

## Job Description - Wild Area Officer - Wild Ingoldsby (PB5)

### Job summary

Forestry England's [Biodiversity Plan](#) sets out a bold ambition of nature recovery in the nation's forests. Working across five principal focus areas, Forestry England aims to restore resilient biodiversity in the nation's forests, delivering our vision to ensure that these forests provide the most valuable places for wildlife to thrive and expand in England.

Established in 2022, Forestry England's Forest Wilding Programme brings together two of these focus areas as part of a co-ordinated effort to deliver a step-change in nature recovery. Our species recovery work focuses on the reintroduction of key influential species, such as beaver, wildcat, pine marten, white-tailed eagle and wood ants. Alongside this nationwide effort, we have established Wild Areas on over 14,000ha of the nation's forests, bringing innovative approaches together with a sound evidence base to shift our land management to restore and enhance natural processes.

With a multi-million-pound budget, supported by Defra and a growing portfolio of external funders, the programme makes a significant investment in nature recovery, alongside Forestry England's parallel ambitions for sustainable timber production and connecting people with our forests.

Central England Forest District encompasses 30,000ha of the nation's forests within a triangle formed by Preston, Grimsby and Milton Keynes. The area comprises a range of habitats and designated sites; from woodland and wetland, to grassland and heathland. As well as supporting a range of wildlife, the District produces approximately 150,000 tonnes of timber annually and manages seven visitor centres, attracting over 2.5 million visits a year. The District has developed a concept for Wild Ingoldsby in Lincolnshire, comprising two woodlands managed by Forestry England that lie within or adjacent to the boundary of the wider landscape-scale rewilding project Boothby Wildland, which is managed by Nattergal. The project intends to aid the progression towards a dynamic and wilder landscape, led by natural processes that will provide substantial gains for biodiversity.

The Wild Area Officer will oversee the development and delivery of one (initially Wild Ingoldsby) or more wild area projects in the district, managing them through concept and definition project stages, and facilitating their effective implementation on the ground. The post holder will be responsible for bringing the concept of wild areas to life, delivering at scale and pace to meet Forestry England's ambitions for nature recovery.

The Wild Area Officer will develop key project management documentation, including visions, land management plans, stakeholder management plans, and communications plans, working closely with other colleagues as necessary. As wild area projects move into their delivery stage, the Wild Area Officer will support or implement land management interventions to secure nature recovery which, depending on the site, will include peatland restoration, hydrological and wetland restoration, the introduction of conservation grazing and naturalistic herbivory, woodland and forest management, and support relevant survey and monitoring regimes to measure progress.

Our wild area projects are often delivered with other organisations, so to succeed in this role you will need to be experienced in working with internal and external stakeholders, including partners, landowners and funders. Effective communication will be a key part of this role, alongside the successful implementation of a robust communications plan. You will be willing to challenge established norms on management for nature and help drive nature recovery at scale and pace.

This is an exciting role, at the forefront of nature recovery in Forestry England. Reporting to the Environment Manager in Central England Forest District, the post holder will work alongside the national Forest Wilding Programme team, as well as other district-based staff, including ecologists, planners and foresters. The post holder will be part of a network of colleagues across the country delivering similar nature recovery projects, sharing expertise and experience.

## Key responsibilities & accountabilities

### 1) Project Management

- Lead on the development of the vision and the project plan for one or more wild area projects.
- Apply appropriate project management principles to ensure effective and timely project implementation, in accordance with Forest Wilding Programme guidance and framework.
- Produce, maintain and review relevant project documentation throughout the project lifecycles.
- Develop annual and long-term work programmes and budgets for the projects, supported by relevant project boards and the Forest Wilding Programme Team.
- Manage a delegated budget to ensure the projects are managed within budgetary limits and fiscal guidelines.
- Support funding bids for external funding and ensure that commitments to funders for the projects are appropriately met through project delivery.
- Work with the Wild Areas Manager and Wild Area projects to ensure that programme, corporate and funder reporting requirements are met.

