



CLACKAMAS COUNTY

## Soil and Water Conservation District

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### Position Description for Conservation Specialist

#### Position Summary

This Conservation Specialist position is focused primarily on helping to conserve natural resources associated with small farms. Wildlife habitat or urban conservation planning needs may also be addressed by this position.

The Conservation Specialist provides technical assistance and education to individual landowners for the successful development and installation of conservation practices to conserve natural resources. The specialist evaluates natural resources (soil, water, animal, plant, wildlife, and cultural resources) on rural and urban sites and creates conservation plans with specifications for conservation actions, using Geographic Information System software and other software solutions.

The Conservation Specialist must have: strong project management skills; field and data management skills; the ability to work independently and as part of a team; and the ability to clearly communicate with District staff and project partners. The person in this position is a key member of the District's conservation planning team. The Conservation Specialist is expected to provide superior customer service and to behave in a professional manner.

Work is accomplished independently from, but may be coordinated with, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and using NRCS resources, technical standards, and specifications where appropriate.

#### Job Description

This position works both in the field and in the District office to:

- Develop plans to address natural resource needs such as managing water, preventing erosion, controlling sediment loss, improving habitat, improving pasture, managing manure, controlling invasive weeds, managing stormwater, and reducing the use of pesticides and fertilizers.
- Conduct site visits with landowners, observing and recording site conditions, and capturing the concerns expressed by these customers.
- Maintain a positive working relationship with partners, customers, coworkers, Board members, and other officials by being responsive and respectful.

- Provide technical information and support to local conservation efforts by teaching workshops, meeting with community groups and organizations, and presenting information to citizens.
- The Conservation Specialist may, from time to time, help train and/or supervise technicians, volunteers, interns, or contractors as needed or assigned.
- Move a 40-pound box once every three minutes for up to 15 minutes daily.

Field work will include working in and around such locations as rivers, streams and ponds; properties with dense vegetation or woodlands; and other areas with steep, slippery, muddy, rocky, or other hazardous terrain. The ability to navigate rough terrain and to work and drive in a variety of weather conditions is essential.

Work will include significant time working at a desk, using a computer, standing at a table, or using a drafting table.

This position may require work outdoors related to workshops, tours, farmers markets, feed stores, field days, and other District-sponsored programs and events. These events may occur during inclement weather.

The Conservation Specialist will be required to travel to conferences, workshops, training sessions, and attend daytime and evening meetings that may be away from the office. Travel may occur outside the normal workday; these events may require overnight stays and may be as long as one week.

The specialist shall perform all duties in a prudent and sensible manner, following established protocols that ensure safety.

## **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

1. Utilize the NRCS nine-step planning process (or the District's equivalent process) and Field Office Technical Guide standards when developing conservation plans for full resource management systems.
2. Maintain working knowledge of conservation practices applicable to farms and rural properties for the conservation on natural resources.
3. Demonstrate the ability to install, or direct the installation of: off-channel watering facilities; heavy use areas; livestock exclusion fencing; manure management facilities; cover crops; wildlife enhancements such as hedgerows, trees, and shrubs; and similar practices.
4. Assist landowners in selecting conservation practices that comply with land use/zoning restrictions on land and water use for specific parcels.
5. Participate in meetings with District staff, Board Directors, and other partnering agency staff to coordinate work and prioritize where technical assistance will be provided.
6. Partner with other agencies/organizations to implement the District's conservation objectives and strategies, and communicate with federal, state,

and local agency personnel involved in similar work to coordinate work and avoid duplication.

7. Work in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, providing service without discrimination according to District and USDA policies.
8. Participate in meetings with landowners or operators and agencies with jurisdiction over proposed activities to provide information and assist in resolving issues.
9. Assist in the development of annual reports, fact sheets, newsletters, brochures, fliers, guidebooks, podcasts and videos, etc. that promote and explain the District's conservation objectives and strategies.
10. Act as the District liaison or representative at meetings as directed by the District's Manager or his/her designee.
11. Possess strong communication, writing, and interpersonal skills.
12. Demonstrate the ability to work independently, with flexibility and adaptability to provide technical leadership and responsibilities across a variety of land uses. Education or experience in natural resources outreach that includes working one-on-one, in group settings and/or public speaking is beneficial.
13. Use a personal computer for information entry and retrieval, correspondence, development of data spreadsheets, graphs, and maps, and conservation practice design is required. Proficient with Microsoft Excel, Word, and PowerPoint. Working knowledge of ArcView and/or ArcGIS, Microsoft Access and Outlook is helpful.
14. Work effectively with people from other cultures.
15. Possess the ability to work within a team environment.

## **Minimum qualifications**

- Bachelor's Degree in an agricultural or natural resources-based field of study AND two years of directly related conservation planning experience; OR,
- Five years of directly related conservation planning experience; OR,
- Any equivalent combination of experience, training and/or education.
- Proficiency using personal computer applications and programs is a must.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills are required.
- Sufficient mobility and ability, with or without reasonable accommodations, to perform the physical functions of the job, in the office or in the field (see "Job Conditions" below).
- The ability to operate a motor vehicle during daylight hours, after dark, and during inclement weather. In order to carry out these assigned duties, a valid driver's license is required.

## **Job Conditions**

This position works in the field and in the District office, and will include significant time working at a desk; using a computer; standing at a table; and using office equipment. Work will often occur outdoors related to site visits, workshops, and other District programs and events. These events may occur during inclement weather. The Conservation Specialist must be able to bend and lift at least 40 pounds.

This position requires some travel to conferences, workshops, and events, as well as daytime and evening meetings outside the office.

## **General Information**

The Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District ("District") is a special district located in Oregon City, Oregon. The District is a local government entity, governed by an elected board of directors and supported through real property taxes, grants, and contract services. District employees provide technical assistance and outreach to residents of Clackamas County to help them appropriately and responsibly use our renewable natural resources, including soil and water.

This position has been identified as a safety/security sensitive position. Therefore, the District requires satisfactory results for the following: degree verification, and investigation of criminal background, employment history, and driving record.

## **Compensation**

This full-time, non-exempt position is classified by the District as a Conservation Specialist. The pay range is \$24.25 to \$32.75/hour depending upon qualifications.

## **Benefits**

The District offers an excellent benefit package including: competitive health and dental insurance plans; employee life insurance; participation in an employer-funded tax-deferred savings plan; and paid vacation and 10 holiday days a year. More information on benefits can be obtained at the District Office. New employees are in an introductory period for their first six months of employment.

## **Application Deadline**

Application and associated materials must be received by the District by the close of business on June 19, 2015 at 4:30 pm.

## **How to Apply**

Please submit an application using the District's employment application form along with a cover letter and resume to [lkilders@conservationdistrict.org](mailto:lkilders@conservationdistrict.org) or mail to 221 Molalla Avenue, Suite 102, Oregon City, OR 97045.

The employee in this position is an employee of the Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District, a special district of the State of Oregon. The employee is not an employee of the State of Oregon or of Clackamas County.

If an offer of employment is made, it will be contingent upon passing the criminal background investigation, having an acceptable driving history, and acceptance of the policies and procedures contained in the District's employee handbook.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the District. The District is an equal opportunity employer.

## **Disclaimer**

The District retains the right to modify compensation, benefits, and job duties for this position at any time.

## **Adopted**

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General Manager

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Date

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Personnel Committee Chair

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Date