

Job Description

Job Title:	Assistant Project Officer
Location:	Keswick Convention Centre, Skiddaw Street, Keswick, CA12 4BY (but a flexible approach will be required as much of the time will be spent out in the field)
Duration:	One-year fixed term until April 2025 (with possible extension subject to funding).
Salary Grade:	Salary grade 3A £24,955 (plus employer's pension contribution at 9%).
Hours of Work:	Full time; 35 hours per week (flexible)

Overall purpose of the job

Working closely with WCRT project officers, you will develop the skills required to engage farmers and landowners, local communities and partner organisations, and help deliver projects to restore watercourses, including improving water quality, reducing flood risk, improving in-river and wider catchment biodiversity and connecting people with the natural environment. This is an exciting opportunity to gain skills and experience in river conservation, building on background surveys and previous interventions, to deliver priority actions within the funding streams available.

Main duties and responsibilities

Project delivery (with support from Project Officers):

- Work closely with farmers, landowners, partner organisations and community groups to help develop and deliver a range of interventions to improve water quality, improve riparian habitat and reduce flood risk.
- Help deliver a portfolio of environmental projects with individual farm businesses including assisting with the consenting and tendering process.
- Contribute to the development of a pipeline of catchment projects to address watercourse issues.
- Work towards an understanding of the complexities of agri-environment schemes and how these link with project delivery.

Engagement and volunteer management

- With support, organise and run practical volunteer tasks such as tree planting and invasive species removal.
- Work alongside the other WCRT Project Officers to run school sessions and community events.
- Undertake Risk Assessments for practical tasks.

Monitoring and data management

- Assist with habitat and species surveys (including electrofishing and pearl mussel surveys).
- Aid with the collection of data to monitor project outcomes.
- With appropriate training, use GIS software to help map project outcomes and showcase the monitoring data collected.

Communications, publicity and partnership working

- Assist with the promotion of WCRT's work, including on-the-ground achievements, locally, regionally and nationally by:
 - Providing information for press releases, the Trust's quarterly newsletter, local community publications, social media etc.
 - Attending events and shows.
- Help maintain positive relationships with project partners including landowners, farmers, Wild Ennerdale, The Environment Agency, United Utilities, the Woodland Trust, Natural England, National Trust, Cumberland Council, the Farmer Network, the Lake District National Park Authority, Parish councils, angling clubs, the local community, and schools.

Other:

- Understand the duty of care for all staff. Ensure health and safety requirements, regulations and reporting procedures are adhered to at all times, as described in the WCRT Health and Safety Manual.
- Work flexibly across the Trust as required by operational need and carry out other duties commensurate to the nature and grade of the post.
- Represent WCRT in a positive manner in all aspects of work, taking opportunities to educate and inspire on the benefits of our work for people and wildlife.

Personal attributes and skills:

Applicants should:

- Be well organised, reliable and able to work to deadlines.
- Have excellent communication and inter-personal skills and the ability to deal with a wide variety of people in a friendly and professional manner.
- Have reasonable physical fitness and desire to work outdoors in all weathers.
- Be team oriented and enjoy working with a wide cross section of the community.
- Possess good IT skills with ability to use Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Be dedicated, self-motivated and be able to work on own initiative.
- Have an ability to produce well-written and well-presented written materials and information.

Essential Requirements:

- A degree in an environmental or farming related discipline or equivalent industry experience.
- Some relevant work experience or practical conservation volunteer experience.
- A keen interest and passion for wildlife conservation.
- Basic knowledge and understanding of nature conservation, land/catchment management, river processes and Lake District farming.
- Awareness and understanding of agricultural practices and a passion for sustainable farming systems.
- Full, clean driving licence and use of own car for work purposes.
- Able to swim and be confident and safe in and around water.

Desirable Skills, Knowledge, Experience:

- Ability to use GIS software or willingness to learn with training.
- A knowledge of geomorphological processes and river management techniques, hydrology, water quality.

Other

Flexible working patterns will generally be accommodated and working from home is permitted as required, in agreement with your Line Manager. We expect all staff to be able to commit to occasional evening and weekend working where required as part of your role or wider Trust activity. Time off in lieu will be given for out of hours worked.

There are currently five company vehicles available to use across the Trust and it is expected that on occasions private vehicles will be used for work and mileage claimed at HMRC rates (currently 45p per mile). The necessary insurance for business use is therefore required.

We will also require the successful applicant to undergo a DBS check and provide satisfactory references from previous employers.

Evidence of your right to work in the UK will be required.

A letter may be required from the applicant's GP confirming their fitness to carry out the duties associated with this post.

Training and development are central to the role, with formal and informal training opportunities available

Employment is based on the generic job description for an Assistant Project Officer although specific duties while aligned to the River Ehen and River Irt projects are as follows:

You will be based at the Trust's office in Keswick, with site work predominantly based within the Ehen and Irt catchments in West Cumbria.

Duties specifically for this role are to assist project officers in:

1. Delivering the conservation actions on the River Ehen and Irt catchment and ensuring the continued protection of England's populations of freshwater mussels. These will include fencing, willow spilling, planting, floodplain/wetland creation and liaising with farmers and landowners.
2. Inputting into and delivery of actions identified in the overall action plan for the River Ehen SAC to reduce impacts from land use activities in the Ehen catchment, and to fulfil the aims of the agreed package of compensatory measures.
3. A combination of High Ecological Status related activities and capital works on the River Irt for freshwater pearl mussels.