### 2) Land Management

- Lead on the development of land management plans for individual wild area projects, working with district colleagues and the Forest Wilding Programme Team to drive nature recovery at the landscape scale.
- Lead the investigation of appropriate techniques which will deliver the vision for wild areas in restoring natural processes, ensuring there is a sound evidence base for land management interventions.
- Implement agreed land management plans on the ground, including for example, installation of grazing infrastructure, management of herbivores, forest management, tree planting, peatland restoration, hydrological restoration.
- Procure and manage contracts, services and contractors, including graziers, forestry contractors, consultants and academic institutions.
- Ensure Forestry England procurement and contract management regulations are followed throughout the project
- Support the investigation of the (re)introduction of influential species to wild areas, which help restore natural processes.

### 3) Knowledge and Monitoring

- Support the implementation of Forestry England's evidence framework, in assembling evidence to support decision-making and monitoring the success of land management interventions for nature recovery.
- Work with the national Forest Wilding programme team, colleagues from Forest Research and wider academia to learn from, identify synergies and efficiencies and share best practice across the Forest Wilding programme.
- Commission, manage and interpret surveys to gather baseline information relevant to wild area projects, including eDNA soil analysis, ecological and hydrological information.
- Undertake or commission feasibility studies to explore innovative approaches to secure nature recovery in wild areas

### 4) Communications and public engagement

- Lead the development and delivery of a stakeholder management plan, and take the lead in building and managing relationships with relevant stakeholders.

- Work with district and national communications colleagues to develop and implement communications plans for relevant wild areas and the Forest Wilding programme
- Where relevant, support the development of partnerships with neighbouring landowners to increase the scale and effectiveness of landscape scale nature recovery.
- Showcase the project to internal and external stakeholders to gain support for forest wilding, nature recovery and further delivery within the nation's forests.

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

## Skills, knowledge & experience

### Essential professional and technical experience

- A track record of successfully developing, managing and coordinating nature recovery projects.
- An experienced project manager, able to manage and prioritise workloads, meet deadlines and solve problems, and manage budgets
- Strong ecological knowledge, with practical experience of a range of land management interventions including in woodlands, heaths, wetlands, and uplands, relevant to the location of the role
- Experience of procurement and contract management, especially in the relevant areas of land management, feasibility studies and ecological survey and monitoring
- A great team worker, adept at working under your own initiative and as part of a multi-disciplinary team, taking ownership of the responsibilities of the role, building collaborative working relationships with colleagues, and being adaptable in the face of changing situations.
- Demonstrable skills in stakeholder management, with a track record of developing constructive collaborative relationships with a wide range of stakeholder groups, including public sector, private sector, and non-governmental organisations, volunteers and community groups.
- An excellent communicator, both written and verbally, able to adapt to a range of audiences.
- Competent using information technology, and sound knowledge of Microsoft Office suite, especially Word, Excel, Outlook, Teams.

### Desirable professional and technical experience

- Sound experience in the forestry sector
- Experience of procurement and contract management.
- Working knowledge of environmental legislation and designations, including their practical application.

## Qualifications

### Essential

- Ecology or environmental degree, or equivalent professional experience in nature-focused land management.
- A full and current driving licence that enables you to drive in the UK.

### Desirable

- A recognised project management qualification
- A member of a relevant professional body, e.g. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Institute of Chartered Foresters

## Location-Specific Information

This role will be based within Central England Forest District, working out of an office at either Sherwood Pines (NG21 9JL), Market Rasen (LN8 3RQ) or Fineshade (NN17 3BB). Hybrid home working available. Travel across England will be required.

The duties of this post require the post holder to sometimes travel to remote locations that are not accessible by public transport. You will therefore need to hold a full and current driving licence that enables you to drive in the UK and be willing to stay away from home. We are willing to consider any proposals put forward by applicants that would allow them to do the job by other means.