

JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Operational Ecologist - NR Eastern ESF

Location: Hybrid: Remote / Network rail base:

- North & East (N) – EcoNorth: York, Newcastle, Darlington, Hull
- North & East (S) – Wildscapes: Doncaster, York, Sheffield, Leeds, Scunthorpe
- East Midlands – EMEC Ecology: Doncaster (preferred), Derby, Lincoln, Leicester, Bedford, Peterborough
- Anglia – Wilder Ecology SWT: Ipswich (preferred), Norwich, Ely, Cambridge
- Greater London – Future Nature: London (preferred), Peterborough, Cambridge, Ipswich

[See Eastern Region map: Appendix 1]

Responsible to: Principal Ecologist (WTC line manager) / Project Manager (day to day manager)

Responsible for: None

Contract: Fixed-Term (Initially 12 months – Potential to be extended to Oct 2025)

Purpose of Role

The Wildlife Trust Consultancies (WTCs) have been engaged by Network Rail to deliver an extensive Biodiversity Plan throughout their Eastern Region. The work forms part of the implementation of Network Rail's National Biodiversity Action Plan and associated commitments (see: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/sustainability/biodiversity-on-britains-railway/>)

The Operational Ecologist work under the guidance of a Strategic Ecologist, assisting them in the production of project deliverables within their assigned area(s) the Network Rail Eastern Region. They will provide best practice ecological input and collaborate to ensure consistent, feasible deliverables across the routes. The Operational Ecologists will use their strong ecological knowledge to produce the project deliverables including Biodiversity baseline, Biodiversity Action Plans and Habitat Management Plans. They will then ensure detailed implementation and monitoring actions adhere to the NR standards and biodiversity recommendations

Main Responsibilities

Line Management and Supervision

The post holder does not have any direct line management responsibilities. In relation to the project, they will be required to work with Network Rail teams to ensure compliance with management plans.

Project Specific Requirements

- Collaborate with team members to deliver consistent and complete project deliverables, across the Eastern Region routes

- Assist in producing a Biodiversity Inventory for the lineside estate, based on stakeholder and existing data. Liaison with local records centres and other data sources. Ground truthing of data within the Biodiversity Inventory received from external stakeholders. Consider operational constraints and contribute data, to allow the setting of achievable biodiversity objectives.
- Assist in the production of Route Biodiversity Action Plan (RBAP) for assigned route(s). Maximise the contribution of Network Rail's lineside estate to biodiversity gains.
- Assist in production of Habitat Management Plans, showing how the RBAP objectives will be put into practice in assigned route(s).
- Support pilots and other work to demonstrate how deliverables will work in practice.
- Produce ecological input, including UKHab Classifications and BNG calculations to assist in the production of implementation deliverables. These will include deliverables such as Section Plans that capture actual habitat interventions, in conjunction with teams in Network Rail.
- Providing technical advice to Networks Rail teams on the ground that are implementing interventions, to help ensure their activities are in keeping with planned outcomes. On site assessment of the suitability of planned biodiversity interventions
- Deliver fieldwork, surveys and protected species work to support implementation of project. This may include: Desk studies & GIS Mapping for inventory. Conduct and oversee ecological surveys, fieldwork and associated reports. QA & input to internal / external ecological reports. Prepare & manage ecological license applications and implementation.
- Monitor and record information, from the implemented biodiversity interventions
- Contribute to review and update of plans in accordance with required timescales

Management of Resources and Projects

The post holder will utilise their experience and knowledge to:

- Support excellent ongoing engagement of internal and external stakeholders
- Ensure utilisation of existing record sources, stakeholder sourced data and data obtained via data collection technology to create project deliverables
- Systematically gather and organise ecological data, using a variety of technology systems, including major data gathering tools and GIS.
- Support integration of the plans into day to day working practices and standards. Work with Network Rail colleagues to ensure steps are safe, feasible, effective and compliant with regulations and Network Rail standards.

Business Development and Client Liaison

The post holder will be responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate liaison with client and internal teams both from the office and on site at all stages of a project from design to delivery.

Compliance and Governance

The post holder will:

- Ensure that the project database is updated to facilitate production of management information.
- Provide management information as required to the Project Manager
- Ensure, through liaison with the Consultancy Manager (and operations team as required), that all HR procedures are followed.
- Ensure that H&S systems are followed and undertake any compulsory training required.
- Maintain records to support the compliance with the WTCs Business Management System (ISO 9001 & 14001) including contribution to regular audits and annual compliance visits as required.
- Ensure that internal Resource Management software is kept up to date.
- Provide updates on activities to staff meetings as required.

General Requirements

Working closely with Project and WTC staff, the post holder has responsibility for undertaking the specific duties outlined in the job description above.

Working hours will be managed flexibly to reflect this requirement and WTCs will operate a system of Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) for additional hours worked.

A full driving licence is required as the post holder will often need to travel within and beyond the area to locations not served by public transport, and sometimes carrying equipment or materials.

For the organisation to work effectively you may be required to assist with other areas of work and therefore, you should be prepared to undertake other duties appropriate to the post, as delegated by the project manager.

All staff are required to abide by organisational policies and procedures and to contribute to the smooth administration of the organisation. This includes promoting and acting as an ambassador for WTCs.

Operational Ecologist Person Specification

Area A - EXPERIENCE

- Experience (minimum 2 seasons) of ecological survey and assessment
- Experience of nature conservation advisory work and habitat evaluation using UKHab Classification
- Experience of sourcing and interpretation of ecological data
- Experience of working on projects with routine mitigation design
- Experience of liaising with clients and landowners
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Area B – KNOWLEDGE

- A good degree and preferably post graduate qualification(s) in ecology or a related science
- Excellent knowledge of habitats and species typical of the East England region

- Excellent understanding of relevant conservation legislation, in particular species protection
- Excellent understanding of health and safety within the sector.
- IT applications including word processing and spreadsheets
- Strong knowledge of GIS and ecological software

Area C – SKILLS

- Good species identification skills.
- Excellent inter-personal and communication skills. Ability to liaise effectively with a wide range of people. Negotiation skills and conflict resolution.
- Sound report writing skills including mitigation design under supervision. High attention to detail.
- Good administration and organisation skills, including ability to prioritise workloads and meet tight deadlines.
- Survey licence for one or more protected species (or working towards) preferred

Area D - PERSONAL QUALITIES

- High level of enthusiasm, self-motivation and self-discipline
- Ability to work without close supervision, work individually or as part of a team
- Flexible and positive outlook with a solution led focus.
- Commitment to nature conservation and equal opportunities.

Appendix 1 Network Rail Routes and Regions:

The Operational Ecologists will primarily cover the Eastern Region Route areas below:

- North & East (N) – EcoNorth: Route 2 (north) ; Route 1 in this area
- North & East (S) – Wildscapes: Route 2 (south) ; Route 1 in this area
- East Midlands – EMEC Ecology: Route 3 (main) ; Route 1 in this area
- Anglia – SWT: Route 4 (Anglia main area)
- Greater London – Future Nature: Route 4 (Greater London area) ; Route 3 (south)



Routes and Regions

- Eastern**
- 1 East Coast Route
- 2 North & East Route
- 3 East Midlands Route
- 4 Anglia Route
- North West & Central**
- 5 North West Route
- 6 Central Route
- 7 West Coast Mainline South Route
- Scotland's Railway**
- 8 Scotland Route
- Southern**
- 9 Kent Route
- 10 Network Rail High Speed
- 11 Sussex Route
- 12 Wessex Route
- Wales & Western**
- 13 Wales Route
- 14 Western Route

• dotted lines show approximate extent of areas