Trees for Life secures support from the National Lottery

Monday 13 March, 2017

Scottish nature charity Trees for Life has won £376,800 of highly sought after funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) 'Skills for the Future' programme. The funding will enable Trees for Life to train 15 people over a three-year period in wild forest restoration skills.

Steve Micklewright, CEO of Trees for Life, said: "There is a shortage of people who are able to manage estates to bring back natural forests and wildlife to the Highlands. This funding will help us train people in these skills, bringing new employment opportunities to local people and to fill the skills gap."

Lucy Casot, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: "We know that our Skills for the Future programme is driving successful and lasting change. It's providing a much-needed pool of talented people who will be the future guardians of the heritage sector, ensuring that it continues to flourish. By pairing trainees with experts, they gain access to specialist knowledge plus practical, paid, on-the-job experience. It's simple yet highly effective, but requires funding which we are delighted to provide."

Trees for Life will recruit five trainees each year for three years, starting in 2018. Over the course of a year, the trainees will have the opportunity to learn and develop the essential skills needed to save the Caledonian Forest – a type of woodland found only in the Highlands of Scotland. They will receive practical training in specialist tree propagation, deer management for nature conservation, native forest management techniques, wildlife monitoring and community engagement.

Trainees will also learn how to interpret landscapes through innovative sources of information such as Gaelic place names, which often describe which trees and other wildlife once thrived in an area.

Steve Micklewright said: "We will be looking in particular for a broad range of trainees – especially young people from the Highlands, women, and people seeking a career change – to increase the diversity of people working in Highland estate management."

The training will be based at Trees for Life's flagship Dundreggan Conservation Estate and will be accredited by the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Ends

Notes to editors

First launched in July 2009, *Skills for the Future* is an HLF grants programme supporting organisations across the UK to develop vocational learning programmes. HLF has awarded grants totalling £47m under this programme, enabling high-quality work-based training, the development of new heritage career pathways and qualifications, and capacity building work.

About Trees for Life

Trees for Life is an award-winning charity working to restore the native Caledonian Forest and its unique wildlife to the spectacular Highlands of Scotland, including to its 10,000-acre Dundreggan Conservation Estate.

The charity's work is about people as much as places. Much of this is carried out by volunteers and is funded by its members, and by charitable trusts, corporate supporters and other donors.

The charity's rewilding activity also includes working for the return of rare woodland wildlife and plants, and carrying out scientific research and education programmes. See www.treesforlife.org.uk

About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk. Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #HLFsupported. For more information, please contact Katie Owen, HLF Press Office, on tel: 020 7591 6036/07973 613820

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