

Job description - District Ecologist (PB5)

Job summary

As District Ecologist you will lead our work to make sure we meet our duties to protect designated sites and protected species. You will be responsible for creating management plans, managing their implementation, and using evidence to review their success. You will play a key role in developing operational plans and forest plans.

You will help to develop and lead a scientific monitoring programme to produce the evidence we need to guide our land management decisions. Evidence will primarily focus on biodiversity outcomes but will be embedded in a wider a natural capital approach. Monitoring will include traditional fieldwork as well as using innovative molecular and digital tools. You will recruit, train and collaboratively manage a network of 'citizen scientists' and volunteers to support this programme, helping people to understand the value of the nation's forests and play a role in improving them.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

- take a leading role in designing, coordinating, and delivering Yorkshire district's nature recovery work, working with specialists with a range of ecological and operational skills.
- provide expert ecological advice for developing operational plans, forest plans, and other enquiries, to ensure our statutory duties for the environment are met and that legal/UK Woodland Assurance Standard compliance is maintained.
- Create, implement, and monitor designated site management plans (including SSSI management plans).
- Procure, set-up, and manage contracts and operational delivery projects.
- manage existing nature recovery projects and provide support as required for new projects. This will include identifying projects in the nation's forests suitable for funding opportunities.
- deliver strategic ecological monitoring and analysis, supporting the district's developing evidenced-based and natural capital approach to making decisions.
- build and maintain good relations with partners in statutory and NGO conservation organisations.
- build and maintain better links with local academia to support an evidence-based approach to management of the nation's forests.
- provide ecological support to the district colleagues working on planning applications, post-minerals restoration projects, infrastructure upgrades, renewables projects, development mitigation and biodiversity offsetting opportunities.
- support and grow volunteering in district by organising ecology/nature recovery volunteering sessions and citizen science programmes.
- line management of an Assistant Ecologist, and possibly other staff.
- any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

General responsibilities

- display Forest England's values & behaviours across all aspects of work.
- minimise filing backlogs and prioritise workload to meet targets.
- present a friendly and professional appearance.
- be familiar with and appropriately adhere to Forestry England policies and procedures.
- keep Health and Safety matters as the overriding determinant at all times and in all circumstances.
- undertake any other duties, reasonably requested by the Planning and Environment Manager or Forest Management Director.

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. 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.

Location-specific information

The Yorkshire District covers an area from Hartlepool to Spurn Head, stretching over the North York Moors National Park, to the Yorkshire Dales and Huddersfield in the west. The district is responsible for the sustainable management of a 21,000-hectare estate, and the team currently consists of over 70 employees supported by dedicated volunteers.

The post will be based at Forestry England's Pickering office, with regular travel around the district. There will be occasional travel outside of the district, including overnight stays, and occasional working in evenings or on weekends.

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- good wildlife identification skills, especially for protected species.
- able to design and deliver robust survey and monitoring programmes.
- an effective communicator, both written and spoken.
- able to manage a complex workload, effectively prioritising and meeting deadlines.
- able to analyse data and evaluate evidence to produce succinct reports.
- competent IT user with experience in MS Office suite of applications.
- up-to-date knowledge of environmental legislation, particularly biodiversity, and experience of its application to land management.
- experience working with and managing volunteers.
- excellent team and partnership working, with a track record of interdisciplinary working.
- experience working with local stakeholder groups, including landowners; non-governmental organisations; charities; and local government.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- competent using Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- competently analyse data using Python, R or similar.
- experience or understanding of the UK forestry sector, the UK Forestry Standard and UKWAS certification.
- experience of citizen science projects.
- experience managing small nature recovery projects.
- knowledge of biodiversity net gain and/or experience with the planning system.
- an understanding of natural capital and how it supports making land management decisions.
- strong ecological knowledge of key ecosystems found within the district.

Qualifications

Essential

- Ecology or environmental degree, or equivalent professional experience.
- A full and current driving license that enables you to drive in the UK.

Desirable

- membership of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)