



UPPER WILLAMETTE

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Conservation Technician

Reports to: District Manager

Employment Status: At Will Employee

Salary Grade: Conservation Technician \$ 45,000 - \$66,874

Starting Salary: Depending on Experience

Work Location: District Office in Eugene, Oregon

Eligible for Overtime Pay: No, this is an exempt position. However, per District policy, overtime is eligible for compensatory time if pre-approved.

FTE: 1.0

General Position Summary

The Conservation Technician conducts conservation planning, project development, design, and implementation on a voluntary basis with private agricultural and timber landowners across the Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District boundaries. The position provides natural resource technical assistance and outreach to District residents as well as on-site assistance on a broad range of conservation practices, methods, and procedures applicable to a variety of conditions to reduce potential resource loss due to soil erosion and water pollution. The technician builds and maintains working relationships with local, state, and federal agencies/organizations to assist landowners with program enrollment support and participates in meetings, tours, and workshops.

Essential Functions:

Technical Assistance and Outreach (40%)

- Provide technical assistance to private Agricultural/Timber landowners focusing on soil and water conservation practices.
- Work with Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Strategic Implementation Area team to implement the Agricultural Water Quality Plan. Respond to landowner's requests for technical assistance to comply with the ODA Ag Water Quality rules.
- Assist with the ODA Scope of Work (SOW) and Focus Area tasks to promote the implementation of conservation practices.
- Conduct voluntary individual landowner site visits to assess resource conditions and identify opportunities.
- Build and maintain working relationships with private landowners and managers within the District.
- Recommend conservation practices in accordance with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) standards or SWCD specifications.
- Work with the Senior Conservation Technician and NRCS District Conservationist to assure that outreach and project collaboration occur across a wide swath of the district community prioritizing historically underserved groups.
- Collaborate with conservation partners and agencies to plan and deliver projects and programs.
- Provide technical assistance to constituents of the District through the District's Soil Sampling program; provide summary of analysis results.
- Identify outreach needs and opportunities. Design, plan, facilitate, and coordinate activities, workshops, and events.
- Develop brochures, mailings, handouts, and other promotional materials.
- Analyze soil sample analysis and provide summaries to participants of the District Soil Sampling program.
- Perform outreach and build relationships with a wide range of agricultural and forestry stakeholders in the district, including specific attention to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.

Conservation Planning, Project Design and Management (40%)

- Develop voluntary conservation plans for landowners and land managers by incorporating principles and techniques of USDA NRCS and the District's conservation planning methodology.
- Participate with partners and other stakeholders in larger regional conservation initiatives to facilitate program evaluation and project development.
- Work with the Senior Conservation Technician and NRCS District Conservationist to identify local resource concerns and promote programs to meet landowner objectives.
- Serve as project manager on designated projects. Successfully obtain grants and implement projects.
- Develop and submit grant proposals, solicit and recommend consultants and contractors for project work.
- Prepare reports to fulfill agreements, contracts, and other obligations to various local, state, and federal agencies.
- Perform project monitoring and evaluations.
- Procure necessary tools/equipment for specific project use.

Organizational Support (17%)

- Attend and participate in Staff and Board meetings and other events as designated; provide monthly staff reports and timesheets.
- Support District planning processes as needed, including annual budget input, annual work plan, and District Strategic plan.
- Work as a team member with peers, District staff, and the Conservation Program Manager to represent and forward the District's Vision, Mission, Organizational Values and Strategic Goals; Assist tech team members as needed.
- Support district outreach to historically underrepresented communities in order to assure broad representation and input from a diversity of community stakeholders.
- Represents District at partner meetings, events, conferences.
- Non-discrimination; Deliver and ensure all services are provided without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. Perform all job duties in a manner that consistently demonstrates fairness, cooperation, and respect forward co-workers, office visitors, landowners and all others in the performance of official business.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Professional Development (3%)

- Pursue professional development opportunities on current natural resources issues and maintain proficiency in conservation planning techniques.
- Participate in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Trainings.

Working Conditions and Physical Demands

- This position involves a mix of indoor office, and outdoor work conducting site visits to private properties. Office work includes long periods of computer use sitting at a desk or standing at a table. Outdoor work includes use of a motor vehicle, may require walking long distances across sloped, uneven terrain. Landscapes include but are not limited to agricultural fields, hills, wetlands, near rivers and streams. Sites may have dense vegetation or woodlands and other areas with steep, slippery, muddy, or other hazardous terrain. Appropriate footwear and attire shall be worn for these occasions. Conservation Tech must carry equipment and supplies and be able to lift up to 50 lbs.
- This position requires travel to conferences, meetings, training sessions, and workshops scheduled both during the daytime and evenings outside the office. Travel may occur outside the workday and may require multiple days of overnight travel.
- To perform the duties of this position, the Conservation Technician must serve as an incidental motor vehicle operator. This requires the operation of a motor vehicle on both public and private roads during daylight hours and occasionally after dark, including in inclement weather. A valid driver's license and current insurance are required.

Supervisory Responsibility

- The position is not responsible for any supervisory functions or responsibilities. This position may occasionally be asked to manage outside contractors and orient and/or train new employees.

Minimum Qualifications

- A Bachelor's degree with major course work in natural sciences, natural resource management, agricultural sciences, soils, water quality, or a related discipline is required. A Master's degree in a related discipline is highly desired.
- 2 years of experience working in the natural resource field.
- Knowledge of a wide range of conservation principles, methods, and techniques sufficient to assess, analyze and evaluate resources and recommended practices.
- On-the-ground experience working with landowners and conducting project design and implementation.
- Experience collecting field data, especially soil and water related data, and maintaining field notes
- Knowledge of the roles of SWCD's, Watershed Councils, Conservation organizations, natural resource agencies, and community organizations. An understanding of the unique role of SWCD's is highly desired.
- 2-years of experience in outreach program development and implementation.
- Must have a current Oregon Driver's License, vehicle insurance, and access to a personal vehicle to use for work purposes. A driving record background check will be performed upon a conditional offer of employment.
- Any combination of education and experience that prepares the applicant to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position will be considered.
- A commitment to the principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is a requirement of all District staff.

Job Skills

- Must possess excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Have an understanding ecological functions and conservation concepts.
- Must possess the full suite of Microsoft-based computer skills, experience in GIS and MS access is preferred.
- Understand, interpret and use various ortho photography and soils information. Have a knowledge of local resource concerns, and conservation practices.
- Have a basic understanding of conservation planning, familiarity with USDA Farm Bill programs is a plus.
- Ability to initiate contact and work with diverse individuals and groups. Experience in natural resource outreach that includes public speaking is beneficial.
- Ability to understand English (oral and written) make presentations, maintain emotional control during difficult exchanges and negotiate positive outcomes.
- Ability to listen, to work collaboratively within a "team" framework, to network, and the ability to establish and maintain good working relationships.
- Experience in Grant writing and grant management.
- Ability to work in a highly professional manner while representing the District in public.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- The District's work will only be successful if we are able to truly partner with all facets of the community, engage with respect, authentically listen, and have the courage to share decision making, control and resources with others. The District is committed to continuously evaluating and updating our programs to better serve people and communities of color. In recognition of the need to address unconscious bias, remove cultural barriers in our programs and eliminate disparities in our work, the District's Board of Directors is working toward a vision for racial equity, the need for it, and how the District will hold itself accountable.

- This position supports diversity, equity, and inclusion by incorporating the principles of equity and inclusion in all aspects of the job and by participating in provided, self-directed, or self-initiated diversity, equity, and inclusion trainings.