



JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Strategic Ecologist - NR Eastern ESF

Location: Hybrid: Remote / Network rail base:

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

[See Eastern Region map: Appendix 1]

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

Responsible for: Operational Ecologists (supervision)

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 Strategic Ecologist will be the ecological lead for their route within the Network Rail Eastern Region, including the part of the East Coast Route that falls within it. They will provide best practice ecological input and collaborate to ensure consistency and practical feasibility of deliverables across the routes. The Strategic Ecologists will use their strong ecological knowledge to lead the production of the project deliverables including Biodiversity baseline, Biodiversity Action Plans and Habitat Management Plans. The post holder 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 expected to supervise Operational Ecologists in the carrying out of their duties.

Project Specific Requirements

- Collaborate with team members to deliver consistent and complete project deliverables, across the Eastern Region routes
- Lead production of a Biodiversity Inventory for the lineside estate in assigned route area(s), based on stakeholder and existing data
- Ensure appropriate use of UK Hab classification and Defra Metric for BNG Calculation in project deliverables
- Collaborate to agree a Route Biodiversity Action Plan (RBAP), that meets standards and delivers consistency across routes, whilst taking into account individual route needs. Lead the production of



RBAPs. This will include prioritisation of key objectives and definition of measures for the route, in the plan timeframe. Maximise the contribution of Network Rail's lineside estate to biodiversity gains.

- Collaborate to agree a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) format, that meets standards and route needs. Lead production of Habitat Management Plans, showing how the biodiversity action plan objectives will be put into practice.
- Support pilots and other work, to demonstrate how deliverables will work in practice.
- Lead the production of implementation deliverables, including Section Plans, ensuring these are incorporated into day to day working practices and meet standards
- Lead on the design and execution of fieldwork and protected species work to support implementation of the 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, including annual 'State of Nature Reports'. Prepare & manage ecological license applications and implementation and the assurance process for offset proposals.
- Guide and interpret information, from monitoring of implemented biodiversity interventions
- Periodic review and update of deliverables, 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
- Guide operational ecologists to contribute effectively to production of project deliverables
- Ensure utilisation of existing record sources, stakeholder sourced data and data obtained via data collection technology to create project deliverables
- Lead gathering and organisation of 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 the 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 NWT 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 County 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.

Strategic Ecologist Person Specification

Area A - EXPERIENCE

- Extensive (minimum 3 seasons) experience of nature conservation advisory work and habitat evaluation using UKHab Classification
- Experience with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculations and improvement recommendations
- Extensive experience of ecological survey and assessment, including protected species surveys, and licensing.
- Extensive experience of sourcing and interpretation of ecological data.
- Extensive experience of licence applications and designing and delivering complex surveys and mitigation design.
- Experience of managing relationships with stakeholders, clients and sub-contractors.
- Demonstrable experience in wildlife mitigation, having previously acted as Named Ecologist on Natural England mitigation licences for bats, great crested newts or other European Protected Species. One or more protected species survey licences preferred

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

- Excellent species identification skills.
- Excellent inter-personal and communication skills.
- Excellent report writing skills including complex mitigation design.



- Excellent administration and organisation skills, including ability to prioritise workloads and meet tight deadlines.
- Ability to liaise effectively with a wide range of people.
- Negotiation skills and conflict resolution.
- Ability to undertake Quality Assurance of others work and provide constructive feedback.
- High attention to detail.

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.
- Leadership and entrepreneurship.
- Flexible and positive outlook with a solution led focus.
- Commitment to nature conservation and equal opportunities.

Appendix 1 Network Rail Routes and Regions:

The Strategic Ecologists will cover the Eastern Region Routes as shown on the map

- North & East – EcoNorth: Route 2 ; Route 1 in area
- East Midlands – EMEC Ecology: Route 3 ; Route 1 in area
- Anglia & Greater London – Future Nature: Route 4 (includes Greater London)

