

Job Description

Job Title:	Skiddaw Forest Project Officer
Grade	£32,140 per annum (Grade 6, Year 1) based on 35 hours per week
Based At:	Skiddaw Forest with an office base available at Gosling Sike, Carlisle or Plumgarths, Kendal. Flexible and hybrid working arrangements will be available by agreement, in line with the needs of the role
Reports To:	Skiddaw Forest Project Manager
Responsible for:	Volunteers and contractors allocated to the project Project management and budgets of small projects (up to £10,000) Tools, vehicles and equipment

Job Purpose:

The Skiddaw Forest Project Officer will deliver the Skiddaw Forest project in conjunction with the Project Manager, working on many aspects of the project, including the re-creation, regeneration and restoration of a range of upland habitats in conjunction with a number of species recovery projects. This will include creating a significant new temperate rainforest and working with our team of specialist peatland staff to restore extensive areas of degraded peat bog.

The role will involve both office work and day to day management work on site, including site checks, surveying and monitoring, tree planting, and directing contractors. The postholder will also be responsible for discrete projects within the larger Skiddaw project including overseeing the tree nursery based at the Lake District Wildlife Park near Bassenthwaite.

The postholder will maintain the Trust's relationships and partnerships at Skiddaw Forest. This will involve working with a broad range of partner organisations, local farmers and commoners, neighbouring landowners, the local and wider community, recreational users and their representative groups.

This is a high-profile project involving a significant amount of external communication, liaison and promotional activity to raise the project's profile. A key part of the role will involve extensive community engagement and volunteer involvement to help achieve the Trust's ambitious aims and long-term outcomes for Skiddaw Forest.

Special Features of the Role:

The role will require a significant proportion of the postholder's time to be spent on site and in the field. Skiddaw Forest is an isolated and remote site and the postholder will organise and run practical work activities and other events in mountainous, steep and rugged terrain, subject to sometimes unexpected extreme and inclement weather.

Where necessary and according to the seasonal requirements of the role, there is likely to be a need to regularly adopt flexible working patterns outside of usual office hours, including evenings and weekends, for which time off in lieu is provided.

Due to the exceptional characteristics of the terrain at Skiddaw Forest, the postholder will need to possess and maintain an appropriate level of physical fitness and capability in order to perform the duties of the role.

The post will be line managed by the Project Manager. You will be expected to occasionally attend meetings of the Skiddaw Forest Steering Group. This comprises a small group of colleagues and experts with whom the post holder will work closely.

Main Responsibilities and Accountabilities:

1. Create a Wilder Skiddaw Forest

Alongside the Project Manager, develop and implement a Nature Reserve Management Plan which includes plans for peatland recovery, species recovery and woodland and montane scrub creation (e.g. tree recruitment and establishment, Environmental Impact Assessment, sourcing of local seed, tree growing, planting/ promotion of natural regeneration and aftercare in line with agreed Woodland Code and Peatland Code standards and requirements of other funders).

Deliver and oversee discrete projects within the wider Skiddaw project, including working with contractors, volunteers, CWT staff teams and others according to agreed and approved plans.

Contribute to applications, claims and monitoring for agri-environment grants and other relevant income schemes as necessary.

Work with partners and our Cumbria Wildlife Trust Community Tree Grower to oversee the tree nursery at the Lake District Wildlife Park near Bassenthwaite, coordinating the volunteers managing the site, the work programme and the budget for the site.

Liaise with neighbouring landowners and stakeholders to ensure smooth delivery of the vision.

2. Staff and volunteer management

Recruit, lead and manage teams of volunteers associated with the project.

Work closely with other staff, Directorates and teams across the Trust to secure their contributions to the Skiddaw Forest initiative.

3. Community and People engagement

Involve people in all aspects of the project, including through volunteering for the project, whether that be as individuals or working in partnership with others.

Assist with developing and nurturing a volunteer team helping with day-to-day management of the reserve, regularly checking boundaries, checking for stock ingress, undertaking surveys and monitoring tree and wild flower planting.

Act as a point of contact for community groups for Skiddaw Forest and maintain constructive working relationships and a two-way dialogue with our community partners and stakeholders.

4. Communications and events

Foster and promote excellent communications and connectivity between external partners and local communities.

Deliver a proportion of the events programme, including talks, walks and events to promote the work we're doing through the project to a wide range of audiences in support of the work programme according to the available resources.

Contribute stories and content to the Trust's media outlets (including the website) and write articles from time-to-time for publications.

