

Position Announcement

Conservation Technician

POSITION DESCRIPTION:

The Washtenaw County Conservation District (WCCD) is looking for a Conservation Technician who will provide technical assistance for the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) while ensuring conservation goals are effectively and efficiently achieved. The technician will assist landowners and producers in reducing environmental concerns on the landscape to protect water quality. The Technician will assist with field office operations including establishing goals, developing, and implementing the team-wide plan of operations, determining workload, and the training of others. Finally, the technician will represent the district on county committees and/or task forces as directed by the supervisor including establishing and maintaining a positive working relationship with other federal, state, and local agencies, units of government, and interested groups.

RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to: Conservation Specialist; District Conservationist
Supervises: None
Works with: WCCD Farmer Programs Team; MDARD Staff
External Stakeholders: Producers and Landowners

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

An employee in this position may be called upon to do any or all of the following essential functions. These examples do not include all of the duties which the employee may be expected to perform. To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential function satisfactorily.

1. Technical Assistance & Administration (60%)

- Provide on-farm, one-on-one technical assistance for MAEAP.
- Work with farmer programs team to ensure that grant deliverables are met.
- Provide one-on-one assistance for other local cost share and technical programs geared towards the farming community.
- Develop conservation and/or emergency management plans for producers.
- Assist producers with guidance on implementation of conservation practices.
- Meet weekly with Farmer Programs staff to plan out best approach and service delivery for farmers and find opportunities to make service delivery more efficient.
- Assist with management and use of cost share dollars designed to assist farmers.
- Complete and submit accurate and regular MAEAP reports to MDARD through an online database.
- Complete quarterly MAEAP and other grant reports as required by the Executive Director.

- Assist with setting annual MAEAP and Farm Bill program goals for Washtenaw County with assistance from Farmer Programs staff and partners.

2. Education & Outreach (15%)

- Communicate to all farms coming due for verification within six months of verification expiration. Contact is to be made in person or by phone; farm status and updates to farm contacts should be recorded in the MAEAP database.
- Support Outreach Coordinator (farmer programs) with the planning and execution of the annual MAEAP Field Day.
- Plan and manage the water testing program.
- Assist other farmer programs staff with farmer-focused programming and events.
- Develop relationships with farmers interested in conservation.
- Assist the Conservation Specialist with Farmer Advisory Committee as needed.
- Serve as liaison to Washtenaw County Farm Bureau.

3. Equipment Rental Program (10%)

- Assist the Resource Coordinator with finalizing Equipment rental program process.
- Manage the farm implement rental process with assistance from staff.

4. Training (10%)

- Commit to ongoing professional development through the Employee Development Plan (EDP), meet MAEAP program requirements for level III.
- Participate in WCCD organized training.

5. General WCCD (5%)

- Assist with general WCCD events as needed.
- Submit monthly board report, attend occasional monthly board meetings.
- Assist with WCCD annual and long-term planning as requested.
- Meet with Conservation Specialist for program assistance/support quarterly or as needed.
- Complete an annual review with the Conservation Specialist.

QUALIFICATIONS & ABILITIES:

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and minimum qualifications necessary to perform the essential functions of the position. These requirements may be accommodated for otherwise qualified individuals requiring and requesting such accommodations.

1. Educational background in agriculture and/or environmental sciences.
2. Experience with meeting facilitation and public speaking.
3. Excellent organizational skills with the ability to meet deadlines.
4. Knowledge of conservation/agriculture/environmental issues and practices.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Familiarity with Farm Bill programs.
2. County-wide knowledge.
3. Strong written and verbal communication skills.
4. Excellent computer skills.
5. Farming background.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT:

The physical demands and work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the job. These requirements may be accommodated for otherwise qualified individuals requiring and requesting such accommodations.

1. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to talk, hear, stand, walk; use hands; reach with arms; lift and/or move items of light to heavy weights (up to 50 pounds). The employee is occasionally required to stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl.
2. Semi-regular fieldwork is required, with potential exposure to heat, cold, inclement weather, stinging and biting insects, rash inducing plants, uneven terrain, moving mechanical parts and/or machinery, and loud noises.
3. Ability to work in-person at the office to assist with answering calls and walk-ins from the public as well as capacity to work remotely (strong internet connection, quiet workspace, self-discipline, etc.).
4. Able to communicate clearly, both written and verbal, to fellow co-workers, partners, and producers/landowners.
5. Is able to work collaboratively and reliably in a team but is self-motivated and goal oriented when working individually.
6. Excellent organizational and time management skills.
7. Excellent computer skills are required. Computer workstation will be provided, including a standard PC, on a shared network with Windows-based software.
8. Ability to learn and integrate use of project and time management software (ASANA and Toggl).
9. Able to assist in other WCCD programs and projects when requested.
10. Must maintain a valid driver's license.
11. Willingness to travel regularly for regional partner events, meetings, farm site visits.
12. Must be able to pass a security background check.

SALARY, BENEFITS, WORK HOURS, LOCATION

This position will be based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. This location is in Southeast Michigan where there is a diverse variety of agriculture for the region, including row crops, diversified vegetable production, dairy, nursery, and livestock. Wildlife habitat and forest management are also a large component of the workload in the area. Work time will be generally split between the Washtenaw County Conservation District office (705 N. Zeeb Rd, #201, Ann Arbor 48103), remote (home) office and field work.

This is a full time, grant-funded salary position commensurate with experience and ranges from \$50,000-\$54,000. As a full-time employee, the Conservation Technician is entitled to the Washtenaw County Conservation District's benefits package, which includes: full medical insurance (includes dental, vision, other ancillary benefits) or ability to waive this benefit and take as a taxable cash payment, 13 paid vacation days, 13 paid sick days, 13 paid federal/state holidays, and 2.5 hours of flextime per week. Other benefits as described in the Employee Handbook. This position is currently exempt from Overtime. However, starting January 1, 2025, this position will be classified as non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and applicable state wage and hour laws and will be eligible for overtime pay at a

rate of 1.5 times the employee's regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per workweek.

Typical work hours will be Monday-Friday, 8:00am - 4:30pm. Some evening and weekend work will be required.

ABOUT THE WCCD

The WCCD is a local government agency and has played a significant role in assisting residents and landowners with access to trees, plants, and conservation tools in Washtenaw County since 1948. Our mission is to assist residents with the conservation, management, and wise use of natural resources in Washtenaw County. Since 1951 the WCCD has distributed over 7.1 million trees, shrubs, and native plants for various conservation purposes.

TO APPLY

Please submit a cover letter, resume, two professional references by email to nick@washtenawcd.org by 4:30 p.m. on October 11th, 2024. Please combine all application materials into one PDF file for review and state "Application - Conservation Technician" in the email subject line. Contact Nick Machinski at the above email address with any questions related to the position. To obtain further information about the Washtenaw County Conservation District visit our website at www.washtenawcd.org.

The Washtenaw County Conservation District does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, military service, disability, or other non-merit factor.