

## Field Operations Manager – Manhattan, KS

### Overview

The National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) is a \$430 million dollar observatory project dedicated to understanding how changes in climate, land use and invasive species impact ecology. For the next three decades NEON will collect a comprehensive range of ecological data on a continental scale across 20 eco-climatic domains representing US ecosystems. NEON will use cutting edge technology including an airborne observation platform that will capture images of regional landscapes and vegetation; mobile, re-locatable, and fixed data collection sites with automated ground sensors to monitor soil and atmosphere; and trained field crews who will observe and sample populations of diverse organisms and collect soil and water data. A leading edge cyber-infrastructure will calibrate, store and publish this information. The Observatory will grow to 300+ personnel and will be the first of its kind designed to detect and enable forecasting of ecological change at continental scales.

### Summary:

Reporting to the Director Field Operations, the NEON Field Operations Manager is responsible for managing all personnel and activities coordinated from the assigned field office. Field office activities include (1) preventative and corrective maintenance of scientific instrumentation, field infrastructure and equipment, office and laboratory equipment, (2) field observations, (3) specimen collection, handling, preparation and shipment according to NEON scientific protocols. Personnel management includes (1) selecting, (2) training, (3) scheduling, and (4) performance management for 5-10 regular full-time field technicians and 20-30 seasonal field technicians according to NEON, Inc. Policies and Procedures.

### Location:

The Domain 06 Field Operations Manager's primary work location is near Manhattan, KS. This position supports sites in the Prairie Peninsula Domain. Prairie Peninsula candidate sites are located at Konza Prairie Biological Station near Manhattan, KS and at the University of Kansas Field Station near Lawrence, KS. The Prairie Peninsula Domain includes parts of Kansas, Nebraska, southern Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, southern Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana.

### Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Supervise all regular and seasonal field personnel supporting field office, lab and collection sites.

- Perform and oversee the recruitment and training of regular and seasonal field personnel.
- Ensure that safety policies, procedures, and practices are followed within their area of authority. Reinforce positive attitudes toward safety and sets the example for staff by enabling compliance with safety requirements.
- Coordinate logistics and schedules, within NEON scientific parameters, for all maintenance, repair and field activities.
- Perform and oversee maintenance, repair and field activities according to NEON scientific protocols.
- Administer the operation of the office and laboratory. Oversees maintenance of office and lab areas including lab equipment and coordinates necessary repair or replacement.
- Act as liaison between regional stakeholders, including educational and research organizations, local property owners and the general public and NEON, Inc.
- Communicate NEON status and activities, local activities and partnerships, and regional issues and concerns to appropriate regional stakeholders and NEON staff. Work with regional stakeholders to resolve issues or concerns.
- Prepare annual operating budget for assigned office, lab and collection sites in collaboration with the Director of Field Operations. Ensure NEON funds are used appropriately and within budget.
- Record activities and completed work according to Field Operations protocol.
- Perform field assignments in a variety of conditions (e.g., weather, terrain, diverse assigned biomes).
- May carry, move and lift field supplies (pack weighing up to 40 lbs.) to assigned field site (diverse and uneven terrain).
- Follow and ensure all NEON, Inc. policy and procedure including administrative, safety, and financial requirements for field station operations are followed.

#### Required Education, Experience, Knowledge, Skills:

- Bachelor's Degree biology, ecology, environmental science or related field. Equivalent

education and work experience may be considered.

- Three (3) or more years' experience supervising at least 5 personnel including hiring, evaluating performance, implementing performance improvement plans and terminating employees.
- Three (3) or more years' experience in management including budgeting, monthly status reporting.
- Three (3) or more years' experience developing complex work or task schedules (e.g. 24x7 operations with full-time, part-time, and seasonal staff).
- Previous experience performing ecology related lab and field activities and/or maintaining scientific instrumentation (e.g. meteorological and aquatic sensors).
- Previous experience communicating with external stakeholders such as customers, funding agencies, regulatory agencies, etc.
- Ability to organize and execute multiple activities and priorities.
- Effective problem solving skills and the ability to determine and act on changing priorities in a fast paced dynamic environment.
- Effective leadership skills and the ability to motivate others.
- Displays good judgment in ensuring safety and operational standards are met.
- Ability and willingness to adopt new technologies as needed.
- Ability to travel frequently within assigned domain.
- Depending on assignment, current and valid State issued driver's license with insurable Department of Motor Vehicle record (parking violations, minor driving offenses excluded) as determined by NEON's insurance provider.
- Willingness to work in variable weather conditions, at remote locations, on difficult or hazardous terrain.
- Ability to ascend and descend multiple flights of stairs on instrument towers.
- Willingness to work on towers ranging in height from 24 feet to 300 feet and at altitudes of up to 11,000 feet (depending on assigned Domain).

- Ability to withstand exposure to fumes, dust, and noise.

Preferred Education, Experience, Knowledge, Skills:

- Graduate study in biology, ecology, environmental science or related field.
- Previous experience managing a technical field operations services group.
- Previous experience leading or participating in outdoor activities in remote areas.
- Familiarity with federal and state employment and safety regulations.

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Must have permanent authorization for US employment.

NEON Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women, Minorities, Veterans and Disabled Persons are encouraged to apply.