

## Job Description - Forest Wilding Project Officer (PB5)

### Job summary

As part of our Growing the Future strategy, Forestry England aims to ensure that England's Forests provide the most valuable places for wildlife in which to thrive and expand. We will do this in a way which is resilient to climate change, increases their value for communities by producing high quality, sustainable timber and absorbing carbon emissions, and ensures that the nation's forests are a living treasure for all, deeply connected to people's lives, improving the health and wellbeing of the nation.

Under Forestry England's new biodiversity plan, we have established key principles for doing this, through:

- restoring biodiversity in the nation's forests by restoring fully functioning ecosystems
- prioritising conservation action beyond managing for single species or very specific habitats
- restoring the natural processes which create a forest ecosystem

This role will progress our aspirations for harnessing natural processes in forest management to deliver nature recovery. This will take the Wild Neroche project through delivery phase with our partners, project planning the steps needed to take our vision forward. The post holder will manage successful relationships with our stakeholders, and begin the implementation of key steps on the ground, including monitoring data, and introducing land management techniques to lay the foundations to meet our long term objectives.

This role may be involved in progressing other Forest Wilding projects such as species re-introductions. Managed by the Operations Manager - Environment, the Wilding Officer will work closely with Forestry England colleagues across West England District and with our national forest wilding and communications functions to help deliver nature recovery.

You can expect to spend up to one third of your time outdoors, often independently and remotely and you will usually be expected to manage your own time to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.

### Key responsibilities & accountabilities

#### Project Management

- Lead the development and delivery of the Wild Neroche project plan.
- Develop long-term budgets for Wild Neroche and potentially other Forest Wilding projects, alongside seeking opportunities for fundraising to potentially include Environmental Land Management, corporate sponsorship and green finance.
- Carry out financial planning, forecasts and expenditure monitoring.
- Ensure Forestry England procurement and contract management regulations are followed throughout the project.
- Contribute to project steering group meetings for Wild Neroche and potentially other Forest Wilding projects.

#### Land Management

- Undertake scoping of potential introductions of ecosystem engineer species and keystone species to drive ecosystem function.
- Work collaboratively with Natural England, the Blackdown Hill NL and other key local stakeholders to share and develop Forestry England's vision for Wild Neroche.
- Lead on the implementation of appropriate land management works (e.g. fencing, introduction of herbivores, tree planting, peatland restoration, deer management), working with other Forestry England staff and contractors.
- Ensure that proposed land management interventions are approved through appropriate regulatory mechanisms, e.g. Forest Plans, Natural England assent.

## **Knowledge and Monitoring**

- Commission, manage and interpret surveys and monitoring to gather baseline information relevant to the project at Wild Neroche, including eDNA soil analysis, vegetation and species surveys, and hydrological information.
- Build a network of academic and other advisors, internal and external, and critical friends to advise and guide the project at all stages.
- Work with the national Forest Wilding programme team, colleagues from Forest Research and wider academia to learn from and share best practice from the project.
- Undertake or commission feasibility studies to explore alternative approaches to land management, which explore the natural capital, economic and biodiversity benefits.

## **Communications and Public Engagement**

- Lead the development and delivery of a stakeholder management plan to build support for the project.
- Work with our existing partners to develop the Wild Neroche vision and engage widely to build support for the project.
- Showcase the project to internal and external stakeholders to gain support for forest wilding, nature recovery and further delivery within the public forestry estate.
- Develop relevant events and activities to engage the public with Wild Neroche, working closely with Forestry England's recreation, communications and Forest Wilding programme teams.

And any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

## **Skills, knowledge & experience**

### **Essential professional and technical experience**

- Experience of project planning and operational management.
- Experience of applied nature conservation and/or forest land management.
- Experience of delivering stakeholder and public engagement in a countryside context and an understanding of relevant engagement methodologies. A natural networker and relationship builder.
- Experience of building effective partnership working with other environmental organisations and landowners.

### **Desirable professional and technical experience**

- Experience of public sector procurement

## **Qualifications**

### Essential

- Qualification in ecology or conservation or a similar discipline.
- Qualification in project management together with demonstrable experience of conservation land management.

### Desirable

- Working towards or have achieved the APM, PMQ or equivalent project management qualification.

