

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Wildlife/Wetland Easement Team Specialists

Sioux City, Iowa

Application Deadline: Until Filled

You would be serving as a member of the wetland easement team, working with Agricultural Conservation Easement Program Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE). One of your main tasks would be to monitor easements to document progress towards meeting habitat and management goals. Monitoring provides an opportunity to assess the habitat and work with easement owners to plan for the development, enhancement, and management of wildlife habitat on their property. You would work with landowners and your team to develop plans that meet the goals of the easement and the landowner as well as the needs of the wildlife that will inhabit their land. The wetland easements that you will be working with are critical for wildlife and water quality efforts in Iowa, and the efforts you put in will be enjoyed for generations to come.

There is nothing more rewarding than seeing the wetlands that you have helped create and manage come to life!

This position is a great developmental opportunity! People who have held this position were able to develop a broad array of skills related to wildlife/wetland conservation and they have gone on to a variety of higher-level conservation career positions!

Please see the description below for more detail.

Anticipated Start Dates: 2-4 weeks post successful job offer.

Overview & Job Duties:

Work in a joint capacity with Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI), Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) to assist with development of wetland restoration plans of operations (WRPOs), prepare management plans and compatible use requests, coordinate restoration activities, and implement restoration vision of multi-disciplinary team on existing and future Agricultural Conservation Easement Program Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE). Activities will include conservation planning, easement monitoring, on-site habitat assessments, plan and proposal writing, coordination of appropriate plans and reports, coordination with Area Private Lands Biologists and Easement Specialists to ensure habitats meet needs of wildlife, including those listed as threatened or endangered. Provide technical assistance for wildlife habitat enhancement techniques to private landowner's and public organizations. Attend CDI, NRCS and Iowa DNR Private Lands Program trainings and meetings.

The incumbent will work in the following areas:

- Housed in the Sioux City USDA-NRCS office covering USDA-NRCS NW Area

The incumbent is an employee of Conservation Districts of Iowa and receive supervision from CDI with daily instruction provided by the local USDA-NRCS Area Easement Specialist. Will work closely with Iowa DNR Private Lands Biologist in conjunction with the USDA-NRCS agreement funding the position. Training and support will be provided by both the NRCS Area Easement Specialist and the Iowa DNR in particular the Private Lands Biologist. The incumbent will be a member of the wetland easement restoration planning team, including civil engineers, engineering technicians, soil scientists, wildlife biologists, and others as appointed. The incumbent will be knowledgeable of all USDA Farm Bill Conservation Programs, Iowa DNR, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) and local programs to private landowners and participants, with special emphasis on USDA's ACEP-WRE.

Duties:

- Conduct on- and off-site monitoring of easements to document progress towards meeting habitat and management goals set out in wetland restoration plans/plan of operations (WRPOs)
- Assist Team with development of WRPOs and management plans for conservation easements
- Assist Team with policy reviews to ensure compliance of all ACEP-WRE applications and subsequent WRPOs with NEPA and other federal and state statutes
- Assist with technical reviews in order to prepare compatible use requests from and for landowners
- Assist with documentation and monitoring of potential easement use violations as appropriate
- Assist with monitoring of on-going, on-site restoration activities to ensure conformance to applicable USDA-NRCS practice standards and applicable WRPO activities
- Work closely with Iowa DNR Area Private Lands Biologist as needed to ensure habitat requirements are met for wildlife as planned in WRPO, with special attention to habitat requirements of any threatened or endangered species planned for or affected by easement restoration
- Provide technical assistance to landowners and clients in field offices as needed or assigned
- Where assigned, assist with development of new ACEP-WRE applications
- Receive training with the goal of becoming a USDA-NRCS Certified Conservation Planner

Required Knowledge Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with landowners and partner agencies.
- Ability to work independently with little supervision and with diverse clientele.
- Ability to work outdoors in wetland environments and associated risks and difficulties, including but not limited to temperature, water, terrain, insects, agricultural runoff, and others.
- Knowledge of wildlife ecology, wetland-associated threatened and endangered species, and wetland and upland management including the ability to utilize various habitat management tools in the development of management plans.
- Knowledge of basic land survey principles, including use of laser-planes, GPS, and other survey instruments.
- Knowledge of agricultural drainage practices, systems, and moist-soil management.
- Knowledge of basic legal documents as related to land ownership and management.
- Excellent verbal and written communication.
- Proficiency with computer software programs such as Microsoft Office, ArcGIS or USDA Conservation Desktop.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Valid driver's license required; some use of personal vehicle may be required (mileage reimbursement provided).
- Ability to utilize UTV/ATV, including transport of such vehicles by trailer.
- Some overnight and evening work required.
- Able to obtain USDA Federal Security Clearance.

Training and Experience Guideline: A general qualification guideline for this position is a Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Management or closely related natural resources field and 1 year related field experience in wildlife habitat development and management or providing wildlife technical assistance.

Starting Salary: \$18.47/hour, health benefits and retirement package, paid holidays and paid leave. CDI reserves the right to terminate or amend and all benefit plan(s). Participation is neither a contract nor a guarantee of future employment.

To Apply: Please include your cover letter, resume and three professional references as one PDF file. Send to John Whitaker at john@cdiowa.org.

Conservation Districts of Iowa is an equal opportunity employer.