

Job Description - Habitat Restoration Officer (PB5)

Job summary

To plan and manage the delivery of habitat restoration projects in the New Forest SSSI from conception to completion, building and maintaining good communications with Forestry England colleagues, contractors, local stakeholders and others to enable delivery of the HLS restoration programme, with a particular focus on river, wetland and heathland restoration.

You will plan work programmes to restore internationally important habitats in the New Forest by carrying out fieldwork and preparing practical plans to deliver works. You will have a particular focus on wetland and river restoration work but also including possible terrestrial restoration work including tree felling, scrub removal, and ridge and furrow removal.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

- Review and update HLS team databases to identify priorities for restoration.
- Carry out walkover surveys to assess restoration work requirements.
- Prepare practical habitat restoration plans.
- Identify constraints and implement appropriate mitigation.

Engage with our staff and stakeholders, including leading consultation site visits, to get agreement for restoration proposals and to manage site-specific constraints (physical, ecological, archaeological):

- Work collaboratively across the HLS and Wider Forestry England teams to integrate restoration work with other operational priorities.
- Liaise with Forestry England colleagues to guide the production of restoration Operational Site Assessments (OSAs).
- Engage with other stakeholders (e.g., Natural England, National Park Authority, Environment Agency, The Verderers of the New Forest) on restoration proposals and secure approval to enable delivery of the HLS works programme.

Deliver restoration projects on the ground by setting up and managing contracts, providing site-specific technical advice and liaising with contractors to ensure restoration is undertaken to agreed specifications with high standards of safety and ecological awareness:

- With guidance from the Ecologist and HLS Project Manager, follow procurement protocols to set up and manage contracts for the HLS programme of restoration projects, with a particular focus on river and wetland restoration projects.
- Work with the Works Supervisors to ensure contractors have the necessary information to undertake contracts safely, including all constraints maps and H&S documentation.
- With guidance from the Ecologist, communicate ecological constraints to contractors (toolbox talks, maps, pre-commencement meetings).
- Liaise with contractors throughout the delivery phase and ensure restoration is undertaken to agreed specifications.

Report progress and monitor outcomes of habitat restoration projects:

- Update HLS team databases to enable audit and reporting.
- Report on progress quarterly to HLS Project Manager for updates to the HLS Board.
- Write up wetland restoration projects using the template developed through the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum.
- Work to keep relevant pages of the HLS website up to date.

- Provide verbal updates on work programmes at HLS team meetings and New Forest Operations meetings.
- Contribute to evaluating restoration effectiveness and recommend adjustments to future work proposals or methods.
- Present updates at stakeholder meetings and conferences, including the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum, and Open Forest Advisory Committee meetings.

Line manage a Works Site Supervisor:

- With guidance from the HLS Project Manager, take on the line management of a Works Supervisor.

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

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- At least 3 years' experience working in the environmental management sector.
- Sound knowledge and understanding of delivering habitat restoration work within designated sites.
- Demonstrable experience in planning and delivering habitat restoration projects.
- Experience engaging with local stakeholder groups, including: landowners; non-governmental organisations; charities; local government.
- Experience in contract management.
- An effective communicator, both written and verbally.
- Competent in IT - Microsoft Office.
- Sound knowledge of the application of environmental legislation to project planning and delivery.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- Experience in delivering river or wetland restoration.
- Knowledge of river and wetland ecology, hydrology and restoration techniques.
- Experience in working within a designated site.
- Experience with Geographic Information Systems (GIS).
- Experience of budget management.
- Experience supervising or mentoring staff, volunteers or contractors.
- An understanding and knowledge of the New Forest and its habitats.
- Sound knowledge of the application of environmental legislation to project planning and delivery.

Qualifications

Desirable

- Degree or equivalent in Ecology, Environmental Management or other relevant discipline.

