

## **Contract Auditor Position Description - Audubon Conservation Ranching Program**

The National Audubon Society has created the Conservation Ranching Program as an innovative, market-based approach to connect conservation-conscious consumers to farmers and ranchers that employ bird-friendly management practices in raising their livestock. Participation in the program is voluntary and is open to beef cattle and bison farm and ranching operations located throughout the United States. Additional information on the Audubon Conservation Ranching Program can be found at [Conservation Ranching | Audubon](#).

Farms and ranches wishing to participate in the Audubon Conservation Ranching program must demonstrate conformance to applicable Conservation Ranching Program Protocols, including the development and implementation of a site-specific Habitat Management Plan. Conformance to program requirements is verified through annual third-party audits managed by Food Alliance ([www.foodalliance.org](http://www.foodalliance.org)).

Food Alliance is seeking highly qualified independent contractors to perform on-site and/or desk audits of operations participating in the Audubon Conservation Ranching Program. Interested parties should submit a detailed resume and cover letter to:

Postal mail: Food Alliance, P.O. Box 1004 Carnation, WA 98014  
Email: [shaila@foodalliance.org](mailto:shaila@foodalliance.org)

The resume and cover letter should clearly detail educational and work experience relevant to this auditor position, and should also include audit rates (e.g. hourly rates for on-site audit work, report writing, travel expenses, etc.).

### **Qualifications**

- Bachelor's degree in rangeland ecology, range management, or related natural resources field
- Minimum 3 years' work experience in conservation planning, natural resource management, field research, or consulting in a related discipline
- Basic ornithological knowledge, and familiarity with habitat needs of regional grassland bird species
- Knowledge of and ability to identify regional grasses, forbs, and browse plants
- Knowledge of sustainable livestock management practices, including principles of rotational grazing, forage management, protection of riparian areas, herd health management, and low-stress handling techniques
- Familiarity with grazing management plans, stocking density calculations, and concepts of ecological potential and carrying capacity
- Excellent interpersonal skills with ability to interact diplomatically with Food Alliance staff and auditees
- Ability and willingness to travel for audit assignments, on weekends and evenings when necessary
- Prior experience conducting farm or ranch audits is preferred

## **Competencies**

- Strong interview skills, with an ability to communicate knowledgeably, clearly, and efficiently with farmers and ranchers
- Resourcefulness, self-motivation, dependability, attention to detail
- Ability to analyze and clearly document field observations
- Unbiased, evidence-based reporting skills
- Ability to work independently
- Keen ability to simultaneously listen, observe, and take notes
- Desire to continually improve auditing practices and increase knowledge base in topics related to sustainable livestock production and bird habitat/biodiversity conservation
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to navigate the MS suite of tools, mapping tools including google earth, pdf, and dropbox

## **Responsibilities**

It is the contract auditor's responsibility to schedule and coordinate audits. Upon completion of an audit, the auditor will be required to submit a report detailing the audit findings and to provide a recommendation for or against certification. Auditors may be contacted by Food Alliance to discuss their recommendations and answer questions about their audit reports.

## **Training**

The auditor's ability to accurately communicate Audubon Conservation Ranching Program requirements and fairly evaluate applicants' conformance to such requirements is critical to the integrity of the program. Auditors will be trained by Food Alliance and/or Audubon staff and mentored by experienced auditors. Training may be conducted one-on-one or in a group setting and may be in-person or virtual (via phone/webinar sessions). After receiving training, auditors are required to observe at least one (un-paid) on-site audit conducted by an experienced Food Alliance auditor. (Exceptions may be made for highly qualified applicants with prior auditing experience.) Auditor trainees are not compensated for training time or expenses.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Auditors must sign an agreement kept on file at Food Alliance pledging to operate under confidentiality and without conflict of interest. Auditors are required to declare any potential conflicts of interest to Food Alliance. Auditors are bound by a code of ethics designed to ensure:

- Confidentiality of the information provided by the auditee.
- No conflict of interest exists between the applicant and the auditee
- Professionalism in reporting and when representing Food Alliance or the Audubon Conservation Ranching Program