

Working Title: Upland Game Research Scientist

Job Class: Research Scientist 2

Agency: MN Department of Natural Resources

- **Job ID:** 92146
- **Location:** Madelia
- **Telework Eligible:** Yes
- **Full/Part Time:** Full-Time
- **Regular/Temporary:** Unlimited
- **Who May Apply:** Open to all qualified job seekers
- **Date Posted:** 02/20/2026
- **Closing Date:** 03/19/2026
- **Hiring Agency/Seniority Unit:** Department of Natural Resources
- **Division/Unit:** Fish and Wildlife
- **Work Shift/Work Hours:** Day Shift
- **Days of Work:** Monday - Friday
- **Travel Required:** Yes - Occasionally
- **Salary Range:** \$32.40 - \$47.76 / hourly; \$67,651 - \$99,722 / annually
- **Classified Status:** Classified
- **Bargaining Unit/Union:** 214 - MN Association of Professional Employees/MAPE
- **FLSA Status:** Exempt - Professional
- [Designated in Connect 700 Program for Applicants with Disabilities:](#) Yes

The work you'll do is more than just a job.

At the State of Minnesota, employees play a critical role in developing policies, providing essential services, and working to improve the well-being and quality of life for all Minnesotans. The State of Minnesota is committed to equity and inclusion, and invests in employees by providing benefits, support resources, and training and development opportunities.

Job Summary

The DNR's [Farmland Wildlife Populations and Research Group \(FaWPRG\)](#) is currently seeking an Upland Game Research Scientist in Madelia, MN. This position exists to serve as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) expert on upland game birds (especially wild turkeys, ring-necked pheasants, gray partridge, and northern bobwhite quail), other upland game (e.g., tree squirrels, rabbits), and avian ecology in farmland landscapes; to design, execute, and report independent and original research and survey projects on farmland game birds and their habitats (including habitats created by governmental farm programs); to provide new knowledge about these resources; and to develop and evaluate new methods and techniques for the advancement of upland game and farmland bird management. The incumbent represents the DNR in public meetings; disseminates advanced technical expertise on research findings and population surveys to peers,

clientele, and the media; and acts as a key participant in the development, evaluation, and implementation of DNR wildlife management policies required to ensure the sustainability of wildlife resources in Minnesota.

This position requires a strong background in avian ecology, previous experience designing and conducting management-oriented research, demonstrated ability to publish peer-reviewed articles, and the skills and desire to work closely with Minnesota wildlife managers and biologists to answer relevant research questions and provide management recommendations.

Research Scientist 2 positions perform independent wildlife scientific research work and are responsible for initiating and completing research projects, including budget management and other administrative tasks (e.g., initiating purchase requests and contracts associated with projects). They also review research activities in progress, correlate complex technical findings, interpret theories and reports, publish in peer-reviewed journals, and instruct lower-level employees in research procedures.

This position has a flexible work arrangement and may be eligible to telework on a part-time basis which is subject to change. If approved, the employee would be required to complete a telework agreement. This position will require reporting to the primary work location on a regular basis for onboarding, meetings, and fieldwork. Travel statewide for meetings and field site visits is required as needed, with some overnight travel necessary on occasion.

Responsibilities include:

- Identify information needs and plan and design independent and original research projects and population surveys concerning avian habitats in farmland landscapes, population dynamics of upland birds (especially wild turkeys and ring-necked pheasants), and farm programs so that relevant data are collected and available for increased scientific knowledge, improved effective wildlife management, and perpetuation of the resources.
- Organize, direct, and execute advanced, independent wildlife research and survey projects (including data collection, storage, analysis, and interpretation), using appropriate scientific techniques and valid statistical procedures, so that study objectives are met, hypotheses are tested, and conclusions are drawn that are statistically and scientifically valid.
- Perform administrative functions of DNR research and survey projects, and administer other cooperative research projects, so that projects are conducted that result in more effective population and habitat management.
- Prepare technical and popular research reports and oral presentations for dissemination to technical, public, and media clientele that state the project rationale and techniques, results, and interpretation and application of these data within the context of existing knowledge.
- Present data and/or expert opinion to committees in verbal and written form and to review management-oriented programs, plans, proposals, reports, and technical manuscripts so that upland game birds and/or other farmland upland game and their habitats are managed in a sound, scientific basis and knowledge is disseminated and accurately reported to DNR managers and administrators and other clientele.
- Advance the technology of wildlife science in Minnesota by remaining current in wildlife, ecology, and other biological sciences, statistical design and analyses, and computer applications.

Minimum Qualifications

- A Master's degree in Wildlife Biology, Ecology, Natural Resources, or closely related field, AND two (2) years post-graduation experience in scientific research, and/or monitoring/survey techniques pertaining to the conservation and/or management of wild birds.

OR

- PhD in Wildlife Biology, Ecology, Natural Resources, or closely related field, including independent research project design, implementation, and analysis pertaining to the conservation and/or management of wild birds.

Applicants must also meet the following additional minimum qualifications:

- Working knowledge of the ecology and management of wild birds to identify and prioritize research needs and formulate hypotheses relevant to management decisions.
- Working knowledge of experimental design, statistics, and field sampling techniques to design, collect, and analyze data from research projects.
- Skill in conducting statistical analyses to test hypotheses and make appropriate inferences, including proficiency in Program R or other statistical software packages.
- Exceptional communication skills to communicate with diverse audiences, including both lay and peer groups, sufficient to document and disseminate in-progress and completed research results.
- Ability to effectively communicate research results to peers and decision-makers in real-time by explaining data tables, graphs, and diagrams and by answering resulting questions.
- Experience publishing in peer-reviewed, scientific journals, including at least two (2) senior- authored wildlife research articles.
- Management skills to effectively plan, budget, motivate, coordinate, and direct resources available to meet wildlife research and management needs.
- Ability to collaborate on large-scale projects involving a diverse team from a variety of scientific disciplines.
- Recognized ability to establish and maintain mutually respectful, beneficial, and rewarding relationships with a diverse network of scientific and professional peers, including landowners and wildlife managers.
- Demonstrated computer proficiency including knowledge of statistical software, databases, spreadsheets, and word processing sufficient to create and write reports and access data.

