

Job Description:

Position Summary:

The regional offices of the National Audubon Society are leaders and integral members of a community of conservation practice, establishing innovative programs to protect, conserve, and enhance habitat for a wide variety of bird species throughout the upper Midwest and beyond.

Reporting to the Director of Conservation and based in east central Minnesota, the Forest Ecologist will work on habitat restoration and forest management for birds across Minnesota and Wisconsin with a focus along the Saint Croix River watershed. The Forest Ecologist will work in partnership with a community of conservation groups including sustainable forestry organizations and agencies to deliver robust private and public landowner programming and technical assistance. The Forest Ecologist will be responsible for engaging, cultivating, and enrolling landowners and land managers into Audubon conservation projects and assisting them with the implementation of innovative best land management practices to enhance bird habitat.

The Forest Ecologist will develop Habitat Management Plans (HMPs) and habitat management prescriptions that help landowners and land managers achieve habitat management goals, implement bird habitat enhancements, and ensure program compliance. Habitat management practices include tree and shrub planting, seeding, encouraging natural regeneration, prescribed fire, invasive species removal, and beneficial forest harvest. The Forest Ecologist will also conduct and/or support vegetation, bird, and soil monitoring to ensure landowners are compliant with program goals and are enhancing their lands to benefit birds.

Compensation:

\$54,000 - \$64,000 / year

Additional Job Description

Essential Functions

- Proactively connect with and liaise with landowners and land managers and provide excellent technical assistance to participants in Audubon's conservation programs.
- Develop habitat management plans and prescriptions with and for landowners and land managers using SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time sensitive) goals on program sites
- Create demand for Audubon conservation programs through partnerships with local agencies and organizations to deliver programs and recruit new participants.
- Provide timely access to financial assistance programs through Audubon, local, state, and federal financial assistance opportunities.
- Refer producers to partner conservation programs when applicable.
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with landowners and land managers participating in Audubon's habitat management programs.
- Communicate program goals and work with landowner and land managers to develop site-specific habitat management plans for each project.
- Execute agreements and plan projects for landowners participating in financial assistance conservation programs.
- Develop Best Management Practices that incorporate bird habitat requirements, carbon sequestration, and sustainable forestry for public and privately owned properties.
- Advocate for science-supported habitat management on partner lands.

- Identify monitoring needs (e.g. avian, vegetation etc.) and implement monitoring techniques to address land use, avian density and occupancy, and vegetation response to management.
- Implement, track, and report on habitat enhancement projects.
- Collaborate with the regional and national teams to manage project budgets, reporting requirements, and third-party contracts.
- Help identify, develop, write, and manage grants to government agencies and foundations to fund projects related to Audubon conservation work.
- Coordinate local events targeted at youth, professionals, or the general community to share expertise.
- Maintain excellent communication with supervisor, supporting partner organization, and administrative staff.
- Participate in partner meetings and conferences.
- Identify and participate in opportunities that allow for continued professional growth aimed at improving skills related to grassland management and avian conservation.
- Attend training events held by local partners, such as NRCS, USFWS, State DNR, Migratory Bird Joint Ventures, Conservation NGOs, and others.
- Plan and participate in land management workshops and other educational events.
- Represent Audubon at events to promote and educate the public on Audubon's conservation programs.
- Partner with Audubon staff to ensure equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging principles are incorporated in our conservation programs.
- Coordinate with Audubon communications, policy, and center staff to help ensure their work is represented internally and externally, and communicated to target audiences.
- Other duties as the job requires.

Qualifications and Experience:

- Bachelor's degree in forestry, natural resources, conservation biology, wildlife management, or a closely related field (Master's degree preferred)
- 5 years' relevant professional experience required. An equivalent combination of education and experience will also be considered.
- Demonstrated experience and skills in planning and implementing large multi-faceted, outcome-based projects.
- Strong knowledge of forest birds of Minnesota and Wisconsin and their habitat requirements; must be able to identify forest birds by both sight and sound.
- Must have professional knowledge of forestry science principles and practices including silviculture methods and forest ecology.
- General use pesticide applicators license is desired.
- Experience with project management including writing management prescriptions, administering contracts, coordinating with key partners, implementing projects, and completing reports. Experience or knowledge writing Environmental Impact Statements/Assessments a plus.
- Demonstrated understanding of forestry and forest management techniques that are employed in eastern forests.
- Ability to work with limited supervision.
- Demonstrated experience working with foresters and biologists from public agencies (federal and state) and private landowners and promoting good public relations.
- Strong leadership and collaborative ethics, as demonstrated in previous work.

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to coordinate with diverse audiences, including landowners and forestry professionals.
- Must be results-oriented; success will be evaluated in part by the number of forest owners and managers reached, number of foresters trained, and, ultimately by acres of habitat properly managed.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a larger team in a dynamic environment. A positive attitude and sense of humor is essential.
- Willing to travel within the local region with occasional out-of-region travel and be comfortable working evenings and weekends as job demands.
- Tech-savviness, including proficiency with Microsoft Office applications and substantial experience using GIS for landscape analysis and conservation planning.
- Willingness and ability to work outdoors, including in inclement weather, life and carry equipment up to 50 pounds, surrounded by biting insects, and traversing across uneven and steep terrains with or without accommodation.
- Must have a valid driver's license and personal vehicle for regional travel (all work travel is reimbursed).
- Passion for and commitment to the mission of the National Audubon Society.
This position is represented by the Communication Workers of America (CWA).

EEO Statement

The National Audubon Society is a federal contractor and an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE). All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or protected veteran status. We are committed to a policy of nondiscrimination, inclusion and equal opportunity and actively seek a diverse pool of candidates in this search.

Accessibility Statement

The National Audubon Society endeavors to keep our careers site accessible to any and all users. If you would like to contact us regarding the accessibility of our website or need assistance completing the application process, please contact Accommodations@audubon.org. This contact information is for accommodation requests only and cannot be used to inquire about the status of applications.