

# **Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District**

## **Field Office Assistant**

Reports to: District Manager  
Employment Status: At Will Employee  
FSLA Status: non-exempt

### **General Position Purpose**

This position exists to assist Office Administrator, Conservation Planners, Watershed Coordinator, and Manager in the performance of their duties.

- a. The Field Office Assistant will meet assigned training objectives and assist District staff in the job functions described in the remainder of this job description.

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### **Field Office Assistant Job Description**

The Field Office Assistant is responsible for providing assistance as assigned to District and Natural Resource staff in a variety of ways. Functional areas of responsibility: Clerical - typing, filing, organizing, copying, data input, records management, research, prepping for workshops and other clerical functions; Conservation Technicians/Planners – assist with construction of conservation plans by learning GIS and creating maps, assist with surveys, field inventories, site inspection, data input, field monitoring checks, taking photos at specified GPS photo points, and helping in whatever capacity is necessary to complete tasks identified in the District’s annual work plan; Watershed Coordinator – assist the coordinator administratively in prepping for council meetings, taking minutes during meetings, typing minutes and agenda, dissemination of minutes and agenda prior to meetings, maintain council mailings lists, assist coordinator in carrying out ongoing project tasks such as water quality sampling, surveys, monitoring, and assisting with council sponsored public events.

### **Essential Functions**

1. Clerical
  - a. Using Microsoft Office Suite to type correspondence, reports, spreadsheets, database management.
  - b. Assisting the Office Administrator with a variety of tasks, including bookkeeping, website maintenance, newsletter, and information and outreach.
  - c. Records management including labeling, filing, and document retrieval.
  - d. Making copies, document assembly, preparations for council/board meetings, taking and typing minutes from meetings, assist with preparing handouts for workshops.
  - e. Answering phones, transferring calls, and general customer assistance.
  - f. Assist the Watershed Coordinator with all clerical functions as needed including maintaining a central mailing list database for 4 active watershed councils.
2. Technical
  - a. Assist planners in the development of conservation plans for program participants.
  - b. Assist in surveys, staking, inspections, site visits, photography using GPS photo points.
  - c. Assist planners in field visits, help load/unload/operate ATVs over rough terrain safely.
  - d. Assist with equipment rental signups and scheduling, equipment inspections, pickup and delivery.
  - e. Assist the Watershed Coordinator with seasonal water sampling on local creeks, surveys, monitoring reports, photos, printing and copying, development of public outreach material.
3. Outreach
  - a. Provide support for workshops, meetings, and public events, including taking sign-ups, setup/takedown, check-in, and creating and copying material for handouts.
  - b. Assist with fair booth and creating District displays for events and when required staff a booth and hand out conservation related material.
  - c. Assist with the District’s Annual Conservation Tree and Shrub sale by inputting orders into a central order Excel spreadsheet, setting up, putting together orders, placing calls to customers, retrieving and providing orders to customers, and taking down/cleaning up after sale is over.

## **Demands / Complexity**

The Field Office Assistant position will vary in complexity and requires the ability to smoothly transition between tasks and take direction from others. This position requires an ability to learn on the job specifically to be able to learn conservation planning and procedures, develop a working knowledge of conservation practices commonly employed within the District, to complete clerical functions timely and accurately, and to assist the Watershed Coordinator in running four active watershed councils.

The Field Office Assistant must be able to work independently – once assigned a task and instructions are provided, the assistant must be able to complete that task with minimal supervision. The assistant is responsible for documenting their own time, prioritizing daily work tasks and schedules. This is a very diverse working environment with unexpected deadlines and demands often popping up. The assistant will need to be able to smoothly shift gears from one task to another to meet unexpected demands.

This position will also entail assisting the technicians with equipment and property maintenance. This includes helping out at the District's nursery which may include setting out irrigation, sawing down trees, pulling weeds, burning organic debris, and other maintenance chores as required.

## **Background Screening**

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service requires everyone who uses USDA equipment and has access to producer records to pass a background screening and receive a favorable adjudication. This is essential for employment with the District.

## **Supervisory Responsibility**

This job has no regularly assigned supervisory responsibility.

## **Contacts with Others**

This position has daily, face to face interactions with District and USDA Service Center staff, including short weekly staff meetings. Frequent interactions in person, via phone, email, and written correspondence occur with other SWCDs, and the many state, federal and local agencies with whom the District works. In addition, similar interaction occurs between staff and the District's clientele, primarily local farmers and ranchers. Typical interactions may include exchange of information, sharing of technical information, coordination of on-going projects or discussion of potential new projects, or providing technical assistance. Care must be taken to avoid sharing information governed by the federal Privacy Act, most of which is private landowner information.

## **Specific Job Skills**

The Field Office Assistant is required to have a good command of the English language and be able to communicate clearly and effectively by writing and by speech. They must be proficient in the use of computers and in the use of certain software including Microsoft Office Suite products that includes Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook. In time, the Field/Office Assistant will become proficient in Microsoft Access and Publisher, GIS software, using GPS equipment, and other tools as needed. The Field/Office Assistant must have good problem solving skills, take direction well, and a willingness to work at a variety of tasks. Typing/keyboarding skills are a must.

Physically, the Field Office Assistant must be able to sit, stand, lift up to 50 lbs, to walk moderate distances over uneven terrain, and work outside in all seasons. Occasional overnight travel, primarily for training is required for this position. The position occasionally requires work in excess of 8 hours per day. The position requires a valid driver's license and the ability to operate vehicles with either automatic or manual transmissions as well as all-terrain vehicles.

## **Education / Experience**

Minimum education requirement is a High School diploma or GED certificate. Knowledge of basic office procedures is essential. It would be helpful to have experience in bookkeeping, use of Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, web design and maintenance, and an ability to learn new and challenging skillsets.

Knowledge of farming and ranching practices as well as natural resources would be highly beneficial but not required.

### **Job Conditions**

Working conditions for this position is mostly office environment, though travel to council meetings, training, and field work with technicians is also expected. Employee must be willing to work in a variety of job conditions ranging from field work in summer heat, winter cold, occasional rain, and office work. Employees can expect multiple interruptions during their tasks to answer questions or fulfill various immediate needs around the office. Job also requires a level of public relations that extends into personal time, including answering questions from producers while off duty in the community. The Field Office Assistant may be required to work some long days and evenings, including evening meetings for watershed councils across Wasco County. Hours beyond normal business hours earn compensatory time **at an overtime rate in lieu of overtime pay.**

### **Additional Information**

- 1) Salary increases subject to additional funding availability and job performance.
- 2) Wasco County SWCD is an equal opportunity employer.