

General Administrative

Office Volunteer

Administrative volunteers may assist staff with routine office tasks such as:

- Database entry
- Filing
- Shredding
- Mailing
- Envelope stuffing
- Maintaining supplies
- Running errands

General Event Volunteer

Administrative volunteers may also assist with outreach events such as Guided hikes and bus tours, and help organize event day activities, including:

- Set up
- Greet guests
- Serve
- Cook
- Cleanup



Marketing & Communications

Shirley Heinze Land Trust needs volunteer photographers, videographers, writers and designers to help us communicate with the public about our mission and events.

Photographer/Videographer

Photographers/Videographers would use their own equipment and be willing to share photos and videos with the organization for use in a variety of media channels including the website, social media, newsletters and press releases and other publications. Photo/Video credits would be ascribed to the volunteer in published material.

Photographers / Videographers may engage in the following activities:

- Share photographs or videos taken during a hike
- Visit preserves on a regular basis to capture seasonal photos of preserves for use in marketing materials
- Document public events including hikes, workdays, workshops, and fundraising events for press releases and other marketing materials

Field Event Reporter

Field Event Reporters may engage in the following activities:

- Attend events in the field such as workdays, hikes, etc.
- Write summary descriptions, take photos, video, etc. to be provided to staff for social media posts, and other communications needs

Writers/Designers

Writers/Designers may engage in the following activities:

- Write summary descriptions or articles on various topics including upcoming or past events, environmental education programs, restoration activities, notable things to do or see on preserves, etc.
- Assist with marketing materials including proofreading, editing, or designing

Internships

Gain practical experience, make connections and build your resume with an internship with Shirley Heinze Land Trust. We would be interested in potential internship projects in a variety of fields. College students studying natural resources, geographic information systems, graphic design, marketing, communications, education, law, and more are encouraged to apply.

Internships are unpaid, but credit hours are possible, to be determined by your advisor. Time frames are flexible depending on academic requirements and class schedule.

If you are interested in an internship, contact our Volunteer Coordinator at volunteer@heinzetrust.org.

Corporate or Large Groups

Do you have a group that is available for volunteer activities? We have opportunities for groups of all sizes and ages - we encourage families to volunteer too!

To bring a large group to a scheduled workday or to schedule a special workday event, contact our Volunteer Coordinator at volunteer@heinzetrust.org.



Volunteer Application

If you are interested in volunteering, please fill out this form and mail it to Shirley Heinze Land Trust, 109 W 700 N, Valparaiso, IN 46385. Or visit our website and submit the form found on our Volunteer page at www.heinzetrust.org/volunteer. Our Volunteer Coordinator will contact you regarding your interests and available opportunities.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

What opportunities are you interested in? Please list below:

What would you like to gain from a volunteering experience?

How often would you like to volunteer?

Please list preserves or localities at which you would be interested in volunteering.



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