

Job description - District ecologist (PB5)

Job summary

You will lead Forestry England's work making sure we meet our statutory 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 design plans.

You will help to develop and lead delivering 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 of molecular and digital tools such as EXAMPLE(s). 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

- provide ecological support to the district's estates team working on planning applications, post-minerals restoration projects, infrastructure upgrades, development mitigation and biodiversity offsetting opportunities.
- identify projects in the nation's forests to be ready for funding opportunities that become available.
- manage existing conservation projects and provide support as required for new projects.
- attend team and district meetings.
- build and maintain good relations with partners in statutory and NGO conservation organisations.
- build and maintain better links with local academia to support the sustainable management of the nation's forests.
- support the district's beat teams helping to organise volunteering days.
- liaise with colleagues and external contractors and giving ecological advice.
- create and oversee implementing designated site management plans (including SSSI management plans) and provide expert ecological advice for developing operational plans and forest plans.
- deliver strategic ecological monitoring and analysis, supporting the district's developing evidenced-based and natural capital approach to making decisions.
- set up and manage survey contracts and operational delivery projects.
- develop and manage an ecological citizen science programme.
- implement and manage biodiversity net gain projects.
- you may need to line manage staff.

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

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 license 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.

Location-specific information (optional)

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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.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- competent using Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- competently analyse data using Python, R or similar.

Essential knowledge and experience

- up-to-date knowledge of environmental legislation, particularly biodiversity, and experience of its application to land management.
- experience of 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 knowledge and experience

- experience or understanding of the UK forestry sector, the UK Forestry Standard and UKWAS certification.
- experience of citizen science projects.
- experience of managing small nature recovery projects.
- good knowledge of biodiversity net gain and/or experience of the planning system.
- an understanding of natural capital and how it supports making land management decisions.
- strong ecological knowledge and understanding of the key ecosystems found in the district.

Qualifications

Essential

- ecology or environmental degree, or equivalent professional experience

Desirable

- member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

