



Employment Opportunity

Wildlife Biologist - 3

**West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
738 Ward Road
Elkins, West Virginia 26241**

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) plans to fill a Wildlife Biologist -3 position in the Elkins Operations Center in **Randolph County**. This notification is being circulated to inform prospective applicants of this opportunity and allow applicants to submit application materials to the West Virginia Division of Personnel (WVDOP).

The position serves as the vegetation ecologist in the Natural Heritage Program of the Wildlife Resources Section with statewide responsibilities. This is a senior staff level position that includes biological field work involving data collection/analysis, data interpretation, conservation planning, environmental review, and coordination with other state and federal agencies and NGOs. Preference will be given to candidates with experience or education in vegetation ecology, ecosystem restoration, and conservation planning.

Location: Elkins Operations Center
738 Ward Road
Elkins, WV 26241

Salary: \$49,642 - \$91,837 Annually

Minimum Qualifications: (Applicants must meet these to qualify for register placement)

Training: Master of Science degree from an accredited college or university with a major in wildlife or fisheries management and biology, fish culture, conservation biology, natural resources, aquatic biology, botany, biological sciences, or environmental sciences. Preference will be given to educational and field experience related to specific job postings.

AND

Experience: Four (4) years of full-time or equivalent part-time paid experience in wildlife or fishery management or related fields.

OR

Substitution: Doctor of Philosophy degree from an accredited college or university with a major in wildlife or fisheries management and biology, fish culture, conservation biology, natural resources, aquatic biology, botany, biological sciences, or environmental sciences.

Special Requirements: A valid driver's license is required.

General Duties:

Under the direction of the Wildlife Diversity/Natural Heritage Program Manager this position serves as the Natural Heritage Program vegetation ecologist. The employee directs a statewide research program to classify, characterize, map, and conserve or restore natural ecosystems, vegetation, and habitats of West Virginia. The purpose of the position is to develop ecosystem, vegetation, and habitat classifications for the entire state of West Virginia; supervise and participate in collection of field data on location, composition, and quality of occurrences of natural communities throughout the state; develop and manage databases to archive statewide data on vegetation and occurrences of natural communities; develop analysis tools and perform statistical analyses and summaries of statewide data on vegetation and occurrences of natural communities; make this information available within the agency, to outside land management agencies, conservation organizations, regional and national professional committees, and to the general public; develop restoration strategies for restoring disturbed or impaired habitats and vegetation communities; nominate exceptional state owned lands for inclusion in the WV Natural Area Program; and develop ecology program goals.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

The employee will design and implement ecological field studies to identify new community types or detect changes to described systems. Tasks include: collecting and analyzing field data to classify and determine condition of natural communities; managing spatial and tabular databases for occurrence data and plant collections; applying natural heritage standards to rank natural community types and individual occurrences of these types; conducting spatial analyses to refine existing vegetation and habitat maps and develop habitat or likelihood of occurrence models; developing policy guidelines for information requests and sharing data products for internal and external use; interpreting ecological classifications and producing standardized habitat types for use in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP); author vegetation community accounts (communities, threats/stresses, conservation actions) for inclusion in the SWAP. Natural Area Program administration involves evaluating natural heritage and agency data and nominating appropriate state-owned lands for Natural Area designation. Administrative duties include supervising permanent professional staff and seasonal technical workers. The employee will contribute job proposals for inclusion in the annual state wildlife grants and will pursue other funding sources as opportunities emerge. The employee will produce performance and fiscal reports for all grant and agreement funded work. Significant research findings are expected to be reported in peer reviewed or popular articles.

The employee interacts with state, federal, and Natural Heritage partners to incorporate WV vegetation types in the U. S. National Vegetation Classification; collaborates with state and federal agencies to identify landscape scale research and conservation priorities and actions necessary to implement them. The incumbent reviews land development or management projects for impacts to vulnerable species and ecosystems and recommends avoidance measures. The employee must be familiar with state natural resource laws and certain federal laws (e.g. Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, National Forest Management Act, etc.) and be able to provide expert opinions to state and federal regulators.

Internally, the position identifies natural habitats on public lands that possess unique characteristics and recommends actions necessary to conserve them. Public engagement will involve participation in agency outreach events and producing popular articles and social media posts.

The employee must demonstrate advanced knowledge of multi-variate and parametric statistics, statistical software (R/R Studio, PC-Ord, etc.), database management (Access, SQL), spatial analysis using Arcmap/Arcpro, geospatial data collection, ecological sampling techniques, taxonomy and ecology of West Virginia (central Appalachian) plants, invasive species ecology, plant/animal/insect interactions, wetland ecology, soil science, geology, biogeography, plant collection and storage, and natural heritage methodology. The applicant must possess physical strength and stamina to conduct field work in remote, mountainous terrain and be proficient with navigation and map reading skills.

Preference will be given to applicants that have a PhD or Master's Degree (in ecology, botany, plant biology, and conservation) and demonstrate experience performing 1) vegetation community classification, 2) terrestrial ecosystem restoration and, 3) conservation planning,

Preferred Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

1. Knowledge of the diverse flora of West Virginia, including identification of over 2,500 species of trees, shrubs, ferns, grasses, sedges, and other vascular and non-vascular plants.
2. Knowledge and skills to perform complex multivariate and parametric statistical analysis of large data sets.
3. Knowledge of ecosystem restoration practices.
4. Knowledge of the taxonomy, ecology, and habitats of native and non-native, animals and fungi found in WV.
5. Knowledge of the principles and practices of conservation biology, including laws and programs to protect biological diversity, and familiarity with stakeholders and the network of conservation professionals across WV.
6. Knowledge and skills in Geographic Information Systems and aerial photo interpretation. Ability to accurately map vegetation and populations of plants.
7. Knowledge and ability to administer and manage a complex, statewide ecology program and supervise and mentor subordinate staff.
8. Skills and abilities in outdoor navigation and survival, including use of global positioning systems, map and compass, aerial photos. Excellent physical health and stamina.
9. Skills in numerous computer programs and applications including Geographic Information Systems, multivariate statistical software, database systems, word processors, spreadsheets, and other standard office applications (Google Workspace).

10. Ability to clearly communicate complex information, orally and in writing, to various audiences, including agency staff, scientific peers, land managers, and the general public.

For Information:

- For more information regarding this position you may contact Kieran O'Malley at Kieran.M.O'Malley@wv.gov, (304) 637-0245.
- For information regarding application procedures you may contact the West Virginia Division of Personnel at (304) 558-3950 or at <http://www.personnel.wv.gov>

To Apply:

- This vacancy will be advertised inside state government and also outside of state government through a **public service announcement**.
- Non-government applicants can learn about the position posting and application procedures by subscribing to receive a Job Information Card for "Natural Resource" position announcements through the WV Division of Personnel website (<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/wv/jobInterestCards/categories>).
- Non-government applicants must submit a state job application and supporting documentation (transcripts) directly to the Public Service Announcement.