

PHEASANTS FOREVER AND QUAIL FOREVER

THE HABITAT ORGANIZATION

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



Smithsonian
National Zoological Park
Conservation Biology Institute



Piedmont
Environmental
Council



Quail and Grassland Field Biologist

Northern Shenandoah Valley, Virginia

Application Deadline: October 3rd, 2023

Anticipated Start Date: October 2023

Supervisor: Quail Forever's Senior Farm Bill Biologist, Alison Menefee, and Smithsonian's Virginia Working Landscapes' Justin Proctor, Lead Coordinator of the Virginia Grassland Bird Initiative Northern Shenandoah Valley; position will be based in New Market, Shenandoah County

Job Classification: Full time (40 hrs/week)

Geographic Focus: Frederick, Shenandoah, and Rockingham Counties

Overview: In partnership with the Virginia Grassland Bird Initiative (Smithsonian's Virginia Working Landscapes) and the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), this Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist will coordinate and implement wildlife habitat-related conservation programs and provide technical assistance to landowners in the Shenandoah Valley, which includes the WLFW Bobwhite Quail Framework. The position will be headquartered in the Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley's office in New Market, Virginia, and provide service to multiple counties within focal areas. This individual will work in joint capacity with partner agencies to promote, coordinate and implement conservation provisions of the Federal Farm Bill on private lands, with primary focus on the Conservation Reserve Program and the Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) Bobwhite Program. Conservation delivery may also involve other relevant Farm Bill programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), general EQIP, ACEP WRE, and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), as well as state and local habitat programs and initiatives. General duties will include all aspects of wildlife habitat planning, contract coordination, conservation plan writing, site assessment/eligibility determination, practice certification, program promotion/outreach, landowner technical assistance, and quarterly reporting.

About the Virginia Grassland Bird Initiative:

[Smithsonian's Virginia Working Landscapes](#) and The Piedmont Environmental Council launched the [Virginia Grassland Bird Initiative](#) (VGBI) in 2021 to address grassland bird decline on working lands in the northern Virginia Piedmont and Shenandoah Valley region. [American Farmland Trust](#) and [Quail Forever](#) (QF) have joined as lead collaborators, bringing with them their respective expertise in conservation messaging and technical assistance on working landscapes. Together, we partner with landowners and producers in [16 counties](#) to increase landowner and producer adoption of best management practices for grassland birds, both for the benefit of birds and associated working landscapes.

Specific Duties:

- Provide technical assistance (wildlife habitat focus) and guidance to private landowners, government agencies, non-government organizations and other groups for USDA NRCS conservation programs. Training provided jointly by VBGI, and QF.

- Coordinate with staff at public and private partner organizations and agencies to enhance grassland bird conservation and restoration on landscapes in the Shenandoah Valley, working both at the site and landscape scale.
- Promote and help onboard landowners and producers into [VGBI's financial incentives program](#) aimed at protecting at-risk grassland bird species during the vulnerable nesting season.
- Complete conservation plans, job sheets, wildlife habitat evaluation guides (WHEG) and/or Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) and other required documentation for the conservation programs requiring biological expertise in cooperation with the listed partners.
- Communicate program requirements, complete site visits to determine eligibility, and develop contract supporting documents for applicants and participants of USDA-NRCS conservation programs and other local and state programs.
- Review plans and specifications for feasibility for implementation under Farm Bill program contract rules, etc.
- Accelerate conservation program enrollment by conducting outreach such as workshops, field days, demonstration events, and habitat tours.
- Provide on-site landowner technical assistance for conservation practice implementation.
- Review/certify conservation practices receiving federal financial assistance.
- Complete conservation plans as they relate to NRCS financial assistance programs, specifically WLFW.
- Increase positive awareness of VGBI, QF, and partner organizations.

Desired Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with landowners and partner agencies.
- Ability to work independently and with diverse clientele. Must be a motivated self-starter with strong interpersonal skills.
- Knowledge of, and/or practical experience with NRCS conservation practice standards related to wildlife in the Northeast US.
- Knowledge of wildlife ecology, grazing systems, and grassland management including the ability to utilize various habitat management tools in the development of management plans.
- Knowledge of conservation and wildlife programs provided by federal (i.e., Farm Bill, US Fish and Wildlife Service), state, & local entities.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Strong organizational skills, with demonstrated ability to manage demanding workloads.
- Proficiency with ArcGIS, GPS, *Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, etc.)*
- Ability to communicate in Spanish is desired.
- Valid driver's license required; use of personal vehicle required (mileage reimbursement provided).
- Must be able to obtain USDA Federal Security Clearance.

Training and Experience Guideline: Any combination of training and/or experience that will enable the applicant to possess the required knowledge, skills and abilities. A Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Management, Forestry, or closely related natural resources field is required. Proven experience working with USDA Farm Bill programs is preferred. The ideal candidate will exhibit a balance of technical knowledge and interpersonal skills required to implement voluntary conservation programs on private lands. A successful applicant must enjoy working with private landowners to achieve their objectives. Demonstrated interest, training, and experience in grasslands, wildlife, and grazing systems is also ideal.

Starting Salary: \$38,000 - \$44,000 + Benefits

To Apply: Please combine your cover letter, resume, and 3 references into a single Word document or PDF file before uploading to the "Resume" area or your application on our website at www.quailforever.org/jobs For additional questions please contact Justin Proctor, VGBI Coordinator, at ProctorCJ@si.edu or Alison Menefee, Quail Forever Senior Farm Bill Biologist at AMenefee@quailforever.org

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