

## UPPER WILLAMETTE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

3291 W 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. Eugene, OR 97402 • 541.852.6680 • [admin@uwsxcd.org](mailto:admin@uwsxcd.org) • [www.uwsxcd.org](http://www.uwsxcd.org)

### Working Lands Conservation Specialist

**Posted:** January 8, 2024

**Application deadline:** January 29, 2024

**Reports to:** Conservation Programs Manager

**Employment Status:** At Will Employee

**Starting Salary:** 57,468/year starting (or + dependent on experience)

**Work Location:** Hybrid Telework/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.

**Benefits:** Medical, Dental, Vision, Vacation Leave, Sick Leave, and 457B Retirement Plan

**FTE:** 1.0

**Desired start date:** Beginning of March, 2024 (with flexibility)

#### Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

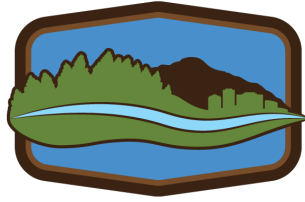
*The District's work will only be successful if we are able to truly partner with all facets of the community, engage with respect, authentically listen, and have the courage to share decision-making, control, and resources with others. The District is committed to continuously evaluating and updating 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.*

#### Position Summary

The Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District (UWSWCD) seeks a Working Lands Conservation Specialist to provide holistic conservation planning support to farmers, ranchers, foresters, landowners, and land managers in the Upper Willamette District service area. This position will be a key role in developing conservation plans for transitions to regenerative land management on farms, ranches, and forests for soil stewardship, water conservation, and promoting on-farm biodiversity and ecosystem function.

The Working Lands Conservation Specialist will work collaboratively with the Working Lands Projects Manager at the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council and the UWSWCD Conservation Program Manager to develop and implement case management systems.



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### Position Overview

The position's primary functions will be to provide land managers, operators, and/or owners with the most current information on regenerative land management practices so that they may voluntarily adopt these practices, resulting in improved natural resource(s) management and agricultural operations.

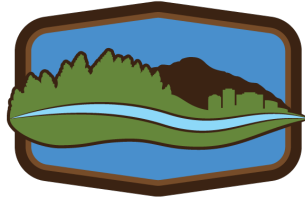
This will be achieved through a variety of job responsibilities: Providing technical assistance to public inquiries, conducting outreach and engagement to applicable demographics, developing conservation plans, managing conservation projects, and educating District residents on local natural resource concerns and best conservation practices. The ideal candidate will have the communication skills to successfully work with a vast demographic of urban, rural, and residential public members.

This position will also support rural landowners and land managers by acting as a liaison, helping to connect residents with regional technical service providers, educators, advocacy organizations, and financial assistance providers. This dynamic and collaborative position is based at the District's office in Eugene and will require travel to farms, ranches, forests, and lands within the Upper Willamette Basin.

The Upper Willamette Stewardship Network's Working Lands Program is an emerging initiative led by the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council in partnership with the UWSWCD. The Program works across watershed boundaries to provide one-on-one guidance to assist farmers, ranchers, and foresters in transitioning to regenerative land management practices. It recognizes and centers relationship building and providing quality technical assistance to support conservation and stewardship on private lands.

### Essential Functions

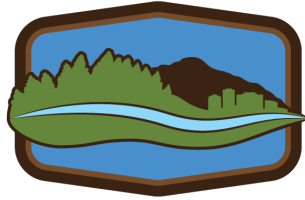
- **Conservation Planning (40%)**
  - Develop voluntary conservation plans for farmers, foresters, and landowners to transition to more regenerative management practices by incorporating principles and techniques informed by recommendations of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the UWSWCD's conservation planning methodology, other federal, state, and local conservation agencies regulations and standards, and Indigenous or other traditional approaches.
  - Work with the Conservation Programs Manager, the Conservation Technician, the Working Lands Program Director, the NRCS District Conservationist, Watershed Councils, tribes, and other local conservation providers to identify local resource concerns and promote grants and programs to meet landowner objectives for soil, water, and biodiversity conservation and enhancement.
  - Develop and submit grant proposals for UWSWCD or partners as needed.



