

Job Description - Species Recovery Manager (PB4)

Job summary

Forestry England's Forest Wilding Programme was launched in 2022, to deliver a step-change in our efforts to restore naturally functioning ecosystems to the Nation's Forests. As part of this, we have developed one of the most ambitious initiatives to recover a select group of priority influential species, including beaver, wildcat, pine marten, white-tailed eagle and wood ants, predominantly through conservation translocation projects. We have over 30 projects in progress across England, including feasibility studies for wildcat in Northumberland, the reintroduction of pine martens in Devon, and a pioneering study of influential species which will inform our priorities through the next phase of the Forest Wilding Programme. These projects involve Forestry England colleagues across the country, as well as many other organisations, including Wildlife Trusts, the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation, Vincent Wildlife Trust and Natural England.

As Species Recovery Manager you will lead this initiative, providing the inspiration, leadership qualities and managerial skills to ensure the effective delivery of these projects, and develop a pipeline of new species recovery projects, which together help drive nature recovery. The post holder will bring technical experience and insight, developing and maintaining standards, and ensuring robust programme and project management to deliver projects on time and on budget. This is an exciting and fast-paced role which is at the forefront of nature recovery efforts in England, working for England's largest land manager.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

Detailed programme planning and control including:

- supporting the programme manager in developing, agreeing and maintaining a detailed programme plan and contributing to the development of constituent project plans
- managing programme deliverables in line with the programme plan, producing best practice guidance
- managing the species recovery workstream budget, and exercise oversight of the constituent project budgets, as part of the overall forest wilding programme budget
- resolving cross-functional issues at programme and project level
- managing workstream scope and change control and escalating issues where necessary
- monitoring workstream progress and performance, including through milestones and gateway reviews, and reporting on these to the Forest Wilding Programme Manager
- procuring, commissioning and managing national contracts, and contractors, especially of ecological consultants and academic institutions
- overseeing the handover of projects back to district business as usual, according to agreed timescales

Provide strong technical leadership in species recovery and nature-focused land management, and its integration with forestry, especially through:

- developing, maintaining and disseminating technical knowledge, legislative and regulatory knowledge, reports and advice
- providing support and guidance to produce project concepts, reintroduction feasibility reports, release strategies, and post-release monitoring and management plans
- ensuring species recovery efforts are developed in tandem with Forestry England's wider organisational objectives, for example considering forestry operations and presence of protected species

Develop and manage strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including:

- working with district-based project officers, and functional staff, without direct line management accountability, in support of programme delivery
- working as part of project boards, providing confident leadership and governance
- manage the coordination of internal and external partners and working groups engaged in the programme
- represent Forestry England in relevant regional, national and international forums
- supporting the implementation of the forest wilding communications plan

Explore and support opportunities to secure external funding for the Forest Wilding Programme, working with external funding colleagues, for example through:

- UK Government grants, especially Defra's Environmental Land Management Landscape Recovery Scheme
- biodiversity net gain
- corporate sponsorship
- green finance
- individual giving

The duties of this post require the applicant 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.

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

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- previous knowledge and practical experience of managing change at pace in the environmental sector, including planning, risk, issue and dependency management
- strong technical background, with experience in species recovery for nature conservation outcomes
- a skilled project manager, able to manage and prioritise workloads, meet deadlines and solve problems, and manage budgets
- strong evidence of stakeholder management, demonstrating negotiation and influencing skills at a high level
- a great team worker, with a strong track record of collaboration and relationship management
- experience of analysing and evaluating complex or conflicting evidence to provide usable advice and guidance to multi-disciplinary teams
- competent using IT and Microsoft Office

Desirable professional and technical experience

- sound experience in the forestry sector
- experience of procurement and contract management
- competence in the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- working knowledge of environmental legislation and designations, including their practical application in species recovery

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

