



Forest Wildlife Specialist- Forester

Western Virginia- State Lands

Location: Home office within 50-miles of Marion, VA or hybrid office at VDWR Regional Office in Marion, VA.

Employer: Ruffed Grouse Society & American Woodcock Society

Posting Open Date: March 27, 2024

Posting Close Date: April 26, 2024

Starting Date: June 1, 2024

Term of Position: June 1, 2024, to June 1, 2027, 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 63-year record of forest wildlife conservation. In partnership with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (VDWR) and the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) we are seeking a dedicated forester to increase capacity for planning and implementing active forest management projects on state-owned wildlife management areas (WMAs) in western Virginia, with a focus on the Clinch Mountain WMA, Hidden Valley WMA, Big Survey WMA, Crooked Creek WMA, Short hills WMA, and Gathright WMA. The Forest Wildlife Specialist will work closely with state agencies and other conservation partners to provide planning support and on-the-ground field forestry assistance. The position will focus on restoring forest age-class and structural diversity to achieve objectives from Virginia's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan and to assist in the recovery of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), including ruffed grouse, American woodcock, and golden-winged warbler.

Qualifications:

- A degree in forestry with experience in forest operations, applied silviculture, and timber sale administration. A bachelor's degree with 3+ years of experience or a master's degree is preferred.
- In-depth understanding of connections between active forest management and wildlife habitat needs, contract administration, forest product markets, forest harvesting systems, forest ecology, and environmental regulations.
- Technical skills and experience in field forestry, including forest inventory design and implementation, timber marking and cruising, project layout, GPS data collection, map making in ArcGIS Pro, data analysis, and silvicultural treatment writing.
- Experience in forest management planning, including growth and yield modeling, database management, and the utilization of decision-support software applications (e.g., Forest Metrix Pro, FVS, and REGEN3).
- Excellent spoken and written communication skills, networking skills, well organized, and ability to engage with a diversity of collaborators.
- Willingness and ability to travel frequently throughout western Virginia and perform arduous field work on steep terrain and a variety of weather conditions fully independently.
- Previous experience working with a state land management agency is preferred.
- Experience managing complex projects under deadlines.
- Applicant must have a valid U.S. Driver's license.



Position Summary: The Forest Wildlife Specialist will provide technical assistance in planning and implementing active forest management projects on state-owned WMAs in western Virginia. Specifically, the Specialist will:

- Administrative and remote planning support for Gathright WMA and Short Hills WMA. Forestry field support for Big Survey WMA, Clinch Mountain WMA, Hidden Valley WMA, and Crooked Creek WMA.
- Provide planning support, including GIS assessment, stand reconnaissance, forest inventory, GPS data collection, GIS mapping of treatment areas, data analysis, model runs through decision-support software applications, and silviculture prescription preparation.
- Coordinate with the Virginia Hardwood Initiative and utilize their decision-support tool in preparing hardwood silviculture prescriptions on state-owned WMAs.
- Administer commercial timber sales on state lands, including drafting timber sale prospectuses, preparing contracts, and completing timber sale inspections of logging contractors.
- Administer noncommercial forest stand improvements and wildlife habitat enhancements on state lands. This includes project layout, flagging or marking treatments, contract administration, and contractor inspections.
- Prepare wildlife habitat restoration plans for state-owned WMAs, including analysis of current conditions, establishing desired conditions, and coordinating with working groups of partner organizations.
- Coordinate monitoring and research needs at state-owned WMAs, including coordinating with Virginia's Turkey & Grouse Program Coordinator and the Eastern Grouse Working Group.
- Supervise temporary Forest Wildlife Technicians during the summer field season to assist with field work.
- Develop future collaborative work with VDWR, DOF, and other partners. This might include assisting with grant writing and preparing agreement proposals.
- 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.

Compensation: The position salary is **\$50,000- \$60,000 (commensurate with experience)** plus benefits, health insurance, and retirement options. An RGS & AWS vehicle will be provided for business travel. 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 Nick Biemiller (RGS & AWS) at nickb@ruffedgrousesociety.org by **11:59pm Eastern Time on April 26, 2024**. Use "Virginia Specialist" as the email subject line. If you have any questions, please contact Nick at 412-719-0625.