



Position Description

Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District

Watershed Technical Specialist

Position Title: Watershed Technical Specialist

Pay Range: \$20.00 - \$28.00 / hour (DOE)

Supervisor: LSWCD Board Chair

Status: Full Time, non-exempt/at will

Date Revised: 2022

Board Approval Date:

About the Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District: Since 1955, the Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District (LSWCD) has worked to enhance and protect soil, water, and other natural resources related to agricultural, forested, urban and rural lands across Lincoln County, Oregon. By building diverse coalitions of stakeholders and partners, providing high-quality education and technical assistance, as well as designing and implementing conservation and enhancement projects on working lands, the District delivers science-based solutions to manage, protect, and improve natural resources for current and future generations. Our conservation goals are based on guidelines set forth in the Mid-Coast Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan (as administered by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA)), the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Program, and the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

Located in Newport, Oregon, LSWCD works to understand and meet the evolving environmental challenges and community needs of the Mid-Coast region - from sandy beach towns, to rich agricultural valleys, to salmon bearing waterways, and productive timberlands. LSWCD, is a non-regulatory government agency established by the State Legislature for the purpose of supporting renewable natural resources in cooperation with private landowners. District financial resources are currently provided primarily through competitive grants, interagency agreements, and direct service contracts. Staff receive guidance and support from federal and State agency and local partners, other District Staff and members of the LSWCD Board of Directors.

Watershed Technical Specialist

The Watershed Technical Specialist provides leadership for the implementation of LSWCD's Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Program (WREP), primarily through providing technical assistance to stakeholders in the region. This position requires strong project management and development skills; technical skills; supervisory skills; fieldwork and data management experience; fiscal responsibility; the ability to work independently and as a part of a team, and be able to communicate with a diverse set of partners and landowners, and through multiple modes of media.



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This position generally is a 40-hour work week. Workdays and work hours will be Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM (half hour for lunch), with daily hours and workdays variable depending upon funding, field work, community events, and required evening meetings. A monthly evening board meeting is required by all LSWCD Specialists on the second Thursday of each month.

Scope of Responsibilities:

The Watershed Technical Specialist (WTS) works with LSWCD's Board of Directors (BOD), Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and other Federal, State, and local partners to develop and implement watershed restoration and best management practices on conservation and working lands across the MidCoast region. This position will be challenged to plan and implement the Mid-Coast Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan goals and objectives such as providing outreach/education and technical assistance to agricultural landowners and operators, planning and project development, and securing financial resources (grants & partnerships) to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect and enhance soil and water quality, conserve natural resources and improve watershed function. In addition, the WTS performs outreach and technical assistance to non-agricultural rural and urban landowners to implement nonpoint source pollution reduction projects as prioritized by monitoring, sourcewater assessments, 303(d)-listed impaired waterbodies, and other regional or watershed plans. This work is supported by information assembled by the District's Water Quality Monitoring Program. The WTS also regularly collaborates with watershed councils, municipalities, and state and federal partners to implement projects that improve fish and wildlife habitat with a strong focus on efforts surrounding threatened Coho salmon. Finally, this position functions as the District's interdisciplinary technical position, serving as the primary representative and community outreach specialist in efforts aimed at increasing effective partnerships between District and regional entities as guided by the District's annual work plan and business plan. As Program Lead, the Specialist represents LSWCD in developing competitive grant funding in support of the Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Program and District.

Program Funding:

This position is primarily grant-funded. The Watershed Technical Specialist is responsible for developing further funding for the program, the position, and any projects, materials and staff required to carry out program and project goals. This funding typically comes from writing State and Federal assistance grants but may also be solicited at the landowner project level (cost-share). Eventually, funds may be secured at the District level from a District levy. Project



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administration expenses (a budgetary line item allowed in most grant packages) are a crucial component in maintaining LSCWD facilities, equipment, and support staff. Additional grant securement sustains program staff, but also other District staff.

Projects:

Projects will be developed based on priorities set by the District and regional partners. Priorities are typically associated with aspects of agronomy, water quality and engineering related to the planning and installation of soil and water conservation projects and management practices.

On the ground, the Watershed Technical Specialist promotes, assists, and educates farmers and landowners about Best Management Practices (BMPs) for maintaining clean water, healthy soils, and sustainable landscapes. In cooperation with landowners, the WTS will work to develop conservation plans, nutrient management plans, and apply sustainable BMPs tailored to specific properties and surroundings. Where available, the WTS may help secure and coordinate state, federal, or nonprofit funding for specific strategies and projects.

