

WARREN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

JOB DESCRIPTION

Agriculture Resource Technician

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES: Provide technical and educational services to agricultural producers and landowners in conservation planning, which will improve the quality and quantity of the Commonwealth's surface and groundwater resources, and assist the sustainability of local agriculture. The focus of this work relates to technical assistance, education, procurement of funding, and the creation of workplans to restore and protect surface and groundwater water resources. The Agriculture Resource Technician will work closely with cooperating agencies, and is available to public and private sectors. This position is under supervision of the Conservation District Manager and WCCD Board of Directors.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Primary Responsibilities may include but are not limited to:
1. Encourages the agriculture community to become cooperators with the District and to participate in conservation planning and utilizing Best Management Practices/Conservation Practices.
 2. Works with USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, PA Department of Agriculture, State Conservation Commission, DCNR Bureau of Forestry, Department of Environmental Protection, municipal government, and other resource agencies in the development and implementation of conservation planning and cost-share programs as appropriate.
 3. Carry out the District's responsibilities as defined in the delegated Act 38 Nutrient Management Program.
 4. Reviews Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) for compliance with Act 38 Nutrient Management Act and summarize findings/recommendations to District Board for action.
 5. Encourage the voluntary participation of agriculture operations in the Nutrient Management Program and assist cooperators/plan writers with planning components necessary to achieve Act 38 approval.

6. Assists and trains landowners and other cooperators with collection of manure and soil samples for analysis, and with manure spreader calibrations.
7. Provide information (orally and in writing) to the public regarding the Nutrient/Manure Management Program through workshops, seminars, one-on-one contact, news media etc.
8. Maintain accurate record-keeping, files and documents relating to contracts and delegation agreements to develop timely reports (status reports, quarterly reports, audits, office reviews, compliance issues, etc.) to appropriate agency or official.
9. Administer, promote and implement the ACAP, REAP, and other state funding sources and encourage cooperators to utilize program benefits.
10. Also carry out Manure Management and Ag E&S duties as required per the state delegation agreements.
11. Facilitate the transfer of technical information among local, state, federal resource agencies, landowners, watershed groups, and others regarding conservation plans.
12. Prepare and submit grant proposals to provide funding for conservation planning and implementation projects and best management practices.
13. Makes contacts with individuals as necessary to advise in the development of soil and water conservation measures, plan and coordinate the implementation of a range of technical practices and recommend alternative conservation solutions.
14. Travel to sites and assess properties in order to determine participation in programs offered by the District, including but not limited to: evaluating conservation needs on farms, layout and implementation of conservation practices, performing construction inspections, interpreting soil tests and nutrient needs.
15. Work with municipalities and municipal planning commissions to realize mutually beneficial relationships that may include model ordinances with flexible design criteria to promote agricultural best management practices.
16. Arrange/develop tours, field days, workshops, exhibits, demonstration plots, etc. promoting nutrient management, agriculture conservation, and best management practices.
17. Communicate with and attend meetings/events of the agriculture community (i.e. Farm Bureau, 4-H, clubs, granges) to develop positive working relationships.

18. Become familiar with and educate the agricultural community on various financial resources available for the installation of BMP's including grants, loans, and cost-share programs.
19. Investigate complaints, document findings, carry out compliance resolutions.

B. Education and Instruction:

1. Organize and provide educational programs to the agriculture community, public, school groups, civic organizations or others as appropriate regarding agricultural conservation and planning, water quality/quantity management, non-point source pollution and related topics.
2. Prepare public information releases regarding District activities in agriculture conservation programs through available media.

C. Training and Certification:

1. Attend training and secure/maintain certification under Act 38 Nutrient Management Program.
2. Seek and maintain NRCS engineering and agronomic job approvals as necessary to carry out job duties as described.
3. As communication and writing skills are of utmost importance for this position, any training to enhance these skills is encouraged.
4. Attend training to stay current with advanced technology related to conservation planning, water quality issues and best management practices.
5. Become familiar with the environmental laws and regulations for which the District is responsible.
6. Become familiar with current land use practices, innovative planning techniques and best management practices (BMPs).
7. Attend seminars/training in those areas that will improve the employee's ability to carry out his/her duties (e.g. Agricultural Technical Boot Camps, nutrient management, wetlands delineation, training offered by NRCS, SCC, PDA, DEP, local resource management and protection issues, project design techniques, land use planning, program specific training).

8. Attend sufficient computer training to effectively use the software supplied by the Conservation District and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint, GIS, Rusle2).

OTHER DISTRICT ACTIVITIES:

1. Prepares written monthly activities report and quarterly/annual reports as directed.
2. Serve on District Committees as assigned.
3. Prepare articles for newsletter or annual report as requested.
4. Assist with environmental/conservation education events.
5. Support District goals and objectives at the HRCDA as directed.
6. Attend staff and other meetings as requested and perform other duties as requested by the Board of Directors or District Manager.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

1. Associate's Degree in Agronomy, Ag Sciences, Environmental Sciences, and related fields or equivalent combination of technical training and experience that provides the equivalent knowledge, skills and abilities as determined by the District Manager.
2. Strong interest and/or experience in agriculture operations, conservation planning, site assessments and evaluations, restoration and protection projects, land use planning, and GIS desired.
3. An ability to communicate and educate effectively both verbally and in writing to a wide range of individuals and groups is essential.
4. Ability to establish effective relationships with government, contractors, farmers, landowners, and the general public.
5. Ability to bend, kneel, stoop, climb, negotiate, and traverse difficult terrain, including during inclement weather where wet/slippery terrain may be encountered.
6. Ability to work with minimal supervision.
7. Valid driver's license and own transportation is required.
8. Occasional evening, weekend, and overnight work is required.