JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Title: Field Assistant, Massasauga Rattlesnake Site Fidelity and Translocation Study

Type of Position: Full-time (40 hr. wk) temporary position (28 weeks)
Start Date: April 30, 2018
Hours of Work: Flexible daily and weekly schedule to suit project needs and weather conditions. Working certain weekends will be required.
Location: Pointe-au-Baril, Parry Sound, Ontario

GENERAL DESCRIPTION
The Field Assistant will assist the Project Biologist in implementing all aspects of the Massasauga Site Fidelity and Translocation Study. This includes field research, purchase of necessary equipment and supplies, liaising and working cooperatively with MNRF Parry Sound district staff, ensuring all work plan activities are completed on schedule, pro-actively identifying potential problems, etc.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Habitat destruction from infrastructure development is a major threat to herpetofauna populations, including the Eastern massasauga rattlesnake, a species-at-risk in Ontario. This project investigates site fidelity of massasaugas to hibernacula and whether translocation of individuals to alternate hibernation sites might be an effective conservation strategy mitigating the impacts of habitat alteration or destruction.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
• Intensively monitor hibernation sites during spring egress (April-May) and fall (Sept-Oct) ingress until movements are complete each season, including trapping at exclusion fence around a major hibernaculum site; assist ID of all snakes and process any new snakes, including digital photographs, morphometric measurements, PIT tags application.
• Daily spring egress monitoring of neonate massasaugas at fall 2017 release hibernation sites.
• Assist with minor spring repairs of hibernacula snake fence.
• Assist Project Biologist in identifying and documenting (via GIS based mapping) alternate high quality hibernation sites in the area suitable for translocated snakes.
• Assist with set-up of Snake Lab for short-term captivity of neonate and adult massasaugas.
• Intensively monitor gestation sites and assist with capturing neonates from birth sites in August.
• Care for neonates and adults in captivity and assist with releases into alternate hibernation site(s) during fall egress (~late-September); maintain daily logs.
• Assist with fall trapping of adult massasaugas at salvage site for temporary care in captivity prior to translocation to alternate site(s).
• Regular data entry and data backup; assist with data analysis and mapping.
• Devote the necessary hours per calendar week to fulfill the duties and responsibilities outlined.
• Assist with an inventory of all project-related equipment at the end of the season.
• Assist with writing monthly field blogs for WPC website.
• Other tasks as assigned.
REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Strong interest in biology, conservation and research-based field work.
- Ability to work professionally and safely under poor weather conditions, in difficult terrain (e.g., rain, heat and biting insects).
- Physically fit and able to hike long distances daily in rough terrain.
- Ability to adhere to detailed field protocols, data protocols, venomous snake safety protocols and Government of Ontario Occupational Health and Safety regulations.
- Previous experience conducting biological surveys (especially for snakes) and proven ability to identify Ontario herpetofauna is an asset.
- Previous experience in the identification of Ontario plants is an asset.
- Ability to record detailed and legible field notes.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office suite for purposes of word processing and data entry in spreadsheets is an asset.
- Willing to be flexible with work schedule, including working weekends and longer hours during spring and fall seasons (overtime taken as time off in lieu).
- Housing is not provided, transportation to the work site from the Parry Sound area can be arranged.
- G-class Driver's license essential.

To apply please send a cover letter and resume to: Eric Jolin, Project Biologist, eric.jolin@wildlifepreservation.ca
and cc Lance Woolaver, Conservation Programs Director, lance.woolaver@wildlifepreservation.ca

Please submit your application as a single PDF or MS word file attachment and include in the email subject heading “Massasauga Field Assistant”.

Application deadline is midnight 23 April 2018, however applications will be assessed as they are submitted. No telephone calls, please. Applicants must be legally entitled to work in Canada. Only individuals considered for an interview will be contacted. Thank you for your interest.