

# Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation

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www.jdcf.org



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## JOB DESCRIPTION

Revised: September 17, 2024

**POSITION TITLE:** Ecological Restoration Lead Specialist  
**SUPERVISOR:** Director of Ecological Restoration  
**LOCATION:** 230 E. Chicago St, Elizabeth, IL 61028  
**TERM:** Full-time permanent (non-exempt)

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## POSITION SUMMARY

The Ecological Restoration Lead Specialist position is a full-time, permanent position responsible for implementing ecological restoration activities on lands owned by Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (“JDCF”), partner conservation organizations, and private landowners. This includes invasive and exotic plant species management, prescribed fire application, native plant re-introduction, and forestry activities in prairie, forest, savanna, and wetland ecosystems.

This position works in a leadership position, serving as the leader of an ecological restoration crew of 2 to 4 people. The Lead Specialist will be responsible for both direct implementation of ecological restoration activities and the oversight of other restoration crew members while working on field-based duties. The Lead Specialist will be asked to complete basic record-keeping and equipment maintenance duties. Although this position includes leadership duties, this position does not directly supervise any other staff positions.

## ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

Under the direction of the Director of Ecological Restoration, the Lead Specialist will oversee and directly participate in the implementation of ecological restoration activities under JDCF’s *Driftless Stewardship Initiative* (“DSI”), a program tailored towards educating, training and applying best land management practices on private and publicly owned lands. The Lead Specialist will serve in a leadership role, providing in-field guidance to a crew of 2 to 4 interns, technicians, and other staff positions as well as acting as the on-site liaison with property owners.

Other duties include:

- Implement natural resource management activities using manual, mechanical, cultural and chemical practices
- Document stewardship activities and/or monitors species using computers and handheld electronic equipment
- Implement prescribed fire plans as prescribed by burn boss
- Maintains hand tools and power equipment
- Provide excellent customer service to landowners, customers, and JDCF members

- Provide basic in-field training to crew members in the areas of plant ID, equipment operation and maintenance
- Lead crew activities in the field for ecological restoration projects, including inspiring others to perform their best and leading by example
- Ensure that crew members are implementing ecological restoration activities according to prescription and in adherence to organizational policies and standard operating procedures
- Assist with preparing reports, presentations, and research on natural resource subjects as needed
- Assist Director of Ecological Restoration with week-to-week scheduling of crew members and project implementation
- Assist the Director of Ecological Restoration with preparing project proposals and land management plans
- Participate in JDCF events with internal and external partners
- Collaborate with supervisor on addressing crew and equipment issues and concerns
- Other duties as assigned

This position's typical work schedule is 40 hours per week, Monday-Thursday, 7 am to 5 pm. However, occasional overtime may be required. Occasional work on Fridays, weekends, and evenings is required.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND EXPERIENCE:**

- A passion for the Driftless Area landscape of northwest Illinois and a commitment to conserving this landscape
- Bachelor of Science Degree in biology, natural resources, ecological restoration, land use management, forestry, or other related field
- Minimum 3-4 years of relevant professional experience
- Minimum 1 year in a crew leader or supervisory role
- Ability to work in extreme environmental conditions, including excessive heat and cold, smoke, biting and stinging insects, and steep terrain
- Ability to communicate effectively with supervisor, colleagues, internal and external partners
- Ability to mitigate and manage conflict between crew members, the public or customers
- Familiarity with the flora and fauna of the Upper Midwest region
- Basic plant identification skills with willingness to learn
- Demonstrated experience implementing land management and ecological restoration plans
- Able to perform heavy lifting of weights up to 60 pounds
- Computer literacy, including using a database to maintain land management records, use of the internet, and Microsoft Office Suite

### **TRAINING, LICENSES, AND CERTIFICATIONS:**

- Valid driver's license
- Illinois Pesticide Applicator License (within 1 month of hire) or other state's equivalent certification.
- National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG):
  - S-130 Firefighter Training (within 6 months of hire)
  - S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior (within 6 months of hire)
  - S-131 Firefighter Type 1 (within 1 year of hire)
  - S-219 Firing Operations (within 1 year of hire)
- Safety and Woods Worker (SAWW) Levels 1 and 2 (within one year of hire)

## **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:**

- This is a full-time, hourly position with potential for advancement
- Starting wage is \$20 to \$24 per hour dependent on experience. Annual wage increases are based on performance and as annual budgets permit
- Two weeks paid vacation after 6 months of employment. Additional paid vacation is available depending on length of employment
- Paid sick days and paid holidays
- Group health insurance plan for employees
- Eligibility for enrollment in JDCF's retirement plan after two consecutive years with JDCF making \$5,000 or more per year
- Flexible, "family-first" work schedule
- Being part of a growing, dynamic, and impactful organization
- Living in the Driftless Area of Jo Daviess County – a beautiful landscape of rolling hills, deep river valleys, a thriving tourist industry, low cost of living, and excellent recreational, entertainment, and educational opportunities

**Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation is an Equal Opportunity Employer.**