

## **Job Title**

Lead Project Officer Norfolk, GRCF Restoring biodiversity: building a mink-free East Anglia

## **Reports to:**

Line Manager: Dr Jonah Tosney, NRT Operations Director

Project Co-ordinator: Marie-Anne Edwards, Norfolk Rivers Trust

## **Job Overview**

The role is to work on the project: 'Restoring biodiversity: building a mink-free East Anglia', which is one of the environmental projects awarded a grant from the government's £40 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund (GRCF). The project is administered by Norfolk Rivers Trust, as part of Waterlife Recovery East, a regional project of which the Norfolk Rivers Trust is a partner. The GRCF is being delivered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.

The post is full time for a period of 15 months finishing by March 2022, the employer is Norfolk Rivers Trust. The purpose is to protect endangered water voles and other native wildlife. The post-holder will have a leading role developing and upgrading the current mink control network across Norfolk, providing guidance and support to staff co-ordinating groups of volunteers. This will help prepare the county to ultimately become part of a unified trial eradication of mink from East Anglia. The project in Norfolk will work closely with similar work being carried out in Suffolk and Cambridgeshire; work across the 3 counties being co-ordinated by a joint Management Group. A particular focus for the role will be the catchments that ultimately drain into the sea at Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft but will involve travelling more widely.

The project will also involve working closely with another partner, the Norfolk Mink Project, and partners carrying out mink control in neighbouring counties. The Project Officer will be expected use their own vehicle for travel and moving equipment but receive a mileage rate for doing so.

The role will be home-based, with an occasional requirement to visit specified locations for training or reporting purposes. All necessary further training will be provided.

## **Responsibilities and duties**

- Provide a leading role in developing the smart trapping network across Norfolk.
- Provide leadership and support for local area mink trapping co-ordinators
- Work closely with the Norfolk Mink Project and Waterlife Recovery East (WRE) to further improve mink control and better prepare Norfolk to take a leading role in a trial eradication project.
- Help WRE to develop a legacy of good practice that can improve the current and future projects.

- As a leading role the postholder would be expected to be able to innovate and use initiative appropriately to help improve the project, working closely with WRE Steering Group members.
- Help carry out trials and record data to improve mink trapping and detection.
- Liaise with existing volunteers (citizen conservationists), landowners and professional conservation staff within the county to support their work and help them move from the use of 'traditional' cage traps on mink rafts to the use of permanently set and more humane 'smart traps'.
- Seek, as far as possible, to ensure all data from smart traps, even those not owned by the project, is available to the project.
- Work with landowners and occupiers to seek and inspire new volunteers who wish to protect water voles and other wildlife by managing smart traps in their local area.
- Distribute Mink Rafts, cage traps and automated trap monitors and train volunteers in their safe and humane use.
- Use an air gun to dispatch cage trapped mink humanely.
- Collect mink carcasses, take measurements, and tissue samples for DNA analysis.
- Accurately record data about trap locations and details of trapped mink and promptly upload those data to the project's database.
- Travel throughout the county to deliver equipment and liaise with volunteers.
- Keep in contact with volunteers by telephone, email and in person.
- Provide advice to help volunteers operate safely.
- Provide written reports and feedback as requested.
- Use social media and press to build awareness about riparian species.
- Be an ambassador for the humane eradication of mink from East Anglia.
- Help ensure a legacy of enthusiastic, equipped volunteers continuing to control mink after the project finishes.

#### **Essential criteria:**

- Own transport, with business use insurance and full driving licence.
- An appropriate home location to deliver the project effectively.
- Experience of wildlife management to be able to be the leading deliverer of mink control in Norfolk.
- A good 'team player' with the ability to communicate and build good relationships with a wide range of partners volunteers and landowners.
- Enthusiastic and self-motivated: can work unsupervised, reliably delivering the requirements of a project.
- Prepared to work out of doors, alone in the countryside and, when necessary, outside standard office hours.
- Willing to humanely dispatch trapped mink.
- Degree in environmental subject or good wildlife knowledge and passion for conservation.
- Able to start at the beginning of January 2021.

#### **Desirable criteria:**

- Experience in the safe use of air guns and other weapons.
- Practical experience of the control of mink or other invasive species.
- Comfortable with the use of IT.
- Desire to foster continual improvement within the project.
- A knowledge of wildlife, farming, and country pursuits.

## **Salary**

The salary will be at a full-time annual rate of £30,000, with a pension and an annual leave entitlement of 25 days. Mileage expenses will be paid.