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- Assist landowners in soliciting and determining consultants and contractors for project work by providing options for potential consultants and contractors specific to the work.
- Successfully obtain grants and manage projects for individual landowners that may include involvement with NRCS, the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ,) the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) programs.
- Prepare reports to fulfill grant agreements, contracts, and other UWSWCD obligations to various local, state, and federal agencies.
- Perform project monitoring and site evaluations.
- Procure necessary tools/equipment for specific project use.
- **Landowner Technical Assistance & Case Management (20%)**
  - Provide one-on-one support for landowners and land managers enrolled in the Working Lands Program with goal setting, best-practice awareness, and technical assistance. Conduct voluntary site visits to assess resource conditions and identify opportunities.
  - Build and maintain working relationships with Working Lands Program participants, managing a caseload and meeting with landowners and land managers quarterly to assess progress, reassess goals, and redirect efforts.
  - Facilitate landowner and land manager connections to other agencies, serving as a liaison and making informed referrals to outside partners for additional technical and financial support. Provide guidance and support for landowners and farm operators navigating regional agencies, programs, and various resources.
  - Write Soil Analysis reports and provide soil health information for landowners who bring soil samples to the UWSWCD.
- **Regional Collaboration and Outreach (20%)**
  - Support the Working Lands Program, in collaboration with partners and agricultural landowners, land managers, and others interested in working lands operations, to develop solutions for overcoming landowner barriers to conservation and increasing the accessibility of resources.
  - Assist with planning and facilitating focus groups & surveys of landowners, land managers, and others interested in working lands operations.
  - Attend regional representative meetings to gather input and become educated from a broad range of voices, perspectives, and worldviews, particularly those of the BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and historically marginalized communities.
  - Build relationships with local landowners, land managers, others interested in working lands operations, and agencies to establish positive and trusting relationships and better plan projects that support natural resource conservation and regenerative land management.
  - Work with the Conservation Programs Manager, regional agricultural interested groups, and conservation partners, including NRCS, the Working Lands Program, and



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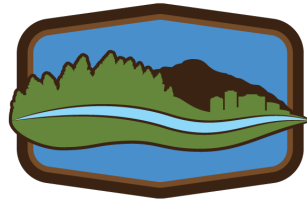
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- other Upper Willamette Stewardship Network members, to plan and deliver projects and programs.
- Collaborate with the Working Lands Projects Manager, UWSWCD staff and board, and partners to identify outreach needs and opportunities and to plan, facilitate, and coordinate activities, workshops, and events.
- Conduct outreach to and create inclusive space for collaborative relationships with agricultural partners of historically underrepresented and underserved communities.
- **Organizational Support (17%)**
  - Attend and participate in Staff and Board meetings.
  - Attend pertinent UWSWCD events that occasionally occur outside typical working hours.
  - Provide monthly staff reports and timesheets.
  - Support UWSWCD planning processes, as needed, by providing input to the: annual budget, annual work plan, and the UWSWCD Strategic Plan.
  - Work as a team member with the Conservation Program Manager and the UWSWCD staff to represent and advance the UWSWCD Vision, Mission, Organizational Values, and Strategic Goals.
  - Conduct oneself in a positive & respectful manner towards the UWSWCD Staff & Board.
  - Support UWSWCD outreach to historically underrepresented communities so that we, as a public service organization, may better represent the diverse interests of the communities we serve.
  - Represent the UWSWCD at partner meetings, events, and 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, marital or family status. Perform all job duties in a manner that consistently demonstrates fairness, cooperation, and respect to fellow staff, board, partners and the populous UWSWCD serves.
- **Professional Development (3%)**
  - Pursue ongoing professional development opportunities on current natural resources issues and maintain proficiency in conservation & restoration planning techniques.
  - Participate in ongoing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Training.

