



White River Natural Resources Conservation District

28 Farmvu Drive, White River Jct. VT 05001 802-369-3167

Conservation Specialist Position Description

Position Title: Conservation Specialist

Who we are: The mission of the White River Conservation District is to protect and enhance the watersheds of the White, Waits, and Ompompanoosuc Rivers by providing leadership, education and services for implementation of sound land stewardship practices. This is done by working with our 5 member board of local landowners to coordinate available resources for promotion of natural resources conservation through education, conservation programs and technical services. The White River District is home to a variety of farms that we work with to improve manure management and utilization in order to meet crop needs and protect surface and groundwater. We are a non-regulatory subdivision of Vermont state government that functions much like a non-profit, which means that landowner engagement with the District is voluntary and incentive-based.

Job summary: WRNRCD is looking for an experienced and enthusiastic individual to join our team. The ideal candidate will possess technical knowledge and/or work experience in agriculture and natural resources management to provide support to landowners. The bulk of the work will be assisting with the development and maintenance of Nutrient Management Plans (NMPs) to help livestock producers meet the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) and adapt best management practices (BMPs) to their operations. This includes conducting field and farmstead assessments, assisting producers with soil and manure sampling, manure application calibration, use of tools for assessing nutrient management and working with farmers on updating their GoCrop™ accounts. This position is grant funded and is under the general supervision of the WRNRCD Manager. Incumbent will also be working to increase conservation district operational functions, financial sustainability, community engagement and coordination with NRCS and other partners.

Minimum Qualifications: The qualified applicant will have a minimum of an Associate's Degree in a related field or a combination of applicable work experience and education. Ideal candidate will have knowledge of current water quality issues in Vermont, have hands on experience working on farms, be comfortable with agricultural equipment, map making and have at least a basic understanding of nutrient management on dairy farms; will be highly motivated, flexible, able to work independently and as a team player, have excellent communication, organization, administrative, and project management skills; and experience with grants administration and record keeping is preferred.

Wage, Benefits and Work Schedule:

This is a non-salaried position starting at \$16/hr, for 20-25 hours a week. Paid holidays, annual and sick leave. This position is funded through grant sources and is an at-will position. There is a possibility of extending this position to full time for the right applicant.

Duties and Performance Requirements:

- Provide administrative and technical assistance to farms with existing UVM GoCrop™ NMPs. Provide education about nutrient management practices that will improve water quality while ideally improving farm operations, yields etc. – i.e. crop selection, crop/nutrient record-keeping, feed management, and manure management practices
 - Track progress in delivering technical assistance and practice implementation.
 - Disseminate information on Best Management Practices, Required Agricultural Practices, and NRCD, state and federal cost share programs.
 - Development of outreach methods and materials i.e. workshops, field days, publications, newsletters, flyers to inform producers of BMPs, nutrient management strategies and provide a forum for information exchange between producers.
 - Obtain appropriate certifications for nutrient management planning and attend appropriate continuing education offerings.
 - Assist with application and implementation of district grants
 - Collaborate with UVM extension, NRCS and VTDEC staff
 - Perform additional related responsibilities as need arises
 - Work will be approximately 60% office based including 10% of time on general administrative WRNRCD duties - and 40% field based.
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Needed for Success:

- Knowledge of agronomic principles, such as regional practices and procedures related to proper crop selection, crop rotations, feed rations, nutrient management, utilizing manure nutrients and commercial fertilizers, etc;
 - Familiar with the development of Nutrient Management Plans; (training is provided)
 - Strong customer service, interpersonal and public relations skills;
 - Passionate farming and natural resource conservation;
 - Willingness to learn Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software and management programs including Global Positioning Systems (GPS);
 - Familiar with relevant state, and federal programs, laws, standards and specifications; (training is provided)
 - Comfortable with operation of agricultural equipment and machinery;
 - Skilled at organizing, planning and presenting to citizen groups, organizations or committees;
 - Ability to plan and carry out assignments independently, meeting deadlines and managing time effectively;
 - Grant and project management experience including successful applications and timely reporting on deliverables;
 - Working knowledge of watershed issues, non-point source pollution and remediation strategies; (training is provided)
 - Applies critical thinking in problem solving and making decisions;
 - Knowledge of precision agriculture and farm technology is a plus (e.g. variable rate technology, grid soil sampling, GIS mapping systems, tillage, planting, fertilizer application and spraying equipment);
 - Experienced with study design and data tracking, monitoring and analysis a plus.
 - Be proficient in Microsoft programs
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Physical Demands:

The employee frequently is required to sit, stand, and walk. The employee is occasionally required to climb and kneel, crouch or crawl. The employee must be able to occasionally lift 50 pounds.

You will be required to work from home, ideally within the White River District. A laptop will be provided, as well as a monthly stipend to help cover the cost of WiFi, electric, and phone expenses. The position involves computer work that includes long periods sitting, typing and reading from a computer screen.

How to Apply:

Please apply by emailing the District Manager, Marina Welch, at whiterivernrcd@gmail.com. Include a cover letter, resume, and three references. There will be a 90 day probationary period for this position. The application deadline is July 29th.

Conservation Districts offer a unique service and voice to the agricultural conservation field. Please take a minute to look at our website to review our current programs and learn more about the history of the conservation district nationwide and in Vermont. www.whiterivernrcd.org

