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The Habitat Organization

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

1 position in Aitkin/Carlton Counties, MN

Application Deadline: August 27, 2023

Anticipated Start Date: October 2, 2023

Overview & Job Duties:

Work in a joint capacity with Pheasants Forever, Inc. (PF), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD's), the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to promote, accelerate enrollment, coordinate, and implement the voluntary conservation provisions of the Federal Farm Bill and related state, local and other voluntary conservation programs. Activities will include program promotion, contract coordination, conservation planning, conservation plan modification, site assessment and reporting. Provide technical assistance to farmers/landowners on conservation planning, habitat planning and other wildlife related practices. Meet with local chapters of Pheasants Forever and other local partners to influence habitat management efforts and participate in statewide meetings. Attend Farm Bill Biologist training and assist in coordinating technical assistance efforts.

The incumbent will work in Aitkin and Carlton, MN. The incumbent is an employee of Pheasants Forever, Inc. and receives supervision from Pheasants Forever with daily instruction by the local USDA-NRCS and SWCD staff. The incumbent will serve as a USDA NRCS Conservation Programs Biologist providing biological/wildlife aspects of all USDA NRCS Conservation Programs, BWSR, SWCD and PF voluntary programs to private landowners and participants.

Duties:

- Help landowners identify plants and habitat on their property and guide them in improving those habitats for wildlife utilizing voluntary conservation programs from USDA NRCS, PF, BWSR and other local and state programs.
- Use science-based knowledge to improve habitat within the agricultural and forested regions of the work area. This includes collaboration amongst staff, and being the in-house technical wildlife expert, and the go-to person for landowners within the work area who have wildlife and habitat related questions.
- Write contracts and other documents to help guide landowners in implementing voluntary conservation programs.
- Collaborate between partnering agencies to achieve habitat restoration and management goals for landowners and programs.
- Assist partners with all phases of the Reinvest in MN (RIM) conservation easement program, from outreach to title work to construction and reimbursement.
- Assist partners with outreach, contract development, and implementation of the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP).
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

Required Knowledge Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with farmers, landowners and partner agencies.
- Ability to work independently with little supervision and with diverse clientele.
- Knowledge of wildlife ecology, wetland and forest management including the ability to utilize various habitat management tools in the development of management plans (e.g. mowing, shearing, burning, tree removal). Background in agriculture or forestry is a plus.
- Knowledge of conservation and wildlife programs provided by federal (i.e. Farm Bill, US Fish and Wildlife Service), state, & local entities. In addition, knowledge of how these programs are implemented in an agricultural/forest landscape is desired.
- Knowledge in habitat requirements of sharp-tailed grouse, ruffed grouse, woodcock, deer, waterfowl, and other forested wildlife species.
- Excellent verbal and written communication.
- A background in GIS mapping or closely related program and skills.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Valid driver's license required; some use of personal vehicle required (mileage reimbursement provided).
- Able to obtain USDA Federal Security Clearance.

What Your Week Will Entail:

Once the incumbent is trained in program details and specifications, then a routine will be developed, and they will start to see an impact in their work area. During the growing season, the incumbent will spend an average of one to two days a week in the field doing site visits, evaluating habitat, making habitat recommendations, identifying plants, and meeting contractors on construction sites. The other three to four days a week will be spent in the office doing data entry, drafting contracts, creating maps, and collaborating with partner staff on current and future projects. During the office time, there will be numerous interactions with landowners, giving technical and program information. During the non-growing season, more time will be spent in the office working on contracts, doing planning work in ArcGIS, still meeting with partners and landowners on project development, with only one day every couple of weeks outside on-site visits and construction projects.

Hear From Other Farm Bill Biologists:

<https://www.pheasantsforever.org/getdoc/9c1d6f7b-b5b4-4559-a93d-0e576d1c3b59/The-Next-20-Years.aspx>

Education and Experience Preferred:

Any combination of training and/or experience that will enable the applicant to possess the required knowledge, skills and abilities. Either a Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Management, Agriculture, Forestry or closely related natural resources field; Or a technical degree in Wildlife Management, Agriculture, Forestry or closely related field and relevant field experience. This position is located in the scenic transition zone of MN where shrubs and forest are a dominant vegetative community. Experience with forestry and/or forest-related practices is preferred.

Where You Will Work and Live:

This position is located in the scenic forested region of Minnesota where people from all over the Midwest travel to hunt grouse, ride ATV's, hike miles of hiking trails, and chase the elusive walleye. This location is a gateway for a candidate who wants to spend weekends hiking the scenic north shore of Lake Superior, fish on legendary Lake Mille Lacs, or drive to Minneapolis to take-in a sporting event. The beauty and wildlife of this landscape will be enhanced by the incumbent by working with landowners to help them with wildlife related conservation practices.

Starting Salary: \$37,600 to \$43,900 commensurate with experience + benefits (see our benefits summary at www.pheasantsforever.org/jobs).

To Apply: Please combine your cover letter, resume and three (3) references as a single Word document or PDF file before uploading to the "Resume" area of your application on our recruitment website at www.pheasantsforever.org/jobs. For information regarding the position contact Josh Pommier, MN Private Lands Manager, at (320) 292-5860, or email to jpommier@pheasantsforever.org

Pheasants Forever, Inc and Quail Forever is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, status as a protected veteran, status as a qualified individual with disability, or any other category that may be protected by law.