February, 2009

**GS-0482-11 Fisheries Biologist**

The Coconino National Forest will soon be advertising a GS-0482-11, Fisheries Biologist for the Coconino National Forest. This position is a permanent full time position. **Anyone interested in further information should complete the attached Outreach Response Form and return it to hcprovencio@fs.fed.us or contact Red Rock District Ranger Heather Provencio at 928-203-7501 or Forest Biologist Cecilia Overby at 928-527-3460.**

**DUTIES**

The position will serve as the Forest Fisheries Biologist, with responsibility for planning, administering, and providing professional expertise in fisheries programs. The Forest Fisheries Biologist provides biological input into the fish habitat management program and assists in development of fishery management plans. This includes gathering, compiling, and analyzing data to determine fish habitat needs; determining key spawning, rearing, and over-wintering areas; determining the need for and designing of fish habitat improvement projects; developing project plans for inclusion in Forest program of work; conducting fisheries field work and supervising crews; and studying and recommending solutions to special coordination problems involving fish habitat protection.

The Forest Fisheries Biologist works cooperatively with State, Tribal, and Federal fish and water quality management agencies. This includes gathering information for stream and lake management plans, surveying fish occurrence, mapping key fish habitat for suitability, and determining the need for fish habitat enhancement or restoration. This position also works with universities, researchers, interested organizations and individuals and others to develop projects and programs.

This position participates on or leads interdisciplinary teams for the evaluation of the impact of Forest Service or non-Forest Service activities on National Forest lands, and the development of land management plans. Additionally, the fisheries biologist provides input to Forest plans pertaining to Fisheries Management and Aquatic Resource protection and enhancement.
THE SETTING

The Coconino National Forest is approximately 1.8 million acres, ranging in elevation from 2600 feet in the arid lowlands, to 12,648 feet at the top of Mt. Humphreys, Arizona’s highest mountain peak. Dr. C. Hart Merriam and Vernon Bailey developed the well-known “life zone” concept in the late 1800’s as a result of field excursions in this area. With a wide range of habitats on the Forest, from alpine tundra to lowland desert, the Forest is biologically rich, supporting a diversity of wildlife, fish and plant populations.

Major habitats include tundra, spruce-fir, mixed conifer, ponderosa pine, ponderosa pine-Gambel oak, pinyon-juniper, and desert grassland. The southern end of the Colorado plateau, which includes the Coconino National Forest, contains the largest concentration of ponderosa pine trees in the United States. The Forest is home to over 500 vertebrate species, including 300 species of birds, almost 100 species of mammals, a wide variety of herpetofauna (amphibians and reptiles), 14 native fish species, as well as many invertebrates.

There are four ranger districts on the Coconino National Forest. The Supervisor’s Office and the Flagstaff Center (Peaks and Mormon Lake Ranger Districts) are located in Flagstaff; the Red Rock Ranger District in Sedona, and the Mogollon Rim Ranger District in Happy Jack.

The Red Rock Ranger District is situated in the Verde Valley and its “red rock country” is world renown for its sensational red sandstone mountains, cliffs, spires, buttes, and mesas of Sedona, Arizona. Diverse vegetation is found within the District; mixed conifer canyons exist at higher elevations, ponderosa pine forests and pinyon/juniper woodlands dominate the mid-elevation sites, and desert shrub and grasslands are present at the lower elevations. Numerous riparian areas and perennial rivers and creeks are also present on the District. The Verde River runs north to south through the valley and is fed by numerous tributaries; Sycamore Creek, Oak Creek, Dry and Wet Beaver Creeks, West Clear Creek and Fossil Creek. 35 permanent employees and an additional 30 seasonals are employed at the Red Rock Ranger District.

While this position will be located on the Red Rock Ranger District, it is a Forest level position and will serve the entire Coconino National Forest. There are currently 5 GS-11 District Wildlife Biologists situated on the 4 Ranger Districts of the Coconino National Forest, and one GS-12 Forest Biologist stationed out of our Supervisor’s Office in Flagstaff.

FISH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Native fishes on the Forest, and in the Southwest in general, have suffered significant declines in abundance and distribution due to degradation and loss of habitat and interaction with non-native aquatic fauna. Arizona is the top-ranking state in the nation for at-risk fishes, and almost all native fish species have special status designations. The Forest has a strong native fish program, and works in cooperation with the state, other agencies, and other stakeholders to restore habitats for native species. The Forest works actively with partners regarding sport fishing opportunities as well.

