

Virginia Private Lands Forester
NRCS's Working Lands for Wildlife Program

Position Summary:

Title: Working Lands for Wildlife-Private Lands Forester

Location: Based in Lexington, VA with work across western/southwestern VA

Supervisor: Indiana University of Pennsylvania Research Institute in partnership with VA NRCS

Application Deadline: Until suitable candidate is found

Term of Position: 2 years with possibility for extension



Background:

Indiana University of Pennsylvania-Research Institute, in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), is looking for a motivated individual to work effectively with private forest landowners and local conservation partners in the Appalachian Mountain region of Virginia. The selected individual will conduct landowner outreach, collect and review silvics data, draft forest management plans, and prepare stands for project implementation for landowners interested in being part of NRCS's Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) partnership to assist in the recovery of the Golden-winged Warbler (GWWA), while also promoting forest health and timber production objectives.

Primary duties:

Work with NRCS field offices, IUP-RI staff, as well as local partners such as VA Dept. of Forestry, VA Dept. of Wildlife Resources, USFWS, NGOs (American Bird Conservancy, Ruffed Grouse Society, etc.), consulting foresters, and others to:

- Promote forest management that benefits healthy forests and imperiled wildlife to private landowners, consulting foresters and loggers; including helping organize and conduct outreach and training workshops.
- Identify and directly contact private landowners with NRCS-based forest stewardship opportunities intended to benefit forest health and wildlife.
- Conduct site visits to provide technical assistance to interested landowners and advance forest management plan development.
- Work with NRCS field offices, the VA Golden-winged Warbler Coordinator, and other forestry resource professionals to draft and implement management plans according to NRCS practice standards and focal species' best management practices.
- Assist with the implementation of conservation plans on private lands using established forest management guidelines known to improve forest health, promote desired regeneration, and benefit Golden-winged Warblers and associated wildlife.
- Assist with monitoring and tracking project activities using an electronic database and GIS to ensure proper reporting for assessing success, and potentially assist with focal species monitoring.

Position Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree or higher in Forestry is required. A strong understanding of forest stand improvement practices and wildlife conservation in eastern deciduous forests is a must.
- Experience working with private landowners as well as public agencies (NRCS, USFWS, state forestry and wildlife agencies, etc.) strongly desired.
- Professional skills, knowledge and experience to assess, devise, and apply strategies for forest management to meet desired forestry and wildlife habitat objectives. Experience developing and implementing site-specific forest management plans/practices, and the ability to utilize forest inventory tools/inventory protocol needed.
- Willing and able to travel throughout western Virginia with occasional overnight travel as project area covers 29 counties. Applicant should be prepared to spend as much as 10% of their time away from home. Use of NRCS vehicles for site visits is provided and IUP-RI will cover expenses related to overnight travel.
- Knowledge of NRCS landowner cost-share programs such as EQIP desired.
- Proven ability to manage multiple projects, produce effective results and meet deadlines.
- Proven ability to be self-motivated, responsible, and solve problems. Applicant must be able to develop and manage their own daily work schedule to achieve results and work independently
- Ability to use GIS, Google Maps, etc. to identify and delineate project boundaries; and Microsoft Excel and Google Drive to manage project information.
- Willing and able to work in physically challenging environment under adverse conditions. IUP-RI provides a GPS unit, cruising vest, prism, flagging, forestry paint, etc. Potential projects are in heavily forest landscapes and often in rugged terrain, so comfort, ability and desire to navigate environments is required.
- Forester will be required to participate in specific NRCS training programs in order to use NRCS facilities, computers, and equipment. Applicant must have a valid driver's license.

Though this position is largely field or home office based, candidates should plan to be located near the NRCS field office in Lexington, VA. The forester will be an IUP-RI employee and represents IUP-RI in its work. The forester will be supervised by the IUP-RI project manager in partnership with VA NRCS staff.

Salary:

The salary for this position is \$50,000-52,000/yr + benefits.

To Apply:

Please send a single PDF document containing 1) cover letter, 2) resume or CV, and 3) names and contact information for 3 references to Kristin Fuoco – VA Golden-winged Warbler Coordinator at kristin.fuoco@usda.gov. If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Kristin by email or phone at (540) 319-6465.

* The IUP Research Institute is an equal opportunity employer.