Preferred Qualifications

- PhD in Wildlife Biology, Ecology, Natural Resources, or closely related field with a focus on avian ecology.
- Completion of at least one (1) post-doctoral research project (including publishing results) related to natural resources with an emphasis on wildlife.

- Extensive computer programming experience with R.
- Proficiency in ArcGIS or ArcPro and using geographic information systems data.
- Proficiency with Access databases.
- Experience leading and planning the work of others.
- Job-related experience conducting applied wildlife research (e.g., research that reduces uncertainties relevant to making decisions for wildlife management or conservation).
- Experience and technical proficiency in live-trapping and marking wild birds (especially gallinaceous birds) handling biological samples, tracking animal movements, and estimating survival.
- Experience modeling populations of wild birds, preferably game birds, and understanding the outputs sufficient to make harvest management recommendations.
- Extensive knowledge of current wildlife research and management in the Midwestern U.S., particularly as it relates to upland game birds, grassland birds, and U.S. Farm Bill habitat conservation programs.

Additional Requirements

This position requires an unrestricted Class D Driver's license with a clear driving record; per DNR Fleet Policy, only those 18 years of age or older with a valid driver's license may operate equipment and vehicles on behalf of the Agency.

Applicants must have the ability to meet the physical requirements and work in the environmental conditions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodations.

In compliance with federal law, all persons hired will be required to verify identity and eligibility to work in the United States and to complete the required employment eligibility verification form upon hire. Candidates must be legally authorized to work in the United States without sponsorship for employment visa status (e.g. H1B status).

It is policy of the Department of Natural Resources that all candidates submit to a background check prior to employment. The background check may consist of the following components:

- Conflict of Interest Review
- Criminal History Check
- Education Verification
- Employment Reference / Records Check
- License / Certification Verification

How to Apply

Internal applicants can apply via Self-Service. For external applicants, navigate to the [State of Minnesota Job Search](#) website, click on the [External Applicant Portal](#), enter the Job ID number in the Keywords search field, and click Search. If you have questions about applying for jobs, contact the Careers Help Desk at [651-259-3637](tel:651-259-3637) or email careers@state.mn.us. For additional information about the application process, go to <http://www.mn.gov/careers>.

Contact

If you have questions about this position, contact Dr. Nicole Davros at Nicole.Davros@state.mn.us or [507-578-8916](tel:507-578-8916).

If you are an individual with a disability and need reasonable accommodation to assist with the application process, please contact the ADA Coordinator at ADA.DNR@state.mn.us. To receive consideration as a Connect 700 Program applicant, apply online, email the Job ID#, the Working Title and your valid Proof of Eligibility Certificate by the closing date to Jordan Krueger at Jordan.Krueger@state.mn.us.

Working together to improve the state we love.

What do Minnesota's State employees have in common?

- A sense of purpose in their work
- Connection with their coworkers and communities
- Opportunities for personal and professional growth

Benefits

As an employee, you'll have access to one of the most affordable health insurance plans in Minnesota, along with other benefits to help you and your family be well.

Your benefits may include:

- Paid vacation and sick leave
- 12 paid holidays each year
- Low-cost medical, dental, vision, and prescription drug plans
 - Fertility care, including IVF
 - Diabetes care
 - Dental and orthodontic care for adults and children
- 6 weeks paid leave for parents of newborn or newly adopted children
- Pension plan that provides income when you retire (after working at least three years)
- Employer paid life insurance to provide support for your family in the event of death
- Short-term and long-term disability insurance that can provide income if you are unable to work due to illness or injury
- Tax-free expense accounts for health, dental, and dependent care
- Resources that provide support and promote physical, emotional, social, and financial well-being

Support to help you reach your career goals:

- Training, classes, and professional development
- Federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (Some positions may qualify for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. For more information, visit the Federal Student Aid website at studentaid.gov)

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for work/life support:

- A voluntary confidential program that helps employees and their families with life challenges that may impact overall health, personal well-being, or job performance
- Common sources of stress can be addressed through the EAP: mental health, relationship challenges (personal and work), grief and loss, finances, and legal issues
- Daily Living/Convenience Services: Chore services, home repair, trip planning, child/elder care

Programs, resources and benefits eligibility varies based on type of employment, agency, funding availability, union/collective bargaining agreement, location, and length of service with the State of Minnesota.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYERS

Minnesota state agencies are equal opportunity, affirmative action, and veteran-friendly employers. State agencies are committed to creating a workforce that reflects the diversity of the state and strongly encourages persons of color and Indigenous communities, members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community, individuals with disabilities, women, and veterans to apply. The varied experiences and perspectives of employees strengthen the work we do together and our ability to best serve Minnesotans.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and disabilities related to pregnancy or childbirth), gender identity, gender expression, marital status, familial status, age, sexual orientation, status regarding public assistance, disability, veteran status or activity in a local Human Rights Commission or any other characteristic protected by law.

APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITIES

Minnesota state agencies make reasonable accommodations to their employees and applicants with disabilities. If you have a disability and need assistance in searching or applying for jobs with the State of Minnesota, call the Careers Help Desk at [651-259-3637](tel:651-259-3637) or email careers@state.mn.us and let us know the support you need.