

SPECIES AT RISK MONITORING BIOLOGIST

Joint Federal Provincial Oil Sands Monitoring Program

Position Type: Wage

Start Date: Immediate

Hours/week: 36.25

Project Duration: this is a multi-year project with a completion date of March 31, 2015

Pay Range: \$36.01 to \$44.46 per hour

Location: Edmonton

This is a professional level Wildlife Biologist position. This results oriented position will be responsible for coordination and delivery of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development's (ESRD) sensitive species monitoring activities under the Joint Oil Sands Monitoring Program (JOSM), with initial emphasis on a project designed to validate existing barred owl models, and develop tools to monitor population status and inform management decisions. The successful candidate will be responsible for coordinating logistics and participating in the delivery of both field and office components of this project. Field work will include nocturnal owl surveys, trapping and banding wild barred owls, telemetry data collection and/or GPS data recovery. The candidate will be expected to develop a detailed work plan for the project, supervise staff, sequester resources, manage project logistics, and implement all safety protocols. This position will also be responsible for statistical analyses, model development and reporting of collected data.

The applicant will also be required to lead and/or participate in other projects associated with JOSM efforts, including the monitoring of bats, amphibians, other species at risk and ungulates. A strong focus on interdepartmental and interagency communication and collaboration will be a priority. The position operates in cooperation with other provincial departments, federal agencies, the Ecological Monitoring Committee for the Lower Athabasca, the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute, and the Alberta Environmental Monitoring Agency with the goal of monitoring the impacts of large, commercial-scale developments on Alberta's wildlife resources and wildlife habitats.

ACTIVITIES:

- Participate in a variety of biodiversity assessment and monitoring programs in cooperation with the provincial Species at Risk Program.
- Work closely with the project team to effectively develop protocols and work plans, deliver field programs, collect appropriate data, conduct analysis, and prepare reports.
- Initially, coordinate and implement a barred owl field program, including the deployment and monitoring of telemetry devices, leading and executing an intensive nocturnal owl survey field season, data collection and management, data analysis, and writing of scientific reports. Similar projects for other species at risk (northern myotis, Canadian toad) may also be included.
- Work with team members and other agencies to develop and ensure the effective integration of research into current resource management frameworks and monitoring plans.
- Work with other ESRD staff to identify opportunities to manage forest resources and to develop management tools and strategies that will streamline with existing resource management processes and frameworks.
- Promote leadership and cross-agency collaboration to develop relevant and effective tools to manage and/or monitor habitat and populations.

SCOPE:

- Conduct wildlife assessment and monitoring projects in northern Alberta as part of the Environment Canada - Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development Joint Oil Sands Monitoring Program.
- Perform data base entry & searches (Fisheries & Wildlife Management Information System) in response to requests from the public for a broad spectrum of projects and locations.
- Weekend, evening, and night time work and travel will be necessary; overtime may be required to meet field survey schedules.

KNOWLEDGE

- A graduate degree in biology or a related field, or a Bachelor of Science in biology with several years of relevant field experience.
- Knowledge of data collection techniques, population/habitat inventory and monitoring, species life histories.
- Knowledge of land use issues and challenges associated with various resource-based industries including knowledge of potential impacts to wildlife resources.
- Basic working knowledge of wildlife management in Alberta, relevant legislation (Wildlife Act, Public Lands Act, Water Act, SARA, EPEA, OH&S Act, etc.) standards, guidelines, policies and practices.
- Familiarity with Occupational Health and Safety standards, issues and practices.

SKILLS

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills which may include writing scientific reports, and making presentations.
- Skills demonstrating leadership and experience in the delivery of field programs.
- Experience using field equipment, including handheld GPS and telemetry equipment.
- Proficient in study design and analysis of ecological data, including a working knowledge of information theoretic approaches to multi-model inference and other techniques.
- Experience developing and implementing habitat models for resource management.
- Experience using statistical software packages (e.g., Program R, JMP, etc.), modelling programs, Microsoft Office applications, and ArcGIS software.
- Experience writing and executing scripts in ArcGIS will be an asset.
- Experience in geospatial mapping and basic analytical techniques.
- Experience in both active and passive survey techniques for amphibians and bats is an asset.
- Experience as an observer in an aircraft during adverse field conditions (e.g., wind, turbulence, repeated turning) is an asset.

ABILITIES

- Attention to detail, positive attitude, good attention span, and strong safety ethic are fundamental traits.
- A valid Class 5 Driver's Licence with off-highway driving and trailer towing experience is required; ability to operate quads, snowmobiles, boats and outboard motors would be an asset.
- Ability to work independently and effectively; as well as a strong ability to work collaboratively in a team.
- Ability to supervise temporary and permanent staff as part of an integrated team.
- Ability to design sampling strategies, collect and analyze data and report on results.

Contacts:

- This position will report to the Head of Non-game, Species at Risk and Wildlife Disease, Wildlife Management Branch, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resources Development.
- The applicant will interact directly with other ESRD members, other government departments and agencies as well as industry and public sector interest groups.

Supervision exercised:

- The applicant will be responsible for the coordination of staff work schedules, equipment, logistics and work plan safety. This may include the supervision of either dedicated or temporary staff.

Prospective Candidates should provide a CV and covering letter to Mike Russell (Mike.Russell@gov.ab.ca) and Kristina Norstrom (Kristina.Norstrom@gov.ab.ca) by January 20, 2013.