SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION
JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Grazing or Rangeland Management Specialist
Department:	Agricultural Conservation Team
Location:	Sand County Foundation—U.S. Remote (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, or Kansas)
FLSA Status:	Exempt (Salary) for Full-Time
Employment Status:	Regular, Full-Time
Posting Date:	October 2, 2026 (*Updated November 9, 2026)*

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Sand County Foundation (SCF) is a national nonprofit working at the intersection of agricultural and environmental improvement. We research and demonstrate conservation strategies that make economic sense for landowners. Our Leopold Conservation Award program recognizes and promotes the stories of conservation-minded farmers and ranchers to inspire other landowners to consider conservation opportunities on their land. Nearly 60 years ago, SCF was built on the core ideas encouraged by Aldo Leopold, America's foremost conservation thinker. Leopold inspired private landowners to adopt what he called a land ethic—a personal responsibility to treat land, water, and wildlife with respect. Today, as most of the land in the contiguous 48 states is managed by farmers, ranchers and forestland owners, SCF is inspiring them to ethically manage the natural resources in their care.

POSITION SUMMARY

SCF is proud to be part of a landmark conservation effort to promote and accelerate regenerative grazing management, habitat restoration, and conservation of wildlife and water on working ranchlands across the U.S. The person hired for this rewarding new position will provide technical assistance to guide ranchers through conservation options and financial assistance. Although our regenerative grassland initiative is driving this recruitment, we manage a diverse project portfolio supported by both private and public grants, ensuring an energizing and dynamic work experience beyond completion.

The successful candidate will lead the development and implementation of regenerative grazing management strategies to enhance grassland resilience, soil health, and rancher profitability. A key emphasis of this position includes recruiting ranchers interested in integrating rotational grazing, brush clearing, virtual fencing, native species plantings, and other conservation practices to support regenerative land management. The specialist will have the opportunity to guide the direction of SCF's future rangeland research while prioritizing relationship building with regional watershed coordinators, conservation partners, federal and local agencies, and non-governmental partners. They will report to the Vice President of Agricultural Research & Conservation, and will interact with all SCF personnel, including outside partners, board members, and project funders.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Design, implement, and monitor sustainable grazing and rangeland management plans.
2. Provide technical assistance to cattle ranchers in Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota to accelerate regenerative grazing practices that can support grasslands and profitability.
3. Recruit landowners to optimize forage utilization and transition traditional operations toward regenerative grazing practices.
4. Create customized, site-specific grazing rotations (e.g., adaptive multi-paddock, strip grazing, or holistic management) based on seasonal forage availability and livestock nutritional needs.
5. Conduct field assessments to monitor pasture and range health, including plant diversity, soil compaction, residual biomass, and invasive species encroachment.
6. Provide expert consultation to landowners on fencing infrastructure, watering systems, and forage species.

7. Utilize partner GIS software to track land enrollment, calculate carrying capacities, and quantify optimal stocking rates.
8. Ensure grazing plans align with local, state, and federal conservation standards (e.g., NRCS guidelines) and assist in applying for environmental grants or cost-share programs.
9. Lead workshops and field days to demonstrate the benefits of managed grazing to the wider agricultural community.
10. Discuss the implications of project results with farmers/ranchers, agricultural advisors, private partners, and governmental agencies (local, state, and federal).
11. Provide input and direction on the development of innovative projects and funding proposals to scale-up conservation management of soil, water, and wildlife habitat on private lands.
12. Maintain effective communication with all cooperating partners to meet deadlines and reporting requirements.
13. Uphold commitment to SCF principles, mission, and objectives.
14. Complete other duties and tasks as assigned.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

1. Bachelor's Degree in Agronomy, Animal Science, Range Management, or related agricultural field.
2. Direct experience (5+ years) in livestock production, pasture management, grassland restoration, grazing planning, or similar rangeland conservation planning.
3. Experience navigating local, state, and federal (i.e., Farm Bill) conservation programs and implementing conservation practice standards.
4. Thorough knowledge of and applied experience in agriculture and conservation, including forage identification, applied field sampling, and data collection techniques.
5. Capable of carrying equipment and navigating traverse uneven terrain in various weather conditions.
6. Proficient oral and written communication skills; able to effectively disseminate project goals and outcomes with a variety of stakeholders and audiences.
7. Demonstrated experience and comfort communicating one-on-one with farmers, ranchers, and/or foresters.
8. Passion for achieving measurable land, air, and water outcomes, with the ability to plan and achieve goals, think analytically, and solve problems.
9. Devoted team-player and ability to work in a collaborative environment, cooperating on projects to produce high-quality, timely deliverables.
10. Independent and driven scientist, exemplified by attention to detail, a high level of integrity, and constant perseverance.
11. Enthusiasm and passion for the mission, goals, and core values of SCF.
12. Willingness to travel to project sites and meetings, with approximately 20-25% overnight travel (may vary based on office location). Valid driver's license required.
13. Candidates must be authorized to work lawfully in the U.S.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

1. Advanced Degree in Agronomy, Animal Science, Range Management, or related agricultural field.
2. Previous employment providing technical assistance with a state or federal conservation agency.
3. Technical Service Provider, Certified Grazing Planner or Range Management Consultant, or similar accreditation.
4. Proven ability to recognize and develop innovations that advance conservation and agronomic outcomes.
5. Skilled project manager, with 3+ years leading projects and managing direct staff reports.
6. Experience conducting soil health and carbon sequestration monitoring, evaluating environmental markets, or quantifying conservation cost-effectiveness.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

SCF is an equal opportunity employer committed to being a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. We are committed to creating a workplace where people from all social identities and backgrounds feel welcome and can thrive. We believe that rich diversity makes us more innovative, competitive, and creative, which helps us better serve our sponsors, collaborators, and communities.

COMPENSATION

SCF offers competitive compensation commensurate with experience and independently verified market comparables, and provides a generous benefits package. Since we expect to receive interest from individuals with varying expertise, the anticipated salary for this position will range between $65,000 and $85,000, based on the candidate's qualifications.

APPLICATION DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, and the position(s) will remain open until filled. Submit a cover letter, resume or curriculum vitae, and contact information for three professional references to apply@sandcountyfoundation.org.

With this opportunity is the potential for growth; we encourage candidates to incorporate into their cover letter a statement explaining how their innovative ideas, personal strengths, and unique skillsets could be integrated into SCF's efforts to complement our mission and program goals. The cover letter is also an opportunity to summarize how past education or work experience fits within the stated required and preferred qualifications.

For specific questions regarding the position, please email Heidi Peterson, Ph.D., Vice President Agricultural Research & Conservation at hpeterson@sandcountyfoundation.org.