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Pheasants Forever AND Quail Forever

The Habitat Organization *JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT*

Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist I/II

Location: Caledonia, Minnesota

Application Deadline: May 13, 2024

Anticipated Start Date: June 2024

Job Overview: An individual in this position will implement wildlife habitat-related conservation programs and provide technical assistance within a multi-county area while located in the USDA Service Center in Caledonia, MN. This position will work in a joint capacity with Pheasants Forever, Inc. (PF), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to promote, coordinate and implement conservation provisions of the Federal Farm Bill on private lands, with primary focus on the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) Bobwhite Grasslands and Savannas Framework. Conservation delivery may also involve other relevant Farm Bill programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), general EQIP, ACEP WRE, and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP), as well as state and local habitat programs and initiatives. General duties will include all aspects of wildlife habitat planning, contract coordination, conservation plan writing, site assessment/eligibility determination, practice certification, program promotion/outreach, landowner technical assistance, reporting and species/vegetation sampling. The individual is an employee of Pheasants Forever, Inc. and receives supervision from Pheasants Forever with daily instruction by the local USDA-NRCS and SWCD staff.

Duties:

- Use science-based knowledge to improve habitat within the agricultural regions of the work area. This includes being the in-house technical wildlife expert, collaboration with partner agencies, and helping landowners within the work area who have wildlife and habitat related questions.
- Coordinate the implementation and application of wildlife habitat programs within the focal regions in cooperation with partner agencies.
- Complete conservation plans, job sheets, wildlife habitat evaluation guides (WHEG) and other required documentation for the conservation programs.

- Help landowners identify plants and habitat on their property and guide them in improving those habitats for wildlife utilizing voluntary conservation programs from USDA NRCS, PF, BWSR and other local and state programs.
- Effectively communicate program requirements and complete site visits to determine eligibility. Review plans and specifications for feasibility for implementation under Farm Bill program contract rules, etc.
- Accelerate conservation program enrollment by conducting outreach such as workshops, field days, demonstration events, and habitat tours. Work with local PF and QF chapters to assist with habitat program education and outreach and provide technical assistance for habitat projects.
- Provide on-site landowner technical assistance for conservation practice implementation.
- Participate in outcomes assessments consisting of vegetation surveys and Fall/ Spring bird counts. Conduct monitoring and species/vegetation surveys within focal areas.

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with farmers, landowners, and partner agencies.
- Ability to work independently with little supervision and with diverse clientele.
- Knowledge of wildlife ecology, wetland and forest management including the ability to utilize various habitat management tools in the development of management plans (e.g. mowing, prescribed burning, herbicide spraying, grazing, forestry mowing, etc..). Knowledge of agriculture is a plus.
- Knowledge of conservation and wildlife programs provided by federal, state, & local entities. In addition, knowledge of how these programs are implemented in an agricultural landscape is desired.
- Knowledge of habitat requirements for pheasant, turkey, deer, waterfowl, monarch butterfly, native bees, and other grassland wildlife species.
- Excellent verbal and written communication.
- A background in GIS mapping or closely related program and skills.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Valid driver's license required; Partner vehicle will be provided for field work, but some use of personal vehicle may be required at time (mileage reimbursement provided).
- Able to obtain USDA Federal Security Clearance.

Job Expectations:

Pheasants Forever will provide a mentor to help train the individual on program details and specifications, after which they will work independently in their designated work region. During field season, the individual will spend time in the field doing site visits on private property, evaluating habitat, making habitat recommendations, identifying plants, and meeting contractors on construction sites. Other time will be spent in the office doing data entry, writing conservation plans, creating maps, and collaborating with partner staff on current and future projects. During office time, there will also be numerous interactions with landowners via phone, email, and in-person, to give technical and program information. Outreach in the form of workshops, training events, letters, phone calls, and social media will be a year-round activity to keep the public informed on current programs offered by USDA and other agencies.

Hear From Other Farm Bill Biologists:

<https://www.pheasantsforever.org/getdoc/9c1d6f7b-b5b4-4559-a93d-0e576d1c3b59/The-Next-20-Years.aspx>

Preferred Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and/or experience that will enable the applicant to possess the required knowledge, skills, and abilities. Either a Bachelor of Science Degree or technical degree in Wildlife Management, Natural Resources Management, Agriculture, Forestry or closely related natural resources field. Experience in agriculture or grassland management practices is preferred. To be eligible for Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist II, individual must have several years' experience working with CRP and farm bill programs.

Where You Will Work and Live:

Caledonia is the seat of Houston County, Minnesota. You'll be close to cities like Winona and La Crosse, while still able to experience some of the best nature in Minnesota. Caledonia is in the Driftless Area which has a gorgeous rugged landscape with cold water streams excellent for trout fishing. Whitetail deer and turkey abound for those interested in hunting. The beauty and wildlife of this landscape will be enhanced as a result of the individual working with landowners to help them with wildlife related conservation practices.

Salary Range: \$43,000 – \$49,000 commensurate with experience + benefits (see benefits summary at www.pheasantsforever.org/jobs).

To Apply: Please combine your *cover letter, resume and 3 references* into a SINGLE Microsoft Word document or PDF file before clicking the blue 'Apply' button and then uploading to the "Resume" section of your application on our Recruitment website at: www.pheasantsforever.org/jobs. For more information regarding the position, contact Maura Curry, MN SE Area Wildlife Biologist at 651-249-6308.

Pheasants Forever, Inc and Quail Forever is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, status as a protected veteran, status as a qualified individual with disability, or any other category that may be protected by law.