 

With Worcestershire Wildlife Trust & Warwickshire Wildlife Trust

Wildlife and Farming Officer

ST Catchment Partnership

For Shropshire

**Full Time: Fixed term contract**

**Accountable to: SWT River Projects Manager**

**The post-holder will be a member of the Rivers Team at Shropshire Wildlife Trust**

**Objective of the job**

Severn Trent Water [STW] and the West Midlands Wildlife Trusts are working with the Environment Agency and other partners on river catchments to tackle diffuse water pollution in watercourses across the region and to bring watercourses into good ecological condition.

An important part of this programme is to work with farmers and landowners to reduce diffuse agricultural pollution into rivers and streams, and protect water quality in relation to the provision of drinking water from groundwater sources, support and promote wildlife of the farmed environment.

The post has been designed to deliver a programme of advice, training and grants to farmers and land managers to reduce diffuse water pollution in 6 catchments. This programme aims to reduce pesticide and nutrient concentrations in surface water with farmers on a voluntary basis, bring added biodiversity value to their farms and provide farm wildlife a boost.

The 6 catchments are as follows: Avon and Leam, Shropshire Middle Severn, Worcestershire Severn, Teme, Middle Severn and associated groundwater protection zones. A team of up to 7 Catchment Partnership officers are working across the West Midlands; this team will be hosted by the relevant County Wildlife Trust. 3 officers in Worcestershire (with some cross border work in Gloucestershire), 1 in Warwickshire, and 3 based at Shropshire. Local line management and support will be provided for each sub-team. Central co-ordination comes from Shropshire Wildlife Trust. We are recruiting for a Wildlife and Farming Officer to delivery the work programme in Shropshire.

**Key results expected**

The post-holder will deliver a programme of farmer/agronomist training events, one to one farm visits to promote resource protection and a reduction in diffuse water pollution from agriculture, with a focus on pesticides and nutrients.

The post-holder will aim to raise awareness, improve understanding and acceptance amongst farmers and land managers of diffuse pollution from agriculture and its impact on water quality and the wider water environment.

Engagement with farmers in targeted areas identified by STW will seek to create through a voluntary approach, a sense of ownership and achievement within the farming community in relation to water quality in the catchment.

**Severn Trent Environmental Protection Scheme [STEPS]**

The post-holder will promote, engage and support farmer uptake of the Severn Trent Water capital grant scheme [STEPS] in target areas of groundwater catchments, in order to support farm infrastructure changes to reduce diffuse water pollution. The STEPS programme includes biodiversity options including:

* Hedgerows
* New woodlands
* Pond management support
* Wildflower meadow creation
* Farmland birds
* Herbal leys
* Beetle banks
* Biodiversity innovation

A key element of the role will be building positive relationships and supporting farmers to take up the biodiversity options for the benefit of farmland wildlife.

**Farm to Tap**

The post-holder will promote, engage and support farmer participation in the Farm to Tap incentive scheme which engages farmers in collaborative programmes of water quality improvements; this is supported and integrated with STEPS infrastructure grant support. F2T is open to farmers that grow either oilseed rape or winter wheat in catchments identified as potentially high risk. This programme is particularly aimed at reducing metaldehyde contamination of water by supporting active measures or product substitution.

Both targeted programmes are evaluated using Key Performance Indicators – these are:

* Overall farmer engagement in priority catchments
* Positive farmer engagement in priority catchments
* Improved knowledge/awareness of water quality issues in priority catchments
* Workshop feedback and evaluation
* Infrastructural changes achieved in terms of range, innovation and completion.
* Land management changes and an increase in priority farmers using ferric phosphate instead of metaldehyde or adopting pesticide reduction or elimination in their cultivation methodology.

