



Rural Action

Working Together to Revitalize Appalachian Ohio

Green and Regionally Oriented Wood Products Specialist

Job Description

Position: Salaried, exempt,
Start Date: August 2010
Reporting: Executive Director on strategy and planning; daily implementation reporting to Sustainable Forestry Administrator

Position Summary

The GRO Wood Product Specialist will lead on and direct the activities for Rural Action's wood products work with the Central Appalachian Forestry Alliance (CAFA), funded through the Ford Foundation and the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities. Rural Action is embarking on a new project area designed to increase regional market demand for sustainably harvested and certified wood products. With increased demand, Rural Action will support the development of certified supply, from the landowner to the primary and secondary producer and retailer. As the lead organization for CAFA in Green and Regionally Oriented (GRO) Wood Products across Central Appalachia, in partnership with three other groups, this position will also support communication and strategy development for the project as a whole. This position is currently funded for 1.5 years with the possibility of extension. We are seeking a dynamic candidate, who can offer organization, leadership, and follow through with a sense of urgency and purpose.

Key Qualifications

- Understanding of the wood products market in Ohio specifically and trends in region and the U.S. broadly
- Ability to collaborate with and organize key staff across several states and organizations
- Ability to think and plan strategically
- Ability to communicate goals, current work, and the organization's needs to the community, local/regional/federal partners, and to prospective partners or funders
- A strong desire to bring people together to problem solve and achieve results
- Ability to stay on top of market trends and policy changes
- Understanding of research and analysis methods and ability to present data as a narrative
- Knowledge of business development and marketing practices
- Ability to produce publications geared towards various audiences (e.g., landowners, funders, NRP's)

Responsibilities

GRO (75%)

- Gather existing regional market data and scan other marketing models in the US wood products industry;
- Conduct and document demand research in southeast Ohio through regional expos;
- Conduct primary market research by building and tracking relationships with wood products buyers;
- Analyze primary Green Building Council research about their demand for green wood products. Make recommendations for market strategies;
- Build relationships with primary and secondary producers and suppliers/brokers in southeast Ohio to assess their interest and capacity in adding a GRO product line;
- Manage the mapping of existing supply of wood products producers in southeast Ohio and southwest Virginia;
- Participate in the design of a web-based market linking tool by identifying functions important to buyers and sellers and revising the existing site;
- Foster participation of Appalachian Ohio wood manufacturers on the website;
- Lead on producing a strategy document that identifies an approach to link supply and demand in the region based on research, conversations and initial implementation efforts;
- Identify the needs of Ohio wood products businesses for capital and other technical assistance;
- Participate and present at annual learning meetings to distill qualitative and quantitative learning and outcomes, and assess progress over the year.

Biomass (15%)

- Assist CAFA partners in developing a broad analysis of the pros and cons of various woody biomass utilization technologies appropriate to the region;
- Monitor Ohio's policy options related to woody biomass;
- Maintain and deepen Rural Action's close partnership with the Ohio Biofuels Working Group;
- Track woody biomass projects applied for or being built in Ohio;
- Assist with educating members and informing a regional Appalachian biomass strategy.

Other (10%)

- Provide guidance and expertise to Rural Actions Landowner Education program as needed and participate in landowner workshops as requested;
- Represent Rural Action at different regional, state, and national events;
- Work with the Executive Director and forestry team to plan and support the program's overall direction;
- Other duties as assigned.

Job Requirements

- Bachelors Degree or higher in Forestry, Wood Products, Natural Resources, Business, or similar field; or equivalent experience working in the wood products industry (5+ years).
- Ability to travel up to 20% of the time in state and out of state ;
- Ability to work nights or weekends when required;
- Participation in Rural Action meetings as requested;
- Ability to carry 20+ lbs of weight and walk over wooded terrain;

- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including a desire to communicate and share learning.

Desired Experience

- Workshop and event organizing
- Writing grant proposals and reports
- Working in a team setting
- Leadership in and guidance under stressful situations

Please send a cover letter and resume to:

Susi Rankis, Sustainable Forestry Administrator

susi@ruralaction.org or mail to:

PO Box 157, Trimble, Ohio 45782

Deadline: **July 30th 2010.**

Rural Action is an equal opportunity employer.