



Position Description Resource Conservationist

General Summary

This is a full-time, at will, non-exempt position serving as a Resource Conservationist for the Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District. The position will serve as a conservation planner and provide technical assistance services for landowners in Columbia County, Oregon. The position will also work with projects in all areas of restoration, with much of the work being habitat and stream improvements.

The Resource Conservationist must have strong project management capabilities including field and data management skills, the ability to work independently and as a part of a team and be able to communicate with project team members.

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District is a tax exempt, governmental agency that operates as a special district of Oregon. The District is run by a board of locally elected directors and receives funding primarily through a permanent tax rate and grant funds. The District staff provides technical assistance and education to property owners regarding soil and water issues on their land. Columbia SWCD is a source of advice, consultation, and planning for the public, on natural resource issues and is not a regulatory agency.

Supervision Received

The Resource Conservationist is under the supervision of the District Manager. Work is accomplished independently with technical guidance available from the resource manuals and specialists. This position acts on behalf of the District Manager and the District Board of Directors, within the authority delegated by the Board and this description and is governed by the policies of the District's Personnel Policy Manual. The District Manager conducts the performance evaluation for this position.

Supervision Given

None

Essential Functions of the Job

- Coordinate and support stewardship activities across Columbia County.
- Act as liaison between landowners and regulatory agencies as requested.
- Engage partners in assessment, interpretation, prioritization and coordination of implementation strategies.
- Provide technical assistance regarding natural resource concerns. Communicate and work directly with landowners and operators through face-to-face contact, telephone, written correspondence or e-mail.
- Interpret and utilize online tools and resources for landowner assistance and project management objectives.

- Develop conservation plans for landowners using best management practices.
- Update internal databases and manage all relevant data including landowner contacts, reporting metrics associated with grant funding, and GIS data.
- Keep up to date on current research, restoration/conservation techniques, and best management practices.
- Conduct field or site surveys as needed.
- Perform all activities associated with project identification and development.
- Identify funding opportunities and apply for grants in furtherance of District's mission.
- Conduct all activities associated with project and grant management.
- Solicit bids from consultants and/or contractors. Implement contracts according to District's contracting policies and procedures. Verify and approve all contracted work.
- Coordinate the work of contractors and others during all phases of project development, implementation, and monitoring.
- Prepare reports for the District Manager and District Board as requested.
- Meet all project reporting requirements.
- Maintain positive, cooperative relationships with co-workers and conducts work responsibilities in a professional manner.

Other Duties and Responsibilities

- Attend trainings and conferences for networking and professional development purposes.
- Participate in staff and Board meetings as requested.
- Conduct/assist with outreach on natural resource issues, water quality, and conservation activities at workshops, seminars, fairs, and conventions.
- Present on various conservation topics to community groups (i.e. associations, clubs, schools etc...) upon request.
- Act as the liaison to watershed councils and attend other meetings as assigned by the District Manager.
- Participate in committees as requested by the District Manager.
- Perform other minor duties as assigned.

Qualifications

This position requires:

- A Bachelor's degree with major course work in natural sciences, natural resource management, agricultural sciences, soils, biology, or a related discipline OR 5 years of relevant job experience OR equivalent combination of education and work experience. (Volunteer experience may substitute for paid work experience.)

- 2 years' experience developing, designing, and implementing on-the-ground habitat restoration projects is required.
- Good oral and written communication skills.
- Experience in collecting field data and conducting field surveys is preferred.
- Must be proficient with Microsoft Excel, Word, and PowerPoint; working knowledge of ArcGIS online or other mapping platforms, Microsoft Access and Outlook.
- Experience with conservation outreach and public speaking is preferred.

Job Conditions

- This position works both in the field and in the office.
- Fieldwork will include working in and around such locations as farms and ranches; rivers, streams and ponds; properties with dense vegetation or woodlands; areas with steep, slippery, muddy, rocky or other hazardous terrain. Appropriate attire shall be worn for these occasions.
- Office work may include working at a desk, using a computer, or standing at a table.
- This position requires occasional travel to conferences, workshops, trainings, and daytime and evening meetings outside the office. Travel for training may be outside the normal workday and may be as long as one week.
- Applicants must have a valid Oregon driver's license. Use of the employee's own vehicle may be necessary (reimbursement based on current state mileage rates).
- The Resource Conservationist shall perform all duties in a prudent and sensible manner, following established protocols that ensure safety.

Benefits

In addition to paid legal holidays, workers compensation, and unemployment insurance, the Columbia SWCD will provide vacation time, sick leave, one personal day of leave, health insurance, dental insurance, vision insurance, short- and long-term disability, life insurance, Aflac accident plan, and a retirement plan.

The Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District is an equal employment opportunity employer. We adhere to a policy of making employment decisions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, political beliefs, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, or any other status protected by law.