**Key tasks**

The post-holder will be required to carry out the following tasks to meet the requirements of the role:

* Co-ordinate, deliver and participate in events to help with the promotion and awareness raising of the core messages and schemes of the programmes
* Plan and deliver training events, sessions and develop partnerships to meet local training needs in relation to water quality
* Promote, engage and seek participation in STEPS and F2T programmes.
* Provide advice and support for scheme participants
* Administer and verify scheme activity
* Maintain simple system of evaluation and feedback from farmers and land managers.
* Prepare and submit monthly progress reports to ensure adequate monitoring of the programme, engagement activity and scheme take up into a Farmer Engagement Database.
* Contribute to annual reporting schedules
* Participate in relevant Wildlife Trust water environment initiatives, programmes and projects during the period of the contract in the context of the Catchment Based Approach and CABA Partnerships. This work will involve the development of new funding bids, delivery of wildlife projects [habitat and species] and taking in part in the campaigning and wider work of the Rivers Team.
* Participate in relevant partner activities where these are complimentary to the core programme, assist in the development of water environment focussed projects in target areas and take part in relevant Catchment Partnerships relevant to catchments being targeted.

**Core skills**

You will be expected to have:

* Relevant environmental qualification/s in a land and water management subject
* Relevant professional qualifications in relation to providing agricultural sector advice – for example BASIS, FACTS or other CPD activities.
* Preferably a minimum of two years’ experience of providing pollution reduction advice to farmers and landowners
* A strong background in understanding water quality issues
* Have a sound understanding of lowland farming systems, wetland ecology, rural sustainable drainage and catchment management.
* Knowledge of the farmed environment and biodiversity
* Computer literate in MS Office with GIS mapping experience
* A Full Driving Licence and your own vehicle

Some weekend, Bank Holiday and evening working will also be required.

This post is suited to someone who is able to communicate technical information in a straightforward and accessible manner to a broad range of participants. They will be able to inspire and enable partners and stakeholders to take an active part in their water environment. They will be able to negotiate effectively with farmers and landowners and provide tactful and effective support to engage and meet programme targets.

The post-holder will be expected to conform to individual Wildlife Trust policy, employment practices and professional standards in line with national and legal expectations and requirements.

**Nature Recovery Network & working relationships**

All the Shropshire Wildlife Trust’s work is helping to deliver ***a Nature Recovery Network across Shropshire and Telford*** – this is the name we give to our approach to restoring and reconnecting large areas of habitat to allow wildlife to adapt to climate change and other environmental challenges. The **River Recovery Network** is the water and river catchment system component of the Nature Recovery Network. The programme delivery of the Wildlife and Farming Officer fits within a very broad range of activities all aiming to make a positive contribution to the future health and ecological condition of the water environment. The post-holder will be a member of the Rivers Team whose task it is to deliver on the vision of the River Recovery Network.

Job description created/reviewed PL/HB **date** 09/01/2020



Wildlife and Farming Officer

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| Salary: | In the range £21,000 to £25,000 per annum + pension contribution (*see below*). Each post will be reviewed annually, following this review the manager or the member of staff may initiate a salary bid in recognition of high performance. Cost of living awards are normally awarded annually with effect from 1 April subject to the employer’s ability to pay. |
| Hours: | Full time. The nature of the post’s duties may from time-to-time require evening and weekend work. Paid overtime is not available, but time off in lieu of hours worked will be given, if requested. |
| Pre employment checks: | The post does not require a DBS check. The successful applicant will need to provide proof of right to work in the UK, |
| Probationary period: | All Trust appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary service of six months. |
| Contract | Initially a fixed term contract commencing 5 February 2018 until 31 March 2019 with the possibility of an extension |
| Holidays: | A full-time member of staff has 20 working days per annum in addition to normal public holidays. An additional day is added for each year’s service up to a maximum total of 25 days holiday |
| Pension: | After three months the employee will be eligible to join the Trust’s group personal pension scheme and if they pay a minimum of 3% of salary the Trust will contribute 7% of salary to this scheme. |
| Notice Period: | During your probationary period, the period of notice for termination of your employment will be one week on either side. After successful completion of your probationary period the minimum period of notice is four weeks on either side. |
| Place of Work: | The posts will be based Shropshire Wildlife Trust. 193 Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury. |
| Home working | Will not normally be appropriate for this post but can be discussed at interview. |
| Travel: | Pool vehicles are normally available but the use of your own vehicle may be necessary at times. You are required to have insurance to cover business use and a mileage allowance of 45p per mile will be payable for such journeys. If you use a pedal cycle you may claim a mileage allowance of 20p per mile. |
| Training: | The Trust is fully committed to personal development and training through its annual review and progress meetings. |
| Closing date: | **30th January 2020 9am** |
| Interview dates: | **11th and 12th February 2020** |