

**Land Steward
Shield Ranch Camp Wood
Job Announcement**

The Opportunity

Shield Ranch Camp Wood is a 7,400-acre property located in southwest Real County near the town of Camp Wood, Texas. The Shield-Ayres family have been the stewards of this land since 1947 when it was purchased by Fred and Vera Shield. The Ranch is currently owned by their grandchildren Robert A. Ayres and Vera Ayres Bowen. In recent years, conservation and wildlife management have been the primary focus and activities on the property. Shield Ranch Camp Wood is home to several rare and endangered plant and animal species. In 2012 and 2019, the owners placed conservation easements on a portion of the Ranch as part of conservation mitigation banks for the black-capped vireo and golden-cheeked warbler. It is anticipated that in the future, other areas of the Ranch will be dedicated to the protection and management of habitat for these species. The property has a wildlife management tax valuation.

The Land Steward will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the property and be part of the Shield Land Stewardship Group, LLC team focused on conservation, restoration, wildlife management, and research initiatives.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Infrastructure Maintenance and Repair
 - Maintain roads (routine maintenance of roads and creek crossings, keeping roads clear of brush)
 - Maintain and repair ranch water systems for residential use and wildlife (entirely spring fed)
 - Maintenance and repair of ranch vehicles (4-wheel drive truck and ATVs)
 - Maintain and repair large and small equipment (tractor, mowers, etc.)
 - Oversee contract work (fence, road, brush control, repairs and renovations to structures)
 - Maintenance and repairs of all houses, barns, and outbuildings
 - Ranch House, Guest House, Hunter's Camp, Land Steward House
 - Mowing and edging (including for fire readiness)
 - Arrange for cleaning ahead of visits by family, staff, guests, lease hunters
 - Monitor propane levels and order when needed
 - Cut and stack firewood
 - Prepare for visits (ensure water tank is full, turn on water heater, appliances, etc.)
 - Close up after visits (remove trash, turn off water heater and appliances, etc.)
 - Winterization of all systems
 - Maintain fences in collaboration with neighboring landowners to ensure livestock are excluded from ranch (repair small stretches of fence, repair water gaps)

- Wildlife and Habitat Management
 - Assist with management of hunting operations
 - Interface with lease hunters, TPWD biologist and game warden
 - Conduct deer density and browse surveys, assist with determining harvest recommendations, maintain harvest data and prepare MLDP reports
 - Interface with and assist owners, staff, and guest hunters
 - Maintain hunters camp house
 - Conduct control of feral hogs (shooting and trapping) and exotic ungulates
 - Conduct cowbird control (to improve nesting success of endangered songbirds)
 - Assist with black-capped vireo nest monitoring
 - Conduct brush control including mechanical, chemical, and assisting with prescribed burning (red card certification desired)
 - Conduct control of invasive plant species (chemical applicator license desired)
 - Interact with and assist conservation professionals working on the Ranch (flora and fauna surveys, wildlife census, research, etc.)
 - Data collection and monitoring
 - Oversight of livestock lessee (if any)
 - Manage ponds for fishing, swimming, and conservation values

- Property Management
 - Manage access to ranch by contractors, utility crews, researchers, guests
 - Monitor property and respond to incidences of trespass
 - Maintain good relations with adjoining and area property owners
 - Fire readiness (maintain sprayer rig in good working condition; mowing, shredding, tree trimming to protect improvements, keep water reservoirs full)

- Supervisory
 - Oversee contractors
 - Supervise college intern
 - Supervise temporary labor

- Administration
 - Participate in development of annual budget
 - Manage expenses within parameters of ranch budget
 - Maintain journal with thorough and accurate records (rainfall, documentation of management activities, etc.)

Qualifications

- Education
 - High School diploma
 - College degree, or some post-secondary education or job-related training preferred
- 10-years of experience with ranching operations and land stewardship preferred
- Interest in and commitment to Shield Ranch conservation objectives
- Passion and experience supporting wildlife and conservation management practices (game and non-game species)
- Experience managing a lease hunting operation
- Experience with operation, maintenance and repair of ranch vehicles, ATVs, trailers, sprayers, chain saws, lawn mowers and other small equipment
- Proficient at basic carpentry, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and welding
- Personable and able to relate well with owners, other employees, hunters, neighbors, conservation professionals, researchers, guests, etc.
- Desire to live and work in a remote, rural environment (must live on ranch)
- Highly motivated and a self-starter
- Displays honesty and integrity
- Direct and open communication style
- Sound judgment and pragmatic approach to decision-making
- Prudence in fiscal matters
- Competent in the use of Outlook, Microsoft Word, Excel, and GPS unit
- Attentiveness to matters of safety, risk, and liability
- Sensitivity to security of ranch property
- Physical ability to lift 80-lbs
- Valid Texas driver's license
- Must be able to occasionally work nights and weekends when required
- Finalists must consent to criminal background and driving record checks

Compensation and Benefits

- Salary commensurate with experience and education
- Position is full time and includes health insurance, retirement plan and paid time off
- Worker's Compensation insurance
- Housing (3-bedroom, 2-bath) and utilities provided (water, electricity, propane, internet)
- Business cell phone allowance

How to Apply

Please submit your resume along with a cover letter via email to info@shieldranch.com.
Deadline for application is November 29, 2021. Finalists must provide three references upon request and are subject to a criminal background check.