### Working Conditions and Physical Demands

- This position involves a mixture of indoor and outdoor work.
  - Indoor/Office work includes:
    - Long periods of computer use sitting or standing at a desk and table.
  - Outdoor/Field work includes:
    - Walking long distances across sloped, uneven terrain; landscapes may include but are not limited to agricultural fields, hillslopes, wetlands, riparian areas, and stream banks. Sites may have dense vegetation or woodlands and other areas with steep, slippery, muddy, or other hazardous



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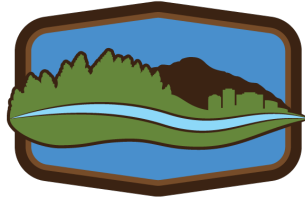
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terrain. Appropriate footwear and attire are required when in the field. Conservation Tech must carry equipment and supplies and be able to lift up to 50 lbs.

- This position requires travel to conferences, meetings, training sessions, and workshops 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 Working Lands Conservation Specialist must serve as an incidental motor vehicle operator. This requires operating a motor vehicle on public and private roads during daylight hours and occasionally after dark, including in inclement weather.
- A valid driver's license, the ability to drive on unpaved roads, and current insurance are required.

### Desired Qualifications

- 2 years of previous experience as a conservation planner developing conservation management plans for private landowners and agricultural operations (conducting inventories, identifying action steps, writing implementation plans.) An ideal candidate will be certified as a conservation planner by the NRCS or be willing to become certified.
- On-the-ground experience working with landowners to execute and manage projects.
- Experience in grant writing and project development.
- Experience using ArcGIS desktop and field apps/devices.
- Experience developing conservation-related plans with a regenerative agriculture focus. (Examples include increasing ecosystem services on farms, climate mitigation and adaptation, focusing and elevating Indigenous knowledge in land restoration, and reducing synthetic inputs and herbicides.)
- Familiarity with regenerative agriculture techniques such as cover cropping, no-till farming, intensive rotational grazing, and agroforestry systems such as silvopasture, riparian forest buffers, and tree intercropping systems.
- Experience working on regenerative or natural resource-related projects as part of a collaborative team.
- Experience working on regenerative or natural resources-related projects with local partners.
- Excellent interpersonal communication skills, sense of diplomacy, and cultural sensitivity.
- 2 years of experience in outreach program development and implementation.
- The ability to marry the needs of local producers with conservation priorities and available resources.
- The best-qualified individuals for this job will have obtained a Bachelor's degree in Agronomy, Agroecology, Soil Science, Horticulture, Agricultural Education, Environmental Science, or another natural resource management degree. (Or otherwise have significant working experience in the above fields).



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- Valid Oregon driver's license, reliable personal transportation (travel reimbursed at State of Oregon rates), and willingness to occasionally work early mornings, evenings, and weekends.
- Demonstrate a commitment to the principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Any combination of education and experience that prepares the applicant to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position will be considered.

### **Veterans Preference**

Under Oregon Law, qualified veterans may be eligible for veterans' preference when applying for UWSWCD positions. If you would like to be considered for veteran's preference, please provide qualifying documents with your application submittal.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**

The Upper Willamette SWCD is an equal opportunity employer, providing services to the public without discrimination against race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

*The UWSWCD strives to create an inclusive environment that welcomes and values the diversity of the people we serve. We foster fairness, equity, and inclusion to create a workplace environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Studies have shown that women and people of color are less likely to apply for jobs unless they meet every single qualification listed. We are most interested in finding the best candidate for the job, and that candidate may be one who comes from a less traditional background. We encourage you to apply for open positions, even if you don't meet every single qualification listed. If you are unsure whether you meet the qualifications of an open position, please feel free to contact us to discuss your application.*

### **To Apply**

Please submit a cover letter and resume in PDF format to [Admin@uwsxcd.org](mailto:Admin@uwsxcd.org) with the subject line "Working Lands Conservation Specialist".

If you prefer to mail your cover letter and resume our contact information is:

UWSWCD  
Attn: Leslie Owens  
3291 W 1<sup>st</sup> Ave  
Eugene, OR 97402

The first review of applications will begin on January 30, 2024. A first round of virtual interviews for qualified candidates will take place during the weeks of February 12<sup>th</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. Our hiring team may request references, or a second round of interviews as needed. We strive for equitable hiring practices, including using the same rating system and interview questions for all candidates, providing interview questions in advance, and considering a wide range of experiences to meet qualifications.