

# PHEASANTS FOREVER & QUAIL FOREVER

*The Habitat Organization*

## JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

# Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist Northern Middle Tennessee



**Application Deadline: March 1, 2019**

**Anticipated Start Date: March 2019**

### **Overview:**

The southeastern region of the U.S. was one of the most diverse grassland regions of North America, yet more than 99% has been lost due to such factors as conversion to row crop agriculture, fire suppression, forest succession, and wetland drainage. Our objective, in conjunction with other entities in a regional public-private partnership, is to use funding from the National Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) funds to work with willing landowners to improve native grassland habitat on private lands in a manner that compliments existing conservation efforts, especially near protected landscapes also under, or planned for, restoration. More specifically, the work we proposed to NRCS focuses on efforts needed to recover populations of three species of grassland/shrubland bird species deemed in need of conservation attention, i.e. Northern Bobwhite, Henslow's Sparrow and Eastern Meadowlark, as well as other components of the native biodiversity associated with the historic grassland landscapes of central Kentucky and Tennessee.

Habitat improvements for the bird species of concern, which are more dependent on vegetation structure than on species composition and diversity, can be accomplished by opening up suppressed native grasslands with removal of mature and extensive woody cover and application of prescribed fire, conversion of cropland or fescue pastures to native grasses, forbs and shrubs, and changing grazing intensities and haying regimes. These efforts can involve somewhat low-diversity seed mixes, but restoring both vegetation structure and increasing native biodiversity will generally require more diverse seed mixes. This strategy will be employed in cases where higher native plant diversity is important to maximize benefits to a wider variety of organisms.

This position is one of 3 Quail Forever (QF) Biologists to be deployed in service to our objectives Tennessee and Kentucky. Two Farm Bill Wildlife Biologists, including this one for Tennessee and another for Kentucky, will be responsible primarily for working with interested landowners to implement those NRCS practices our partnership has deemed valuable in recovering the key species of grassland/shrubland birds. A third position, a Coordinating Biologist, will focus on both states, working with farm bill biologists and landowners interested in recreating more diverse native grasslands, recommending locally-adapted seed mixes appropriate for each particular site, and working with seed companies to develop seed sources. These positions will be employees of, and supervised by, Quail Forever, with additional instruction and leadership provided by our regional partnership.

This position is a full time position funded for 5 years through the RCPP program and partnership commitments from federal and state agencies, universities, and non-government organizations. It is our hope that these positions will continue after the 5-year term, but that is not guaranteed.

### **Duties:**

- Provide verbal, written and on-site technical assistance (wildlife biology and habitat focus) to interested private landowners.
- Coordinate the implementation and application of select farm bill practices in cooperation with the local NRCS District Conservationist, NRCS Area Biologist, TWRA Private Lands Biologist, PF/QF staff, and others.
- Complete wildlife conservation plans, contracts, applications and other required documentation for conservation programs (i.e. ACEP-WRE, EQIP, CSP, etc.) requiring biological expertise in cooperation with the listed partners.

- Communicate program requirements, complete site visits to determine eligibility, develop contracts and plans for applicants enrolling in USDA conservation programs or other state and local conservation programs, and approve completed practices.
- Coordinate and participate in fieldwork activities for habitat project implementation and work with private landowners. Conduct periodic wildlife and vegetation surveys.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

**Required Knowledge Skills and Abilities:**

- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with landowners and partner agencies.
- Ability to work independently with little supervision and with diverse clientele.
- Knowledge of wildlife ecology, grassland management, including the ability to utilize various habitat management tools in the development of habitat management plans.
- Knowledge of conservation and wildlife programs provided by Federal (i.e. Farm Bill), State agencies, and PF/QF. Also, knowledge of how these programs are implemented in an agricultural landscape.
- Excellent verbal/written communication and organizational skills.
- Valid driver's license and personal vehicle required (mileage reimbursement provided).
- Able to obtain USDA Clearance and NRCS Conservation Planning certification
- Able to identify grassland/shrubland bird species as well as native grasses and forbs.

**Training and Experience Guideline:** Any combination of training and/or experience that will enable the applicant to possess the required knowledge, skills and abilities. A general qualification guideline for this position is a Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Management or closely related natural resources field and/or related field experience. The ability to identify birds and native plants will be considered a plus.

**Salary:** \$32,000 – \$35,000+ Health and Retirement Benefits.

**To Apply:** Visit our Recruitment website at: [www.pheasantsforever.org/jobs](http://www.pheasantsforever.org/jobs)

Only ONLINE applications will be accepted. Please include your cover letter and resume as a single Word document or PDF file on the Recruitment website.

**For More Information:** Contact Tim Caughran, Director of Field Operations for Quail Forever at [tcaughran@quailforever.org](mailto:tcaughran@quailforever.org) , or Andy Edwards, Regional Biologist and Representative , Quail Forever at [aedwards@quailforewver.org](mailto:aedwards@quailforewver.org)

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