**Project Manager – “Building Oxfordshire's Freshwater Network: engaging people in nature's recovery” GRCF 2021 project**

**Job description**

Contract: Fixed-term 17 months; Full-time.

Location: Oxford Office.

Responsible to: David Morris, Freshwater Habitats Trust Senior Plant Ecologist and Project Director for ‘Building Oxfordshire's Freshwater Network: engaging people in nature's recovery” GRCF 2021 project.

Responsible for: Managing the ‘Building Oxfordshire's Freshwater Network: engaging people in nature's recovery” GRCF 2021 project.

**Background**

Freshwater Habitats Trust is a small (c£1.25 million annual turnover), friendly and ambitious conservation charity, which works to protect UK and European freshwater wildlife through practical, evidence-based and innovative nature conservation projects. Our organisation is well-respected nationally and internationally, working with a network of UK-based partners in both the public, private and NGO sectors, and internationally with the European Pond Conservation Network and others.

Following the award of a Green Recovery challenge Fund grant of £690,000 for the Building Oxfordshire's Freshwater Network: engaging people in nature's recovery” GRCF 2021 project the post-holder will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the project, working closely with existing and new members of FHT staff and multiple external project partners.

**Role**

This is a key developmental project for FHT with substantial responsibilities, and an opportunity for the appointed person to take a major step in their career, making a big impact in UK freshwater conservation.

You will be responsible for managing and ensuring the successful delivery of the three main strands of the project:

1. Delivering fen habitat restoration work on five sites (four SSSIs and one Local Wildlife Site), continuing an established programme of work with private landowners who own the sites, conservation partners and contractors.
2. Implementing a programme of floodplain wetland habitat creation at three sites, with a focus on pond creation.
3. Coordinating a citizen engagement programme, called GroWet, focused on the growing of a suite of 25 endangered wetland plants in people’s homes, and subsequent translocation to FHT and partner pond and wetland creation and restoration sites. This programme has substantial engagement with both conservation literate and disadvantaged public audiences, working closely with professionals and contractors involved in ‘green engagement’.

You will also be responsible for the recruitment and management of three young Trainees, who we will integrate closely into the programme and with the work of Freshwater Habitats Trust and the New Conservation Partnership. You will also manage the work of the projects 0.5 FTE Volunteer Co-ordinator, and co-ordinate with a Technical Advisor, a senior member of FHT staff specialising in the conservation of endangered wetland plants.

These programmes are roughly equal in size and will require excellent management skills and the ability to drive a programme of practical conservation delivery, and the ability to engage with and motivate new enthusiastic, but inexperienced, staff.

You will be responsible for the day to day project budgeting, working closely with the Project Director and FHTs Finance Manager and Senior Management Team.

Further information on the details of the project, including details of the Work Programme you will be running, are available from Lisa Stephens (lstevens@freshwaterhabitats.org.uk).

**Key responsibilities**

Project management:

* Financial management of the project including: (i) regular (monthly) reporting to the Project Director and the Senior Management Team and (ii) grant claim and reporting to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
* Working with partner organisations (e.g. National Trust, Thames Water) and private landowners to deliver a set programme of practical habitat creation on their sites.
* Identifying and managing habitat delivery contractors.
* Overall management of the project’s community engagement programme (including work of 0.5 FTE Community Engagement Officer) in and around Oxford which includes growing uncommon wetland plants at private homes and community sites prior to re-introduction in the wild at FHT and partner habitat creation and restoration sites.

Staff management, training and development:

* Recruitment of three Trainees who will have a 12-month posting with FHT.
* Development of a Trainees work program.
* Day to day management of the Community Engagement Officer, who is an experienced FHT Project Officer, and Trainees.

Project communications:

* Working with the FHT Communications Team to deliver the communication plan for the project.

**Additional general responsibilities for the post holder**

* Help to build a positive relationship between Freshwater Habitats Trust and its partners.
* Understand and follow FHT’s internal procedures including Health and Safety, information management systems, site protocols etc.
* Work closely and constructively with your manager and colleagues in all areas of your responsibility.
* Undertake other duties as the Senior Management Team may from time to time require.

**Competencies**

**Qualifications**

* Degree or equivalent in a relevant subject (at least a 2:1).
* Full current driving licence.

**Knowledge and experience**

* Proven project and budget management skills.
* Proven experience of managing multi-partner projects in the field of practical habitat creation and management, including on the ground delivery AND/OR working with citizen groups to deliver practical conservation outcomes.
* Experience of staff management.
* Good knowledge of restoration ecology for both freshwater and wetland habitat.
* Ideally, experience of contractor management.
* Knowledge of land management stakeholders and policy.
* Computer literate: Word and Excel are essential, GIS is desirable.
* Proven ability to communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders, including landowners and the public.
* General interest in wildlife.

**Personal qualities**

* Ability to manage workload and competing priorities effectively and meet internal deadlines through effective forward planning.
* Good verbal and written communication skills.
* Good interpersonal skills - approachable, professional and courteous.
* Attention to detail and able to deliver on time.
* Ability to work independently and as part of a team.