



## American Bird Conservancy Oak Ecosystem Forester

### Position Summary:

**Title:** Oak Ecosystem Forester

**Supervisor:** Great Lakes Oak Ecosystem Coordinator

**Location:** TBD - Must be located in NE Illinois Project Area (DeKalb, Kane, DuPage, Cook, Kendall, Will, Grundy, or Kankakee Counties)

**Employment Type:** Full-time

**Salary:** Estimated at \$55,000; Based on experience

**Application Deadline:** July 31, 2024

### Introduction:

The mission of American Bird Conservancy (ABC) is to conserve birds and their habitats – the places birds need to thrive – across the Americas. We are a growing group of 140+ dedicated staff, located across the United States and with a network of partners from Canada to Chile. Each year, we grow in budget and staff, and we deliver more results aimed at preventing bird species extinctions and reversing declines that are reducing populations of nearly all bird groups. Our work is guided by our principles, which include a commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI).

The Oak Ecosystem Forester (Forester) will primarily work with private landowners, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Morton Arboretum, and other local partners in the region to implement best management practices (BMPs) on non-industrial private lands as part of ABC's NRCS Oak Ecosystem Regional Conservation Partnership Program in NE Illinois and SE Wisconsin.

The Forester will work closely with ABC's Great Lakes Oak Ecosystem Coordinator to design and contract management prescriptions for oak ecosystem restoration by working directly with NRCS and other collaborative partners. Duties will include, but are not limited to providing technical forestry assistance for private landowners, building partnerships (e.g., with NGO, public agency, and tribal entities), assisting with ABC partnership projects on public lands, promoting ABC and its various programs, and assisting with grant preparation and reporting.

This position requires knowledge of, and experience with oak ecosystem management, conservation agencies and organizations, and conservation partnerships. The Forester maintains a high level of contact and partnership, particularly with NRCS, in person, by telephone, and by email.

This work requires initiative, innovation, excellent communication skills, experience achieving on-the-ground results for bird conservation, strong writing skills, the ability to manage multiple projects and responsibilities, ability to work independently and as part of a team, and attention to detail. The Forester must be articulate and responsive in representing ABC with partners and others within the bird and broader conservation community.

**P.O. Box 249, The Plains, VA 20198** (regular, registered, or certified mail)

**8255 E. Main Street, Suites D & E, Marshall, VA 20115** (physical address; use for deliveries)

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### Primary Duties:

1. Works within a team of Foresters to implement the ABC-NRCS Oak Ecosystem RCPP Project. The team includes the Oak Ecosystem Coordinator (lead on the project) and one additional Oak Ecosystem Forester located within the project area.
2. Identifies and communicates with landowners and natural resource managers within designated focal regions to implement oak conservation activities.
3. Conducts field visits on private lands to evaluate properties for possible oak ecosystem restoration treatments using focal species BMPs.
4. Identifies and delineates project areas for non-commercial oak management treatments. Identifies and communicates with contractors capable of completing these treatments, and continues to develop a growing referral list to provide to landowners.
5. Provides technical assistance to private landowners to facilitate the NRCS cost-share application, contracting, and certification process. Develops site-specific conservation plans in accordance with NRCS practice standards and focal species BMPs. Maintains NRCS-specific Job Approval Authority and/or other NRCS training and certifications as needed.
6. Conducts outreach and education to private landowners, technical service providers (TSPs), and local, state and federal agency staff on habitat BMPs through workshops, trainings, meetings, etc.
7. Assists partners and team of Foresters with collecting forestry data and writing forest management plans. Monitors and tracks project activities using a variety of database management software and GIS applications for assessing success.
8. Develops excellent working relationships with non-profit, agency, local government, tribal, and industry partners to expand collaborative conservation opportunities that advance bird conservation strategies. Specifically coordinates with Morton Arboretum on shared deliverables and oak ecosystem priorities.
9. Assists ABC Development staff and Oak Ecosystem Coordinator with preparing and reviewing fundraising proposals and assists with preparation of new funding/grant agreements and sub-awards.
10. Supports ongoing research and monitoring activities including, but not limited to, obtaining landowner permission to conduct site surveys, conducting vegetation and bird surveys, placing and retrieving monitoring equipment (i.e., acoustic recording units), and managing data.

### Position Requirements:

- Associate's degree or Bachelor's degree in forestry (e.g., forest management, urban forestry, forest science, agroforestry), or a similar conservation-related field; and
- A minimum of three years of experience with technical forestry, wildlife habitat management, or related natural resource management is preferred.

### Required Experience:

- Knowledge of oak ecosystem improvement and management, wildlife management, and the use of prescribed fire for natural community restoration.



- Professional knowledge and skills to assess, devise, and apply silvicultural strategies for oak management to meet desired wildlife habitat and conservation objectives. Experience developing and implementing site-specific management plans/practices and the ability to utilize forest inventory tools and protocols.
- Experience working with private landowners as well as public agencies (NRCS, DNR, USFWS, USDA Forest Service, etc.), with knowledge of landowner incentive programs, especially NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and NRCS Regional Conservation Partnerships Program (RCPP).
- Communication skills are critical; ability to maintain regular and clear communication with supervisor, team members, and external partners, including contractors.
- The position requires regular travel both within and outside the greater Chicago project area. ABC will reimburse travel expenses. Applicants are required to have an unrestricted Class D Driver's License with a clear driving record.
- This position requires a background screening, and the Forester must also obtain and maintain USDA Security Clearance and NRCS Conservation Planning certification. Forester will also be required to participate in specific NRCS training programs in order to use partner facilities, vehicles, and equipment.

#### Preferred Experience:

- Preference will be given to applicants who are a certified forester or are able to become a certified forester.
- A general knowledge of environmental laws, regulations, and policies to ensure legal standards are met during habitat project development and implementation activities.
- Advanced ability to complete many forms of technical writing, editing, and database management, including grant writing and site- or landscape-level habitat management or conservation plans. Must be able to adapt messaging to a diverse audience that includes habitat managers, conservation practitioners, academia, and the general public.
- Ability to use multiple forms of GIS software and GPS hardware, including ESRI applications, Avenza, Google Maps/Earth, OnX, and/or similar to identify and delineate project boundaries, Microsoft Excel and other database management tools to organize project and program information, and Forest Metrix (or similar) to write forest management plans.
- Willing and able to work in physically challenging outdoor environments throughout all seasons, including traversing difficult or uneven terrain, in a range of weather conditions, and with insect presence.

#### **Benefits:**

- Excellent benefits package includes medical, dental, flexible spending accounts, and employer-matched retirement savings, flexible schedule, etc.
- Paid vacation days (starting at 15 days annually and increasing to 20 days after 1 year of employment), paid holidays (including both US holidays and additional ABC holidays) and sick leave.
- Lodging, meals, and transportation covered for work-related travel away from home.



- Rental vehicle or personal mileage reimbursement where applicable.
- Pre-approved forestry equipment, office expenses, and professional training/workshop expenses covered.

**To Apply:**

Please apply on [Paylocity](#).

If you have trouble submitting an application, please send your cover letter and resume as one document to [HR@abcbirds.org](mailto:HR@abcbirds.org)

*At American Bird Conservancy, we believe that a diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and skills makes us more effective. We are committed to creating a respectful and inclusive work environment for all of our employees.*

*As an equal opportunity employer, ABC is committed to ensuring that employees and applicants for employment have equal opportunities regardless of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, religion, physical or mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other factor unrelated to the requirements of the position.*