



Employment Opportunity

Wildlife Diversity Fish Biologist

**West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
738 Ward Road
Elkins, West Virginia 26241**

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) plans to fill a Wildlife Diversity Fish Biologist position (Wildlife Biologist-2 job classification) in the Elkins Operations Center in **Randolph County**. This notification is being circulated to inform prospective applicants of this opportunity and allow applicants to submit application materials to the West Virginia Division of Personnel (WVDOP).

The position serves as the staff fish biologist within the Wildlife Diversity Unit of the Wildlife Resources Section that includes statewide responsibilities. The position conducts field and lab work, manages and analyses collected data, and drafts scientific reports to document and disseminate findings related to non-game fishes in West Virginia including species of greatest conservation need, endangered species restoration, fish kill investigation, data collection, and conservation education.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Under the direction of the Wildlife Diversity fish program manager this position oversees field and laboratory operations for the Wildlife Diversity Fish Program. The program's goal is the conservation of non-game fishes in the state. This position leads a crew of technicians on survey, monitoring, and research projects, as well as overseeing sample processing and data capture in a laboratory setting.

The employee identifies data gaps, monitoring needs, research interests, and develops the field sampling schedule. The position coordinates field operations with other WVDNR personnel (e.g. District Wildlife Diversity and Fish Management biologists) and biologists from other state and federal agencies. Stream conditions change overnight, and the employee must be able to adapt to changing field conditions to facilitate the completion of project objectives. Field work requires extensive overnight travel around the state.

Field duties include safely operating a 20' john boat on large rivers for electrofishing and trawling surveys, operating whitewater electrofishing raft, setting and retrieving fyke nets, conducting wadeable electrofishing surveys on small to midsized streams, snorkeling, and using seine and block nets. Collected fish will be either identified and enumerated in the field or preserved and transported back to the lab. This individual will conduct sampling to investigate the demographic, distributional, genetic, and health status for selected individual species

This biologist ensures protocols including assessing water chemistry, water quality, water quantity, and classifying aquatic habitat are followed by staff. The employee will participate in restoration and recovery projects involving federally listed species and species of greatest conservation need as identified in West Virginia's State Wildlife Action Plan.

The employee will train staff in safe boat/trailer operation, electroshocking protocols, fish preservation, and the use of habitat sampling equipment while afield. Laboratory duties include fixing and preserving fish specimens, identifying survey samples, extracting and processing age structures, managing the chemical supply, diluting fixatives, ensuring accurate specimen identification, and entering sample data into the program database. The employee will train staff in safe lab procedures, back-up data, maintain chemical inventory, oversee laboratory equipment maintenance, and manage a reference fish collection.

This position will compile and analyze tabular and spatial data to 1) assess species status and distribution, 2) detect population trends, 3) determine aquatic community composition and richness, 4) detect aquatic non-native invasive species and, 5) detect evidence of possible introductions. Final products will include performance reports, technical reports for peer review, species status assessments, and conservation recommendations.

The employee will be asked to investigate fish kill reports, serve as technical point of contact to law enforcement and regulatory personnel, present environmental education material to the public, attend public meetings, propose fishing regulations, participate in State Wildlife Action Plan development, and assist other Wildlife Diversity staff.

Location: Elkins Operations Center
738 Ward Road
Elkins, WV 26241

Pay Grade: WV PG- 19 **Salary Range:** \$45,042 - \$83,326

Minimum Qualifications: (Applicants must meet these to qualify for register placement)

- **TRAINING:** Training: Master of Science degree from an accredited college or university with a major in wildlife or fisheries management and biology, fish culture, conservation biology, natural resources, aquatic biology, botany, biological sciences or environmental sciences. Preference will be given to educational and field experience as related to specific job postings
- **EXPERIENCE:** Two (2) years of full-time or equivalent part-time paid experience in wildlife or fishery management or related fields.
- **SUBSTITUTION:** Doctorate of Philosophy degree from an accredited college or university with a major in wildlife or fisheries management and biology, fish culture, conservation biology, natural resources, aquatic biology, botany, biological sciences or environmental sciences.
- **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:** A valid West Virginia driver's license is required. If you are the selected candidate for the position and do not currently have a WV driver's license you will have to acquire one prior to beginning employment.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Strong background in fish taxonomy, biology, and ecology is required.
- Knowledge of fish and habitat conservation practices is essential.
- Ability to identify West Virginia and regional fishes and aquatic organisms in field and lab settings is essential.
- Familiarity with MS Office Suite, ArcMap, and Program R is required.
- Familiarity with environmental monitoring equipment, software, and data (i.e., HOBOWare; YSI; USGS discharge, stream temperature, conductivity etc.) is necessary.
- Knowledge of principles related to electrofishing and electrofishing safety is essential.
- Demonstrated experience operating and maintaining boats, rafts, outboard motors, 2-cycle engines, and trailers is essential.
- Experience operating wadeable and non-wadeable electro-fishing equipment, fish traps and nets, water sampling gear, habitat sampling equipment, microscopes, laboratory equipment, and geospatial data collection equipment is preferred.
- Demonstrated experience in designing and implementing scientific research including data collection, analysis, and literature review is essential.
- Experience using appropriate fixatives and preservatives used for collection of and long-term preservation of vertebrate and/or invertebrate specimens for lab identification, museum storage, cataloging, DNA samples, and fish aging is essential.
- Ability to capture and analyze spatial and tabular data to develop well supported conclusions is necessary.
- Familiarity with the responsibilities and organization of other agencies (US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, WV Department of Environmental Quality, etc.) is preferred.
- Familiarity with the federal environmental regulations and law such as the federal Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and Clean Water Act is preferred, as is knowledge of West Virginia natural resource laws and regulations is desirable.
- Must be detail oriented and have strong organizational and communication skills.
- Knowledge of invasive aquatic plants, animals, and aquatic diseases is preferred.
- Demonstrated experience in presenting scientific information in programs for citizen groups, agency personnel, private industry representatives, and professional/technical groups is essential.
- Must be able to swim and comfortable working in confined spaces such as boats for extended periods of time.
- Leadership skills are essential. Supervisory experience is preferred.

For Information:

- For more information regarding this position you may contact Nate Owens at office phone: 1 (304) 637-0245, Nate Owens cell phone: 1 (681) 298-0601, or by email at Nathaniel.V.Owens@wv.gov
- For information regarding application procedures you may contact the West Virginia Division of Personnel at (304) 558-3950 or at <http://www.personnel.wv.gov>

To Apply:

- This vacancy will be advertised inside and outside state government via a **public service announcement**.
- Non-government applicants can learn about the position posting and application procedures by subscribing to receive a Job Information Card for “Natural Resource” position announcements through the WV Division of Personnel website (<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/wv/jobInterestCards/categories>).
- Non-government applicants must submit a state job application and supporting documentation (transcripts) directly to the Public Service Announcement.

OUTREACH