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Private Lands Biologist (North-central Iowa)

1 Full-Time Position (Prairie Pothole Region of north-central Iowa)

Requisition ID:

Great Lakes Atlantic Region: Iowa

Full-Time, Remote, Ducks Unlimited Position

Application Deadline: 1 March 2024 (or until filled)

Work Area

Position Location: Flexible within the northern part of Iowa's Prairie Pothole Region. The position will work remotely and travel often to complete areawide responsibilities.

Position Overview

Ducks Unlimited, Inc., (DU) is seeking to hire one (1) Private Lands Biologist to help deliver on the ground technical assistance to producers and landowners within the Prairie Pothole Region of north-central Iowa. The Private Lands Biologist will be integrated into DUs team of Biologists, GIS Analysts, and Engineers working in partnership with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) to deliver water quality practices on private lands. This partnership will support a variety of in-field and edge-of-field regenerative agriculture and water quality practices across the 37-county project area. The selected candidate will build relationships with state, federal and local agencies, private landowners, and agricultural partners to identify and develop opportunities to implement practices benefiting water quality and soil health. This position will be remote, working from an in-home office, and will be expected to have routine interaction with all involved program partners and landowners. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of agricultural systems, agronomy, soil health, wildlife conservation, and then integrate their expertise into program delivery.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities

In partnership with IDALS, this position will promote agricultural programs and practices that result in improved water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat on private lands in north-central Iowa. As a member of DU's conservation team, the position will foster relationships with producers and private landowners and provide conservation technical assistance and voluntary conservation program delivery (with a specific focus on water quality practices). In addition to supporting the delivery of conservation technical assistance within priority areas, staff may also provide technical support and planning to the Climate Smart Commodities Program, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and other state, federal, and Non-Government Organization (NGO) partners as deemed appropriate.

The selected candidate will work in a joint capacity with state and federal partners, commodity groups and agricultural retailers to promote and accelerate enrollment for water quality

practices. The biologist will be responsible to coordinate and implement the conservation provisions of the Iowa Water Quality Initiative, Federal Farm Bill programs, and other wildlife-related conservation programs. Activities will include working one-on-one with private landowners (with specific focus on implementing water quality practices and habitat conservation), hosting workshops and one-on-one meetings, contract coordination, conservation planning, site assessment, reporting and outreach. This position will provide technical assistance for soil health and water quality practice adoption and wildlife habitat enhancement techniques to private landowners. The selected candidate will also work with DU staff and other local partners to increase habitat management efforts and participate in regional and statewide habitat meetings, as necessary.

Minimum Qualifications:

Preferred candidate must have a Bachelor of Science in agriculture, agronomic sciences, wildlife, or related field from an accredited university. At least two years of professional work experience focused on agriculture systems, wildlife management, programs, practices, and delivery are highly preferred. Experience in agronomy, specifically soil health principles/regenerative agriculture is highly preferred. Excellent written and oral communication skills, as well as interpersonal skills, are required. The ideal candidate will have a good working knowledge of agricultural systems and incentive programs, experience working one-on-one with private landowners to provide conservation planning assistance, and the ability to work well with diverse teams including DU staff, conservation partners, landowners, and agriculture producers. The position will require frequent work out-of-doors, possibly in inclement weather, and may require physical exertion or lifting as needed. Candidate must be able and willing to travel as needed, including some overnight travel. This position will consist of both office and field work.

Required and Preferred Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Possess strong personal skills to effectively communicate with private landowners, USDA staff, other wildlife professionals and the public.
- Knowledge of local, state, and federal conservation programs and policies (especially Iowa Water Quality Initiative and USDA Farm Bill) used to protect and restore wetlands and grasslands in agriculturally dominated landscapes is preferred.
- Working knowledge of Farm Bill programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) also preferred.
- Working knowledge of soil health principles and how they can be applied across different crop/soil systems and their agronomic benefit.
- Knowledge of principles used in the management of migrating waterfowl.
- Specific knowledge in writing and delivering conservation management plans.
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office and ArcGIS software.
- Ability to work effectively both independently and as a member of a team.
- Ability to effectively plan, organize and prioritize work activities and complete tasks to meet deadlines.
- Effectively prepare and present information on conservation programs to peers and the public through workshops, tours, and other planned events.

- Possess good writing skills for preparation of grants, reports, management plans, etc.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.
- Possess a valid driver's license and be willing to drive fleet vehicles or personal vehicle for federal mileage reimbursement rate when fleet vehicles are not available.

The position will report directly to Courtney Nicks, Working Lands Coordinator.

Benefits/Salary: DU offers a competitive benefits package. Salary commensurate with education & experience. Typical starting salary ranges from \$50,000 - \$60,000/year with a variable compensation incentive program.

Application: To apply please go to www.ducks.org/jobs and fill out the application materials and attach a resume, cover letter and 3 references by 1 March 2024. Please direct any questions regarding application materials to DU Human Resources hr@ducks.org. For further information regarding this position, please contact Courtney Nicks at cnicks@ducks.org. This position is open until filled.

Application Deadline: Applications will be accepted through March 1, 2024 or until a qualified applicant is identified.

DUCKS UNLIMITED, INC. IS AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

It is the policy of Ducks Unlimited, Inc. to afford equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons regardless of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation and related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 or over), disability (physical, mental or visual), genetic information, marital status (including registered domestic partnership status), military and veteran status, immigration status, or any other category protected by federal, state or local law.