Position Description: Senior Ecologist

Position Title: Senior Ecologist
Location: Working from home, Brisbane or Gold Coast area preferred with regular field work
Salary: $50.00 - $53.00 per hour + 12% superannuation (above Professional Employees Award)
Hours of Work: 25 hours/week (flexible)
Reports to: Executive Officer
Employment type: Fixed-term part-time until November 2028, with the possibility of extension if our funding is extended
Probation: Three months
Start date: February 2027

Our Organisation

Friends of Parks Queensland Incorporated (FoPQ) is a Queensland not-for-profit organisation supporting community involvement in the conservation and management of Queensland's protected areas. Our mission is to build, connect and support resilient communities engaged in on-ground conservation, research and education activities that enhance protected areas across Queensland.

We work alongside local Friends of Parks groups (member groups), volunteers, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships (QPWS&P), government, community organisations and other conservation partners to strengthen community-led conservation. As a small and growing organisation, FoPQ is focused on developing sustainable systems, supporting its member groups and delivering meaningful conservation outcomes across Queensland.

Purpose of the Position

The Senior Ecologist provides science-based technical leadership for Friends of Parks Queensland, helping member groups manage protected areas in ways that are consistent with best practice methodology and QPWS&P strategic and operational plans.

Working under the direction of the Executive Officer, the position leads FoPQ's ecological projects, supports member groups with on-ground management planning, and trains volunteers in survey, restoration and monitoring techniques.

The position exercises professional judgement on technical matters, and works closely with the Operations Manager on project budgets, reporting and logistics.

This position ensures that the work of FoPQ and its member groups delivers measurable conservation outcomes for Queensland's protected areas and threatened species.

Scope of Authority

The Senior Ecologist works under the direction of the Executive Officer and exercises professional judgement on technical and ecological matters within approved project plans, budgets and policies.

Staff may approve expenditure of up to $250 within approved budgets; amounts above this require Executive Officer approval. Matters affecting cultural heritage, work health and safety, land manager approvals or project scope are referred to the Executive Officer.

The Senior Ecologist is expected to plan and deliver technical work independently, and to keep the Executive Officer informed of project progress, risks and opportunities.

Key Responsibilities and Duties

1. Technical Advice and Planning

- Provide science-based advice to member groups on the ecological values and management of protected areas, consistent with QPWS&P strategic and operational plans.
- Help member groups prepare and implement weed management, habitat restoration and citizen science plans that meet the expectations of Traditional Owners, land managers and the community.
- Prepare ecological reports, management plans, and ecology-based grant applications.
- Provide technical advice to member groups for grant applications or project planning.

2. Project Delivery

- Lead the delivery of FoPQ's ecological projects within approved budgets and timelines.
- Design and lead flora and fauna surveys and monitoring programs.
- Provide technical content for project milestone reports, working with the Operations Manager on grant reporting.

3. Data Management and Citizen Science

- Collect species data and ensure it is recorded accurately in the relevant databases, including permit data for reporting to WildNet.
- Apply for, maintain, and manage FoPQ's research permits from the Queensland Government and animal ethics approvals for activities including camera trapping, spotlighting, bioacoustics recording, and nest box installation and maintenance.
- Support citizen science programs, including survey design, data quality and volunteer training.

4. Volunteer Training and Engagement

- Mentor and train volunteers in ecological restoration, surveys, and monitoring techniques.
- Deliver presentations and field sessions at FoPQ events, workshops and forums.
- Provide stories, photographs, videos, and technical information to the Operations Manager for FoPQ's communications.

5. Partnerships

- Work with QPWS&P rangers, Traditional Owners, researchers and other partners on ecological programs.
- Provide technical input to the Executive Officer for stakeholder briefings and funding proposals.

Essential Selection Criteria

1. A tertiary qualification in environmental science, ecology, or a related field.
2. At least two years' postgraduate experience in ecological restoration, threatened species management or environmental consulting.
3. Strong plant identification skills relevant to Queensland (particularly South East Queensland), and experience undertaking flora and fauna surveys.
4. Experience developing and implementing restoration management plans.
5. Experience preparing successful grant applications and project reports.
6. GIS proficiency and experience managing ecological data.
7. Ability to communicate complex topics to a range of audiences, including mentoring and training volunteers.
8. Experience working with Traditional Owners, land managers and volunteers, and an understanding of cultural heritage obligations.
9. A current, unrestricted Australian driver's licence, and willingness to work flexible hours, including some weekends and occasional overnight field trips.

Desirable Selection Criteria

1. Experience working in a member-based not-for-profit organisation.
2. Experience in threatened species recovery or fire management planning.
3. Experience obtaining and managing scientific research permits and animal ethics approvals in Queensland.
4. Familiarity with citizen science and the ability to design citizen science programs.
5. Working knowledge of the Queensland Government's Values-Based Management Framework.
6. Four-wheel-drive experience.

Personal Attributes

1. Emotionally intelligent and resilient under pressure, demonstrating empathy, self-awareness and sound interpersonal skills with the ability to work in a small team.
2. Evidence-driven, with sound scientific judgement and attention to detail.
3. Collaborative and approachable, with the ability to build trust with local communities, volunteers, rangers, and Traditional Owners.
4. Patient and encouraging when sharing technical knowledge with people of all backgrounds.
5. Self-motivated and organised, with the ability to manage field and office work.
6. Passionate about conservation, community participation and protecting Queensland's natural and cultural heritage.

Eligibility

Applicants must be:

- An Australian citizen; or
- An Australian permanent resident; or
- A person holding a valid visa that provides unrestricted working rights in Australia.

Why Work with FoPQ?

- An opportunity to contribute to practical conservation outcomes and the protection of Queensland's natural environment through meaningful work, in close partnership with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service rangers and community members.
- Become part of a purpose-driven workplace with a passionate, collaborative team working to strengthen community-led conservation across Queensland.
- Opportunities to shape the ecological support Friends of Parks Queensland provides to local communities, and build community capacity for conservation through enhancing ecological literacy of volunteers.
- Working closely with the Executive Officer, you will have opportunities to expand your knowledge, build experience and develop professionally.
- A supportive approach to work-life balance, with flexibility where operational requirements allow.
- A mix of home-based and field work, including in some of Queensland's most stunning landscapes.
- Connection to a values-based conservation community, working alongside volunteers, community groups, government agencies, and conservation partners.

Location

Work from home, based near Brisbane or the Gold Coast, with regular field work across South East Queensland, including occasional overnight trips, and access to shared office space in either city.

Compliance Requirements

The successful applicant may need to obtain a Queensland Blue Card (Working with Children Check) and/or a National Police Check.

To Apply

Please submit:

- A current CV with the details of two referees
- A cover letter of no more than two pages addressing the selection criteria

to admin@friendsofparksqld.org or through the online recruitment platform.
Deadline: 5pm AEST Monday the 14th of December 2026.

If you have any questions or would like more information on the role, please email Jessica: jessica@friendsofparksqld.org.

Friends of Parks Queensland is an equal opportunity employer. We particularly encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply. Applicants requiring adjustments to participate in the recruitment process are encouraged to contact us: admin@friendsofparksqld.org.