

Job Description - Colonial Soil & Water Conservation District (CSWCD)
Classification: Conservation Specialist I
Functional Title - Agricultural Specialist I

General Statement of Responsibilities:

Responsible for administering and implementing a variety of agricultural and conservation programs and initiatives, which may also include termed grant projects. Some examples are: The Virginia Agricultural Cost Share program (VACS) and other conservation initiatives such as Conservation Planning, Nutrient Management Planning, etc. The Conservation Specialist position is a full-time, salaried employment position, with fringe benefits. This employment position is exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Work is performed under general to minimal supervision.

This employment position is offered for a minimum of two years beginning on or about January 2, 2023.

Essential Functions:

Job responsibilities may include any or all of the following, depending on the incumbent's functional assignment. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of job functions, but a representative sample of the type and level of work that is expected in this position.

- Implement the Virginia Agricultural Cost Share Program and other conservation initiatives:
 - Responsible for identifying agricultural and natural resource conservation concerns throughout the district, by networking with agricultural & community leaders.
 - Responsible for initiating contact with landowners who have conservation needs and recommend appropriate conservation practices to address identified concerns.
 - Responsible for promoting VACS and other programs by attending related meetings, networking with constituents, preparing and distributing press releases and other articles, providing presentations, facilitating various committee meetings, and through other effective methods.
 - Responsible for maintaining accurate files and updating conservation programming databases as appropriate.
 - Responsible for obtaining and maintaining required certifications for District Programming and Implementation.
 - Responsible for meeting reporting deadlines and conducting spot checks for VACS Program compliance.
 - Responsible for meeting VACS contract and other grant deliverables as required.
- Assist with implementation of the District's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (CBPA) Initiatives:
 - Assist with developing conservation plans for agricultural enterprises, as necessary, for CBPA compliance.
 - Assist with identifying agricultural tracts and conducting annual assessments in support of local government CBPA ordinances.

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- Assist with reporting CBPA activities to the District Board of Directors, local governments, and the VA Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), as necessary.

Additional Responsibilities Include:

- Use GIS technology and data management tools for enhancing field assessments, data analyses, and deliverables for district programming.
- Seek out, recommend, and draft applications/proposals for additional grants and other funding to support program opportunities.
- Engage local community leaders and organizations to form new partnerships in order to broaden the district's network of collaborators, and to broaden the scope of services to the communities.
- Serve on various committees to further the CSWCD's interests statewide; develop strategies for communicating and marketing the various programs.
- Serve as or alternate staff liaison to district Agriculture Committee.
- Attend job-related trainings and other opportunities for continuing education.
- Other duties as assigned by the District Manager and/or the Board of Directors.

Entry Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Thorough knowledge of agricultural operations and conservation issues related to agriculture.
- Thorough knowledge of agricultural best management practices.
- General Knowledge of other soil and water resource concerns and conservation practices.
- Ability to utilize standard computer software – word processing, spreadsheets, email, and database programs.
- Ability to utilize computer and GIS software and online sites – required by VACS and other District conservation programs or for maintaining certifications.
- Strong map reading skills.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and schedule time in an efficient manner.
- Ability to maintain effective working relationships with others.
- Ability to interpret technical standards, and program policies and guidelines.

Required Education and Experience:

Any combination of education and experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science, Natural Science, Agriculture, or a related degree, and considerable experience working with soil and water conservation programs, which provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Special Requirements:

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- Applicant must have a valid driver's license with an acceptable driving record and must be willing to provide their own transportation on the job if District vehicles are not available.
- A federal background check will be required. Drug testing will be required.
- Obtain and maintain other appropriate certifications as directed by the District Board.

Physical Demands:

Tasks involve frequent walking over difficult terrain, lifting and carrying moderate weight (25 -50 lbs.), and exposure to adverse weather conditions. Tasks require alertness to avoid potentially hazardous conditions. Responsibilities require regular contact with farmers, contractors, and public officials, District Board members, and the general public, while using judgment and tact to resolve complex issues.