

TITLE: Arid Lands Ecologist
LOCATION: Eastern Washington
SUPERVISOR: Director of Conservation Science
PREPARER: Elizabeth Gray
DATE: March 1, 2004

SUMMARY OF POSITION:

The Aridlands Ecologist is responsible for planning and implementing research, monitoring and restoration efforts that further The Nature Conservancy's conservation goals in central and eastern Washington. The Aridlands Ecologist will provide scientific leadership and use scientific information to help the Conservancy's eastside program team implement the full array of strategies developed through ecoregional planning, conservation area planning, and statewide strategic planning. S/he also will serve as a catalyst for advancing research partnerships and stimulating the scientific community to participate in critical research. These efforts will be carried out in cooperation with agency, private, non-profit and academic partners in priority landscapes, including Moses Coulee, Hanford National Monument, and other areas identified as priorities within the North Central and South Central Washington Programs. This is a full-time, exempt position supervised by the Director of Conservation Science. S/he will work closely with the east-side program team, the Conservation Science team, and the Volunteer Program Coordinator and may supervise interns, volunteers, and/or contractors. This position will start 1 July 2004.

DUTIES

1. Help program teams in setting and refining conservation priorities, launching conservation strategies, working creatively with diverse partners, and measuring success in terms of the Conservancy's biodiversity conservation mission.
2. Develop a shrub-steppe research agenda that identifies critical research needs, cultivates partnerships with agencies and academic institutions, and initiates high-leverage research programs that focus on conservation targets and threat abatement strategies for species, communities, and habitats. The Conservancy's Moses Coulee project will be an important area of research focus.
3. Synthesize and integrate available research data to advance our understanding of the condition and status of biodiversity at landscape-scale sites. Use this process to inform and develop effective conservation strategies to abate critical threats and maintain or improve biodiversity health.
4. Help implement high-priority conservation strategies in central and eastern Washington, with emphasis on conservation of shrub-steppe, riparian, and dry forest ecosystems.
5. Assist in developing and maintaining active partnerships with federal, state, and municipal agencies, NGOs, and local communities involved in protecting or managing priority aridland habitats in central and eastern Washington.

6. Promote and/or direct applied ecological research and monitoring that helps to: a) advance our understanding of biodiversity health and status in project areas, b) inform the development of effective conservation strategies, and c) measure progress and success.
7. Develop high-leverage land management and research programs that demonstrate innovative practices, investigate new techniques, involve and enhance partnerships, and provide a model that can be exported to other landscapes and projects.
8. Participate as an active member of the Washington Conservation Science team, providing scientific expertise and guidance to team members on issues of statewide and regional importance.
9. Develop strategic partnerships with academic researchers and create opportunities for collaboration between academic and TNC scientists in addressing issues related to invasive species, shrub-steppe grazing, fire, dry forest and aridlands restoration, and threatened and endangered species.
10. Represent The Nature Conservancy on select planning teams and provide expertise for local and regional aridlands conservation initiatives.
11. Participate in other eastside program activities as needed to ensure conservation success including public and private fundraising and community outreach.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Advanced degree in ecology, ecological restoration, conservation biology, botany, zoology, rangeland ecology, or closely related field. At least 5 years successful work experience, including field work, in applied conservation biology or related field, with a focus in arid environments.
2. Professional familiarity with the flora and fauna of arid environments in the Pacific Northwest. A good working knowledge of the key ecological processes that maintain the region's native species and communities is essential, including experience with fire and invasive species. Basic knowledge of land use planning and land management desirable.
3. Demonstrated skills in research and experimental design, data collection, and statistical analysis.
4. Excellent written and verbal communications skills a must. Ability to meet project deadlines. Strong organizational skills.
5. Proven ability to work effectively with a wide range of individuals, including partner organizations, local constituencies, volunteers and staff. Strong team ethic required; ability to work effectively as a team leader or member.
6. Familiarity with agricultural, range, and livestock management issues. Knowledge and appreciation of the people, values, and current conservation issues of eastern Washington.
7. Commitment to practical solutions to conservation challenges. Experience designing and conducting field research to inform immediate and long-term conservation action.

8. Experience using maps, aerial photography, and GPS.
9. Proficiency in Microsoft Office. Basic word-processing, spreadsheet, and database skills essential; working knowledge of ArcView/ArcInfo and/or other Geographic Information Systems technology highly recommended.
10. Good physical condition. Work requires physical exertion such as walking over rough terrain in various weather conditions.
11. Valid driver's license and automobile for use on the job.
12. Demonstrated commitment to the preservation of biological diversity.

Send cover letter and resume by May 1, 2004 to:

Arid Lands Ecologist Search Committee
The Nature Conservancy of Washington
217 Pine Street, Suite 1100 Seattle, Washington 98101

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