Projects shall require use of an LSWCD laptop computer and standard Microsoft Office software such as Access, Word, and Excel, as well as proficiency in ESRI ArcMap and GIS software.

Project sites include riparian corridors, lowland and floodplain pastures, urban and rural right of ways, steep inland mixed conifer deciduous forestland, highly channeled sedge/rush dominated estuaries, open bays, coast headland grasslands, rivers, streams, and coastal pine forest.

Reporting:

This position is governed by the LSWCD Board of Directors (BOD). Daily, operational activities are largely self-directed in coordination and consultation with other Program Specialists and require a high degree of self-motivation and independence. All programs and projects must ultimately be approved by the LSWCD BOD. Activity reports must be prepared, submitted and presented at monthly Board meetings and to funding partners.

Stakeholder Engagement (20%):

- Communicate and work directly with property owners and operators through face-to-face contact, the telephone, written correspondence, or e-mail. Advocate and promote conservation of natural resources with urban and rural property owners, the general public and other resource-related organizations by developing and/or using a variety of education/outreach tools.
- Attend and actively participate in professional meetings, workshops, and conferences



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relating to professional and technical issues. Speak at meetings of associations, agencies, schools, and other groups to provide information on natural resources, conservation, and water quality, along with District goals, objectives and projects.

- Represent the District at local and regional working groups, public events and meetings, and with urban and rural property owners.
- Seek the cooperation of landowners in planning and implementing Program and District goals and objectives.
- Update and provide content for the District website as needed to reflect current events and projects.
- Prepare outreach materials as needs arise, develop/coordinate/attend community events and educate the public concerning District programs and services as part of Stakeholder Engagement grants
- Build and maintain collaborative relationships with private landowners, watersheds councils, local/state/federal agencies, tribal entities, water districts, OSU Extension Service, and other conservation organizations to successfully plan and implement conservation projects, workshops, educational tours, and outreach
- Provide public and landowners outreach, education, and services regarding watershed BMPs through site visits, workshops, presentations, office meetings, telephone, press releases, written correspondence and/or e-mail.

Technical Assistance (30%):

- Assist Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) officials and landowners with professional consultations and property assessments regarding compliance with Mid-Coast Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Rules as needed. Complete quarterly tasks and reporting associated with ODA Scope of Work (SOW), effectiveness monitoring of the Siletz Focus Area, and biennial planning activities.
- Coordinate with ODA, DEQ, and stakeholders to implement the Bales Creek Upper Yaquina Strategic Implementation Area (SIA)
- Develop conservation and restoration plans in cooperation with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Field Office staff, DEQ and other partners. Design projects incorporating the principals, methods and techniques described in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guides and other accepted watershed restoration practices.
- Provide program leadership, management and technical support for implementing Best Management Practice plans and projects associated with nonpoint source pollution reduction related to agricultural, rural and urban systems.
- Recommends conservation practices to farmers and land managers to help improve operations, reduce cost of production, and conserve our soil and water natural resources.
- Prepare and submit technical documents, agreements, plans, records, and required grant reporting documents on behalf of the District, as authorized by the Board of Directors.



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- Participate in meetings to coordinate work, establish priorities, and create plans and budgets.
- Understand, interpret and use various maps, aerial photography, soils information, and other technical resources to assist residents of Lincoln County.
- Hire, supervise, coordinate and provide job training to ensure program assistants and/or project managers meet their deliverables with success.

Project Development and Management (40%)

- Secure funding through successfully researching, writing and administering grants to assist clients and partners with implementation of conservation projects and planning, and to provide for Program and District operations, equipment and staff.
- Prepare GIS maps and perform basic analysis using ArcGIS, maintenance of GIS products and data, for use with landowner/operator and grant applications for implementation projects.
- Do physical labor that may involve planting, fencing, nursery work and carrying up to 50 lbs of equipment and materials for this work, including in wet conditions and on uneven ground.
- Manage WREP conservation practice construction and implementation in the field, including working productively with field staff, contractors, and partners. Checks completed Best Management Practices to determine that standards and specifications are met and recommends acceptability of completed practices. Advises landowner/operator to complete proper maintenance. Performs annual compliance review checks.
- Enter into contracted service agreements, cooperative agreements and authorize expenditures, consistent with authority levels authorized by the Board of Directors to carry out project implementation.

