



Forest Wildlife Specialist- Forester

Kentucky- All Lands

Location: Barbourville, Kentucky (or remote location near southeast Kentucky)

Employer: Ruffed Grouse Society & American Woodcock Society

Region: Southern Appalachians

Starting Date: October 17, 2022

Term of Position: October 2022 to October 2025, with a possibility of position extension.

Background and Primary Duties:

The Ruffed Grouse Society & American Woodcock Society (RGS & AWS) are a national, nonprofit organization with a 60-year record of forest wildlife conservation. RGS & AWS in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Daniel Boone National Forest (DBNF), and other partners, are hiring a wildlife-oriented forester to work effectively with private forest landowners and public land managers in the Appalachian Mountain region of eastern Kentucky. The selected individual will coordinate the implementation of sustainable forest management practices on private, state, and federal lands to assist the recovery of Species of Greatest Conservation Need identified in the Kentucky State Wildlife Action Plan and the Kentucky Ruffed Grouse and Young Forest Strategic Plan, while also promoting forest health and timber production objectives

On private lands, the Forest Wildlife Specialist will provide technical assistance to private landowners and connect them to financial assistance through NRCS programs, including EQIP and CSP. Primarily, the position will prepare forest management plans for qualified landowners. On state-owned lands, the Forest Wildlife Specialist will increase on-the-ground capacity for active forest management, with a focus on Kentucky Ridge State Forest and Wildlife Management Area (WMA). On National Forest lands, the Forest Wildlife Specialist will coordinate RGS & AWS's stewardship projects with DBNF, including leading the administration and inspections of commercial timber harvests and noncommercial treatments.

Qualifications:

- A passion for forestry and wildlife conservation.
- In-depth understanding of forest management including operations, silvicultural systems, forest product markets, and environmental regulation. Ability to assess wildlife habitat and make connections between forest management and wildlife needs.
- Technical expertise in field forestry, including management plan preparation, forest inventory, timber marking, boundary layout, and GPS data collection. Experience in prescribed fire and burn plan preparation is a plus.
- Excellent spoken and written communication skills, networking skills, well organized, and ability to engage with a diversity of forest landowners and conservation partners. Experience managing complex projects under deadlines.



- Knowledge of USDA Forest Service processes, regulations, policies, and directives (e.g., NFMA and NEPA). Previous experience working with the US Forest Service, or another federal land management agency is preferred.
- Knowledge of NRCS landowner cost-share programs, especially EQIP, preferred.
- Experience working with private landowners as well as Federal or State agencies is desired.
- Ability to use Excel, ArcGIS, Google Maps, and other computer mapping systems to identify and delineate project boundaries.
- Willingness and ability to travel frequently throughout the Southern Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky and perform arduous field work on steep terrain.
- A degree in forestry or closely related field, with 3+ years of experience and/or a graduate degree in natural resource management.
- Proven ability to manage multiple projects, produce effective results and meet deadlines. Applicant must be self-motivated, responsible and have ability to solve problems.
- The position will be required to participate in specific training programs to use partner facilities and equipment. Applicant must have a valid driver's license.

Position Summary:

The Forest Wildlife Specialist's **main duties** will include working with RGS & AWS staff, KDFWR staff, and NRCS-KY field offices, as well as local partners such as KY Division of Forestry, DBNF, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves, conservation nonprofits, consulting foresters, and procurement foresters to:

- Lead the administration of noncommercial treatments and commercial timber harvests to achieve desired forest conditions, including preparing bid announcements, selecting contractors, forest road maintenance, and performing site inspections and evaluations.
- Inspect timber sales for compliance with contract clauses and adherence to best management practices for soil and water conservation (Kentucky Forest Conservation Act and Agriculture Water Quality Act) [FOR-130: Kentucky Logging BMP Field Guide \(uky.edu\)](https://www.uky.edu/for130/)
- Coordinate RGS & AWS' Stewardship Agreements with DBNF, including project administration and reporting.
- Prepare NRCS-compliant Forest Management Plans for private landowners and lead site visits to provide technical assistance and connect landowners to financial assistance through EQIP and CSP programs.
- Promote active forest management to private landowners and the public, including the potential to organize and conduct outreach and training workshops.
- Perform outreach to recruit landowners for NRCS programs, including direct mailings, site visits, networking, and events. Facilitate private landowner enrollment in NRCS programs and conduct or oversee NRCS conservation planning and program participation.



- Work with NRCS field offices and other professional resource managers to assist with contracting, preparing, and overseeing the implementation of Forest Management Plans on private lands.
- Assist with monitoring efforts, including the potential to assist with wildlife monitoring (e.g., ruffed grouse drummer surveys).
- Lead volunteer efforts with RGS & AWS members and the public, including monitoring efforts, information or interpretive programs, and habitat workdays.
- Communicate the importance of active forest management to RGS & AWS members and the public during field trips, presentations, blog posts, and local media pitches.
- Maintain a database to track performance, achievements, and outcomes.
- Write and submit regular summaries, and interim and annual reports to RGS & AWS and partners.

The Forest Wildlife Specialist will report to the NRCS field office in Barbourville, Kentucky. A portion of their timing working from a home office might be possible depending on the candidate. However, the position should be prepared to report to Barbourville multiple times per week as needed. The position is an RGS & AWS employee and represents RGS & AWS in their work. The position will be supervised by RGS & AWS's Southern Appalachian Forest Conservation Director. There will be a 6-month probationary period for the purposes of determining the suitability of the employee to their new position.

Compensation:

The salary for the position is \$50,000.00, plus benefits, health insurance, and retirement options. A vehicle will be available for the position, with the possibility of mileage reimbursement or a vehicle stipend. A purchasing card for business and travel expenses, computer, printer, cell phone, office supplies will be provided.

Application Instructions:

Please send a cover letter and resume to Charles Faires (RGS & AWS) at charlesf@ruffedgrousesociety.org by **11:59pm on September 6, 2022**. If you have any questions, please contact Charles at 412-443-0905.