Point Blue Conservation Science

JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title**: Rangeland Watershed Initiative Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) Partner Biologist/Range Ecologist

**Location:** McArthur, CA Local Partnership Office

**Group:** Emerging Programs and Partnerships

**Hours/Benefits:** Full time w/competitive benefits

**Point Blue Conservation Science’s Vision**

Point Blue Conservation Science advances conservation of birds, other wildlife and ecosystems through innovative research, restoration, outreach and extensive partnerships. Our highest priority is to reduce the impacts of habitat loss, climate change and other threats to wildlife and people, while promoting adaptation to the changes ahead. Point Blue will achieve this by conducting further research on ecological processes and by developing and disseminating science-based solutions to mitigate the negative impacts of these changes. Because of our work today, healthy ecosystems will continue to support thriving wildlife and human communities in California and beyond, on land and at sea.

**Job Summary**

The ACEP Partner Biologist/Range Ecologist serves as a wildlife biologist/range ecologist on the Rangeland Watershed Initiative staff and provides technical assistance to NRCS Wetland Reserve Easement Implementation Team in Northern California. The Biologist/Ecologist is responsible for planning and applying conservation measures in all types of situations with emphasis on wildlife biology, grazing management and habitat restoration, especially for wetland wildlife species. The applicant is also responsible for carrying out NRCS environmental planning and evaluation for conservation easement programs in the area of assignment.

This position will focus on providing *value added* delivery of wildlife conservation programs on working lands through Farm Bill and other federal and state programs. In particular, they will seek to develop grazing management plans that are compatible with the wildlife habitat management objectives for wetland conservation easement properties. The Partner Biologist will also be involved with assessment and monitoring of conservation practices that have been applied on those working lands. This position is intended to be a *full time position* for a 3-year term with benefits. The position will be located in the NRCS McArthur Office, in the Southern Cascade Region of California.

**Essential Duties**

* Works directly with landowners and operators, individually or in groups, in developing and revising grazing management plans for landowners with property enrolled in a Wetland Reserve Easement. Ensures compatibility between grazing management and wetland wildlife habitat objectives in support of NRCS’ conservation easement programs.
* Prepares grazing management plans for grassland Agricultural Land Easements to ensure that wildlife habitat considerations are compatible with grazing and livestock management objectives.
* Develops grazing and haying Compatible Use Authorization prescriptions that promote and support the restoration and enhancement of wetland and riparian ecosystems on NRCS enrolled easements.
* Assist in the ACEP enrollment process, including eligibility, ranking and gathering of any necessary information needed to evaluate the applications ecological value and feasibility.
* Assists in the application and evaluation of planned conservation measures as outlined in long-term contracts, including spot checking of applied grazing practices to ensure that they address the habitat objectives of identified target wildlife species.
* Provides technical assistance and biological guidance to field office staff to support the development of Resource Management System (RMS) level plans and contracts.
* Provides technical assistance to field offices on new and existing Wetland Restoration Program (WRP) Easements. Assists in the enrollment, restoration, and management of new easements, and provides coordination between field offices and the WRP team.
* Develop restoration plans that incorporate range conservation practices (such as cross-fencing, off-stream watering facilities, conservation cover, etc).
* Assists the field offices with monitoring existing WRP easements and provides technical support in the development of Compatible Use Authorizations.
* Participates in performing periodic review of plans and contracts and the progress made in applying conservation practices. Provides technical guidance to clientele and field office staff on mitigation and environmental procedures related to conservation program requirements.
* Monitors wildlife habitat change, including wetlands, and develops periodic reports on findings.
* Provide technical support for the incorporation of fish and wildlife habitat considerations into working land producers’ Compatible Use Agreements.
* Develop technical proficiency in the use of NRCS Conservation Planning process and NRCS technical tools such as Soil Data Mart, Ecological Site Descriptions, Habitat Assessments, and Stream Visual Assessment Protocol 2.
* Initiate and sustain cooperative working relationships with NRCS staff, working lands producers, other federal, state and local agencies, tribes, conservation groups and other resource professionals.
* Identify needs for and assist with the development of wildlife habitat-related education and outreach materials.
* Provide fish and wildlife habitat assessment, management, restoration, and monitoring-related training, workshops, and field sessions to NRCS staff, working lands producers, and other conservation partners.

Job Specifications

* Prefer 3-5 years’ experience in working with planning, design, assessment, management, restoration, and monitoring of wildlife habitat, especially wetlands and rangelands on private, public, or tribal lands.
* Possess knowledge of wildlife and wetland management principles, rangeland management and ecology, soil and water conservation principles, and general knowledge of methods and techniques sufficient to analyze and evaluate environmental conditions, particularly for wildlife and wetland concerns.
* Knowledge of wildlife biology, range ecology, and engineering techniques sufficient to develop conservation plans and incorporate detailed wildlife and wetland development and management practices into conservation program contracts.
* Sufficient knowledge of NRCS environmental policy, and wetland and wildlife management to provide guidance and training to employees, as well as assist, in developing all needed environmental documents for the program.
* Knowledge and skill in oral and written communication methods and techniques sufficient to present and explain program environmental concerns and monitor efforts at formal and informal meetings involving elected board members, county and community conservation leaders, and representatives from local, state, and federal government agencies. Skill is needed in clearly presenting supporting facts and data justifying the rational for specific measures and alternatives.
* Prefer on-the-ground experience with fish and wildlife habitat management, range ecology, restoration and enhancement techniques, conservation practices and tools used on wetlands, and riparian areas.
* Strong working knowledge of the flora (especially hydrophytic plants) and fauna of the wetlands and related range and forest lands of California, especially those surrounding the Modoc Plateau (Siskiyou, Modoc, & Lassen Counties).
* BA/BS degree in a conservation related field, preferably in wildlife biology, range or forest ecology.
* Basic experience and knowledge of USDA Farm Bill Conservation Programs
* Prefer experience and understanding of range ecology and management principles and implementation of grazing management systems that use domestic livestock as a tool to manage fish and wildlife resources.
* Strong interpersonal skills, proven ability to work collaboratively and remain flexible under pressure.
* Strong communication skills (oral, written, and presentation) are required.
* Strong organizational skills, ability to multi-task and prioritize daily and long term objectives and tasks is required. Attention to detail and exceptional follow-up skills are critical.
* Ability and desire to work with a diverse group of people including state, federal, tribal, and non-government resource professionals, working lands producers, and the general public.
* Excellent computer skills (Microsoft Office Suite, GIS software and Internet) are required.
* Ability to traverse various terrains on foot.

## Compensation and Benefits

Salary: ~ $60 K/year, depending on education, qualifications, and experience.

Point Blue offers competitive compensation commensurate with experience, 100% medical and dental premium coverage, partial coverage of dependents including domestic partners, long term care insurance, optional vision, life insurance, short term and long term disability insurance coverage, as well as generous leave time and 401(k) Plan matching contribution, per conditions outlined in Point Blue’s personnel manual.

## Application Requirements

*Email resumes* to: [wgilgert@pointblue.org](mailto:wgilgert@pointblue.org) by November 1, 2014. **Please *include a 1 page cover letter* explaining your interest and qualifications.** Please put “ACEP Partner Biologist” in the subject line. No calls please. Equal Opportunity Employer. For additional information about Point Blue and highlights of current programs, see [www.pointblue.org](http://www.pointblue.org).