Work with the marketing team to contribute to the production of interpretation to promote the site and a Wilder Skiddaw Forest. Provide content for the Trust's social media channels, website, press releases, written articles etc.

Contribute to educational aspects of the Trust's work including seminars, training and attending conferences.

5. Budgets, Health and Safety, Risk management

Undertake and implement risk assessments for activities, including compliance with lone working arrangements for themselves and volunteers.

Assist with preparing for and responding to site risks and emergencies, including liaison with emergency services and moorland fires.

Assist the Skiddaw Forest Project Manager, with the preparation, management and monitoring of discrete project budgets, for example, fencing, pathing projects and nursery budgets. (circa income/expenditure of £10,000)

Assist with the security and maintenance of all assigned assets.

6. Reporting and monitoring

With the Skiddaw Forest Project Manager, establish a monitoring programme of delegated features, in partnership with others (such as higher education establishments and volunteers). Monitoring could include species, habitats, features of geological and geomorphological interest and other environmental parameters.

Contribute to monitoring and progress reports when requested internally or for external partners and funders when required as part of grant funding schemes.

7. Other duties

Take responsibility for continuing your own professional development and training.

All staff are ambassadors for the organisation, both internally and externally and are always expected to act in a professional manner.

All tasks and responsibilities to be carried out in accordance with the Trusts policies and procedures.

Engender and support membership recruitment and donor development to increase funds raised for achieving the Trust's objectives.

Develop and participate in educational aspects of the Trusts work including events, guided walks and illustrated talks

Any other duties as required within the scope of the grade and role.

Person Specification

Role Title: Skiddaw Forest Project Officer

1. Qualifications & Experience

The post holder will be expected to have qualifications and recent experience in the following areas:

		Essential	Desirable
1.	Relevant knowledge gained through experience in a similar role, or a degree or qualification in Ecology, Environmental Sciences or another relevant subject	•	
2.	Upland habitat management and restoration, including the creation of new woodlands and tree establishment	•	
3.	Experience working in upland environments and on large Nature Reserves	•	
4.	Experience working with contractors and demonstrable successful delivery of contracts to budget in agreed timelines	•	
5.	Running successful public engagement activities and events	•	
6.	Volunteer leadership/management experience	•	
7.	Competent and qualified to use a range of vehicles, machinery and powered tools	•	
8.	Off-road driving certificate		•
9.	ATV certificate		•
10.	Mountain Leader qualification		•
11.	Deer stalking qualification		•

2. Knowledge & Skills

The post holder will have the following knowledge and skills:

		Essential	Desirable
1.	Working knowledge of the ecology and management of a broad range of upland habitats and species, including woodland and peatland	•	
2.	Ecological survey and monitoring skills, of a wide range of features (e.g. habitats, species, water levels, visitors)	•	
3.	IT literate (computers, phones, GPS, GIS, Microsoft 365 Office packages, social media)	•	
4.	Ability to manage a small budget	•	
5.	Demonstrable Project management skills		•

3. Personal Qualities

The post holder should possess the following:

		Essential	Desirable
1.	Have the physical capability and the aptitude to undertake practical tasks required for the role in mountainous terrain	•	
2.	Excellent communicator with a proven track record of building relationships with partners, colleagues, volunteers, local communities, neighbours and other stakeholders	•	
3.	Practical and a good problem solver	•	
4.	Enthusiastic and able to enthuse and inspire others	•	
5.	Ability to work on own initiative whilst also being a strong team player	•	
6.	Well organised, able to prioritise and manage workloads whilst meeting deadlines	•	
7.	Willingness to demonstrate the Trusts values and behaviours	•	
8.	Passionate about the natural world and our cause	•	

Further Information

Skiddaw Forest includes Skiddaw summit and c1200 hectares of wild upland landscape. It is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area of Conservation; it is of international importance for its upland habitats and species.

Cumbria Wildlife Trust has purchased Skiddaw Forest, so we have a unique opportunity to make changes for nature by bringing back a mosaic of habitats on a truly landscape scale. The opportunity to restore land and natural processes at this scale is very rare.

Skiddaw Forest forms the centre of the Skiddaw massif, a well-known and well-visited part of the National Park. The land forms the central "bowl" of the Skiddaw massif and it supports a number of special and important habitats restricted to the uplands; blanket bog, upland heathland and montane grass heath being most prominent. The area has an outstanding upland breeding bird assemblage. Skiddaw Forest sits within a ring fence and is not grazed by either sheep or deer.

We currently manage 42 nature reserves across Cumbria, with Skiddaw Forest being our 43rd and will be the highest Nature Reserve in England.