

Position Announcement

Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District Agricultural Water Quality Specialist/Conservation Specialist

Application Deadline – Saturday, November 12, 2022

Overview:

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (NVSWCD) seeks an enthusiastic and organized team player to fill a vacant Agricultural Water Quality Specialist/Conservation Specialist (AWQS/CS) position which supports NVSWCD's technical assistance programs by providing professional expertise to Fairfax County residents, environmental groups, state and local government agencies, and other entities in the areas of conservation of natural resources under Fairfax County's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Program.

The AWQS/CS will provide technical assistance and prepare conservation plans for agricultural operations within Fairfax County and be the go-to person for technical recommendations addressing issues related to agricultural land use problems. This position promotes the VA State Agricultural Best Management Practice Costshare Program, as well as supports the VA Agricultural Stewardship Act Program. Standards and specifications provided for Agricultural Best Management Practice recommendations will be based on the technical guidelines of USDA-NRCS, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the VA Department of Environmental Quality.

The individual will work closely with Fairfax County's Government Agencies, in reviewing and commenting on rezonings and other development related applications and provide technical expertise in other non-point source pollution related issues. They will provide residents, consultants, students, and environmental groups with conservation assistance related to conservation of natural resources, such as water, soil, trees, etc. This position will also support other NVSWCD programs such as our Annual Native Seedling Sale. Work environment will be in both field and office settings, and work is performed under the direction of the Executive Director.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Technical Assistance

- Provides program guidance to county agencies in the implementation of the agricultural provision of the local Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Ordinance.
- Aids agricultural land users in the implementation of soil and water quality conservation plans.
- Works directly with the Office of Comprehensive Planning in reviewing and reporting on rezoning, final development plan, special exception, and proffered condition amendment applications. Makes site visits. Prepares and sends environmental assessment reports.
- Gives technical advice to individuals and groups on erosion prevention and other water related problems such as flooding, wet basements, poor drainage, and streambank stabilization.
- Provides natural resource information to environmental and engineering firms and the public.
- Serves as a representative of NVSWCD's Resource Management Planning Technical Advisory Committee.
- Represents NVSWCD in technical committees.
- Participates in judging the annual Fairfax County Land Conservation Awards Program.
- Provides guidance for and administers the Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share Program locally.
- Reviews site plans and responds to homeowner requests in absence of the Urban Conservation Engineer.

Chesapeake Bay Program

- Identifies agricultural parcels with Resource Protection Area (RPA) and Resource Management Area (RMA) features using Fairfax County's GIS maps.
- Develops conservation plans designed to meet the needs of the individual land user in accordance with Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act regulations and county ordinances. Plans will include nutrient management, integrated pest management, and soil erosion prevention measures.
- Serves as NVSWCD's advisor in the interpretation and administration of the agricultural regulations of DEQ – Division of Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance, in accordance with established state and local guidelines.
- Identifies local audiences to receive general and specific nonpoint source pollution information. Develops a program to inform and educate individuals and groups of their obligations and options regarding compliance with Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance regulations.

Training and Administration

- Participates in activities directed at providing experience and training in the planning and application of soil and water quality conservation principles, theories, and practices.
- Provides progress reports on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis to the NVSWCD Board of Directors, Division of Soil and Water Conservation, DEQ-Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance, USDA-NRCS, and locality on the development, application, and maintenance of soil and water quality conservation practices.
- Participates in special NVSWCD programs including the annual seedling sale, seminars, and exhibits.
- Participates in planning and evaluation of programs. Provides leadership, cooperation, and support as a member of the NVSWCD team.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Knowledge of theories, principles, concepts, and methodologies of soil and water conservation and environmental engineering practices.
- Knowledge of details involved in the compliance attainment of the Chesapeake Bay Ordinance. Nutrient management planning knowledge/certification preferred.
- Interpreting resources such as maps, statistical information, land use plans, and soils information. GIS experience preferred.
- Effective oral and written communication.
- Ability to work independently and as an effective team member.
- Ability to coordinate programs among other agencies and localities.

Education and Experience:

A minimum of 5 years of experience in the field of conservation, and a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in environmental science, agriculture, conservation, water resource engineering, soil science, agronomy, biology, or a related field is required. A master's degree in a related field is and/or Certification in Conservation Planning is preferred.

A Conservation Planner certification awarded or approved by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is required, or ability to obtain such certification within a year. Proficient use of DCR's nutrient management planning tool (NutMan) is required to prepare nutrient management plans for agricultural land use.

Physical Requirements/Nature of Work

Work is typically performed in a field/ office setting with a 50/50 time distribution. Visits to off-site locations are required, including residential properties. Occasionally requires working hours outside of regularly scheduled hours and days to meet specific deadlines or participate in shared programs such as our Annual Seedling Sale. Periodic travel to other parts of Virginia for training, or in support of our programs.

Ability to spend extended periods of time standing, walking, and ability to traverse rough and uneven terrain including stream valleys. Must be able to work in varying weather conditions. Must be physically able to lift 40 pounds.

Must pass a criminal background check, a check of the Child Protective Services Registry, and a driver's license check to the satisfaction of the employer. Use of a personal vehicle infrequently required; mileage will be reimbursed at current IRS rate.

How to Apply

If you find that you meet 75% or more of our expectations and requirements for this position, we highly encourage you to apply.

Interested applicants should email their resume, accompanied by a cover letter and contact information for two references, to Willie Woode, Executive Director, at Willie.Woode@fairfaxcounty.gov by Saturday, November 12, 2022.

This is a full-time, 40-hour per week position, which offers a flexible schedule, health insurance, retirement plan, and leave benefits. Occasional evening and weekend hours may be required. Salary will be commensurate with knowledge and experience and in range of \$60,000 – \$70,000.

About NVSWCD

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Its boundaries are the same as those of Fairfax County, home to nearly one million people. Founded in 1945 by citizens concerned about conserving natural resources, NVSWCD is now one of 47 conservation districts in Virginia and approximately 3,000 nationwide. The agency is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who employ ten staff to carry out the organization's technical and educational programs.

The agency's goal is to promote clean streams and protected natural resources. We achieve this through effective leadership, technical assistance, and outreach programs in collaboration with government, industry, and the public.

NVSWCD is not a regulatory agency. Instead, the agency provides conservation information, technical services, educational programs and volunteer opportunities to residents on many aspects of water quality, nonpoint source pollution and stream health. We also connect residents with environmental initiatives and opportunities through our Watershed Calendar and other online newsletters.

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Its programs, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or political affiliation.

Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District
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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation