



Centennial Valley Association
Dell, MT 59724

PO Box 240077

715-681-0795

Range Rider Job Announcement

Compensation: \$2,250/month plus housing, vehicle use, field equipment, horse pasture, hay, and farrier costs.

Time period: May 15th - October 31st (1 position) and August 1st – October 31st (possible 2nd position, dependent on funding availability). Start date is flexible for both positions, but applicant must be able to commit to working through October.

Location: Centennial Valley, Montana. Nearest towns with amenities: Lima, MT, and West Yellowstone, MT. The Centennial Valley is an extremely remote, high altitude valley, with the nearest grocery store about two hours away. Access to work site requires about 1 hour of travel (~30 miles) on marginal dirt roads.

Job description: The Centennial Valley Association (CVA) has available positions for dedicated individuals to join our Range Rider/Wildlife Team for the 2023 season. The CVA is a locally driven, landowner-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve traditional ranching as a way of life in the Centennial Valley, and to maintain quality open space, wildlife habitat, water quality, and wildlife migration corridors as they exist today for future generations. The CVA is known for being the main disseminator of information in the Valley and uniting local ranchers, community members, agencies, NGOs, and other groups to collaborate on local conservation issues.

Range Riders report directly to the CVA's Wildlife Program Coordinator and will be responsible for closely monitoring multiple cattle herds, primarily on horseback, with the intent of minimizing livestock stress and losses due to depredation, as well as tracking wildlife across the Centennial Valley. Range Riders will work as a Team to accomplish these primary goals:

- Documenting key wildlife and their movements in the Valley, especially grizzly bears and wolves.
- Minimizing wildlife-livestock conflict, especially depredation.
- Reducing the number of unconfirmed cattle deaths.
- Removing cattle carcasses when and where appropriate.
- Effectively communicating information about wildlife and the wildlife program to the community.
- Maintaining equipment and practicing responsible animal-husbandry.

Job responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Riding on horseback through cattle herds and adjacent areas 4-5 days a week, often in remote and rugged areas with recent grizzly bear and wolf activity.
- Reducing predator-livestock conflict by increasing human presence across the landscape.
- Monitoring and reporting on cattle health, infrastructure (i.e. fences, water, salt), and other observations of concern (i.e. theft, predators, etc.).
- Finding and reporting carcasses of domestic and wild animals around cattle. Riders will never be required to approach a carcass area, allowing individual discretion in determining safety of a situation.
- Removing carcasses when appropriate for human or livestock safety, typically with a vehicle.
- Assisting Wildlife Services to locate and investigate carcasses when requested by livestock owner.
- Placing and monitoring game cameras in areas of high predator use, carcass locations, or other areas of interest, checking them periodically, and processing associated data.
- Tracking wildlife in areas used by cattle to determine wildlife presence and how that presence may be affecting cattle. Riders will track wildlife by searching for sign, using game cameras, and visual observation.
- Communicating daily with the Wildlife Program Coordinator, ranchers, landowners, and community members.
- Assisting with data management by filling out data entry forms daily on range riding activities and uploading pictures, GPS points, and GPS tracks to a CVA hard drive weekly.

- Operating and maintaining ATV/UTVs, manual transmission vehicles, and horse trailers.
- Occasionally gathering/moving cattle when asked by participating ranches.

Required Qualifications:

- 5+ years of horseback experience, preferably with cattle and in remote, backcountry locations, or verifiable horsemanship qualifications via references or training experiences, or a combination of the two. Preference will be given to applicants with more years of experience related to this job description.
- Ability to ride long distances on horseback (15+ miles/day) in remote settings (often alone) with large predators and hazardous conditions (i.e. bogs, downed wire, inclement weather, etc.).
- Ability to care for horses and practice responsible animal husbandry.
- Willingness to work long and odd hours (early mornings, nights, weekends, and holidays).
- Willingness to carry bear spray, radio, and SPOT device on horseback (provided by CVA).
- Ability to work independently and as a part of a team in a small organization where your co-workers are possibly your roommates in a bunkhouse setting.
- Self-motivated, flexible, and can remain neutral on whether predators are good or bad.
- Willingness and ability to take direction from the Wildlife Program Coordinator and/or CVA's Chairwoman.
- Willingness to handle cattle in manner that owners prefer, including learning and practicing low-stress methods.
- Verizon cell phone service (this is the only carrier that works in the Centennial Valley).
- Must bring own tack, and any items needed to care for horses (i.e. saddle, halters, etc.).
- Applicants must be 18 years or older.

Desired Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree/working towards a bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management, Agricultural Sciences, or related field, or >3 years applicable job experience in wildlife or agricultural fields, or a combination of both.
- Experience with ranching operations, cattle handling/monitoring, and small, local communities.
- Ability to accurately assess sickness and stressed behavior in cattle.
- Although not required, preference will be given to applicants with 1-3 broke working horses.
- Familiarity with predator behavior and movements, particularly wolves and grizzly bears.
- Experience working in grizzly bear country.
- Experience with GPS units, or the Avenza smartphone application, and Microsoft Office programs.
- Experience operating an ATV/UTV (training course will be provided, and is required by CVA).
- Strong problem-solving skills, and ability to assess risk and take appropriate safety precautions.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Familiarity operating manual transmissions and hauling trailers, especially on rough dirt roads.

Applications will be accepted from February 1st through February 28th, 2023. Please submit a cover letter, resume, and three references (at least one reference must be able to verify your horseback riding experience) to hire@centennialvalleyassociation.org (include "2023 Range Rider" in the subject line) or to:

Centennial Valley Association
 c/o Yvonne Martinell
 PO Box 240077
 Dell, MT 59724

Applications sent via postal services must be postmarked no later than February 28th to be reviewed. Applications sent via email must be submitted by 11:59pm (MST) on February 28th. The selection committee hopes to make final hiring decisions by March 22nd. If there are any additional comments or questions, feel free to contact the Wildlife Program Coordinator, Erika Nunlist, at hire@centennialvalleyassociation.org or (406) 407-2297.