The Coconino National Forest covers a significant portion of the headwaters of the Little Colorado River and several major tributaries of the Verde River (i.e. West Clear Creek, Wet Beaver, Oak Creek, and Fossil Creek). All of this area lies within the Colorado River system. The Forest has over 240 miles of streams and 9,000 acres of lake, pond and reservoir habitat.
Fishes of the Colorado River are known for being highly distinct and endemic (restricted to that location). The Coconino NF’s waters hold a suite of still existing fishes such as Little Colorado River sucker, Sonora sucker, desert sucker, and roundtail chub. Species that are now rare or extinct that once roamed portions of the Forest include pikeminnow (the top carnivore and largest “minnow” in North America), spikedace, loach minnow, razorback sucker, and native trout. One of the two most endangered species on the Forest (and in the Southwestern Region) is the Little Colorado spinedace. Some of the remaining springs on the forest also hold endemic spring snails.

Some of the most important current work of the Fisheries Biologist position includes proactively managing rare species and their habitats, developing and maintaining agency and other stakeholder partnerships, participation on various fisheries conservation teams, planning and seeking funding for restoration and habitat management projects, and conducting field inventories. The position spends a considerable amount of time participating on interdisciplinary teams for a variety of Forest projects, writes Specialist’s reports and Biological Assessments, and consults with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Forest Plan Revision and Travel Management Rule Implementation are two ongoing, complex Forest-wide projects.

**DUTY STATION**

The incumbent’s duty station will be the new Red Rock Ranger District office which is located one mile south of the community of the Village of Oak Creek, approximately eight miles south of Sedona, Arizona. Located in the Verde Valley and Yavapai County, the new Red Rock Ranger District Office is within easy commuting distance (less than 20 miles) of the entire Verde Valley and its numerous small communities. The Verde Valley communities include: Rimrock (population 2,000), Village of Oak Creek (population 3,500), Sedona (population 20,000), Cottonwood (population 18,000), Camp Verde (population 12,000), Cornville (population 3,800), Clarkdale (population 3,500), and McGuireville (population 700). The Verde Valley is about a two hour drive north from Phoenix, Arizona and one hour drive south from Flagstaff, Arizona.

**Housing**

There is no Government housing available. There is good availability of housing in the Verde Valley with a reasonably wide range of prices; an average 2-3 bedroom home may range from $200,000 to $350,000. Sedona and the Village of Oak Creek property values are very high. Verde Valley rental properties are common and reasonably priced.

**Schools**

All of the communities in the Verde Valley have a variety of schools, including a variety of charter and private schools. Yavapai College also has a campus and several satellite facilities in the Verde Valley.

**Medical Facilities**

The Verde Valley Medical Center at Cottonwood; the Village Medical Center in the Village of Oak Creek, the Sedona Emergency Clinic and Sedona Urgent Care in Sedona and are among the hospitals and medical clinics found in the Verde Valley. Plus a very wide variety of physicians, dentists, clinics, chiropractors, etc. are available in all the Valleys major communities.

**Churches**

There are a large number of churches in the Valley, all denominations are represented.
Shopping
Sedona, Cottonwood, and Camp Verde are all full-service communities with many substantial shopping opportunities. A wider range of shopping can be found in Flagstaff, Prescott, and Phoenix.

Recreation
About a million acres of national forest are present in the Verde Valley with many more on the balance of the Coconino, the Kaibab and Prescott National Forests which are adjacent. All the communities have active community based activities as well, including soccer, baseball, etc.

Clubs and Organizations
Most civic organizations and clubs are represented.
OUTREACH CONTACTS

Heather Provencio  
District Ranger, Red Rock Ranger District  
(928) 203-7501  
hcprovencio@fs.fed.us

Cecelia Overby  
Forest Biologist, Coconino National Forest Supervisor’s Officer  
(928) 477-5001  
coverby@fs.fed.us

For public information about the Forest:  http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/

For internal information about the Forest and District:  http://fsweb.coconino.r3.fs.fed.us/
OUTREACH RESPONSE FORM

If you are interested in this position and want to receive a copy of the Vacancy Announcement, please complete this form and send to hcprovencio@fs.fed.us. If you do not have access to electronic mail, please complete the form and mail or fax to: Heather Provencio, Red Rock Ranger District, P.O. Box 20429, Sedona, AZ 86341. Fax number 928-203-7539.

I am interested and would like to receive a copy of the Vacancy Announcement for the following position:

Position Title/Series/Grade: Fisheries Biologist GS-0482-11

Location: Region 3, Coconino NF, Red Rock Ranger District

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Address:

E-Mail Address: __________________

Phone:

Current title/series/grade:

Are you currently a Federal employee? YES ____ NO ____

If YES: Current Agency and location:

Type of Appointment: ___ Permanent ___ Term ___ Temporary

If you are not a current permanent (career or career conditional) employee are you eligible for appointment under any of the following special authorities:

Person with Disabilities ____ Veterans Readjustment ____ Former Peace Corps Volunteer

Disabled Veteran w/30% Compensable Disability ____ Student Career Experience Program

Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 ____ Other

Thank you for your interest in our vacancy.