District Administrative/Other Functions (10%):

- Support LSWCD staff with administrative duties as assigned.
- Attend regular staff meetings.
- Attend regular meetings with Board Supervisor.

POSITION QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's Degree in agricultural science, environmental studies, hydrology, conservation ecology, toxicology, natural resources management or other related degree.
- 1-3 years of managerial and/or supervisory experience related to the position's duties
- Experience crafting grant proposals and managing a budget



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- Working knowledge of soil and water conservation principles, practices, implementation methods and procedures and land use factors that affect soil erosion and water quality
- Good organizational skills and the ability to work on multiple projects and deliverables simultaneously with a variety of agencies, organizations and public and private entities.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills that pertain to public speaking, working one-on-one, in group settings and in leadership roles
- Have sound math skills including basic mathematics, plane geometry, and algebra
- Have good problem-solving skills
- Ability to work independently, with flexibility and adaptability.
- Understand the principles, capabilities and techniques of operating common farm machinery.
- A thorough understanding of Native Plants along the Central Oregon Coast
- A technical background with experience in evaluating the implementation and maintenance of Best Management Practices (BMPs); understanding of drainage and erosion principles; familiarity with topographic and watershed mapping; basic knowledge of geophysical and biological survey techniques and products; comprehension of engineering design/construction drawings, plats and associated terminology; comprehension of stream morphology, soils, and geology
- Familiarity with a wide range of laws that govern District operations including state and federal permitting requirements; NEPA, Endangered Species Act, Privacy Act, and Oregon Ag Water Quality requirements.
- Detailed knowledge of USDA NRCS Technical Standards and Job Sheets, the Field Office Technical Guide, conservation planning standards and procedures, and familiarity with the types of agronomic and conservation practices commonly employed within the District.
- The ability to use a computer for data entry and retrieval, correspondence, work management software, and development of databases, graphs, and maps. Must be proficient with Microsoft Excel, Word, Access (or other database software) and have working knowledge and experience with GIS (i.e. ESRI products) and GPS technology.
- Ability to obtain and maintain an NRCS Certified Conservation Planner Level III
- Maintain positive, cooperative relationships with co-workers and conduct work responsibilities in a professional manner.
- Possess or obtain a valid Oregon Driver's license and have a good driving record and appropriate insurance coverage
- Possess a functional vehicle, and be willing and able to use it for work-related travel, and be able to transport hand- and gas-powered tools and fuel. Mileage is reimbursed at the current state rate



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Supervision and Guidance:

Work is accomplished independently with guidance available from LSWCD staff, LSWCD Board of Directors, project partners, and resource manuals. This position acts on behalf of the LSWCD Board of Directors within the authority delegated by the Board, and this Position Description, and is governed by the policies of the LSWCD's Personnel Policy Manual.

Working Conditions and Physical Requirements:

- This position works both in the field and in the office. The amount of time required in the field varies seasonally.
- Fieldwork will include working in and around such locations as farms, timber tracts, rivers, streams and ponds; properties with dense vegetation or woodlands; and other areas with steep, slippery, muddy, rocky or other hazardous terrain. Ability to navigate rough terrain in inclement weather on foot is essential. Appropriate attire shall be worn for these conditions.
- This position will include significant time working at a desk, using a computer or standing.
- This position may require work outdoors related to workshops, tours, farmers markets, field days, and other LSWCD-sponsored programs and events. These events may occur during inclement coastal weather.
- This position requires work with and around hand tools, herbicides and mechanical equipment. Appropriate safety policies established by the District, OR-OSHA, Oregon Dept. of Agriculture, and Oregon Dept. of Forestry and other authorities must be followed and supervised.
- This position requires occasional travel to conferences, workshops, training sessions, and daytime and evening meetings outside the office. Travel may be outside the normal workday or overnight. Overnight travel may be as long as one week.
- Carrying materials weighing up to 50 lbs. for distances over 50 ft. and using power equipment weighing up to 50 lbs. is common.
- Working outdoors in a team setting, sharing duties, observing and supervising safety protocols and maintaining a professional attitude on private property are required

Benefits:

Ten paid legal holidays, workers compensation, and unemployment insurance are provided. Additionally, LSWCD will provide accrued vacation leave and personal leave. A cell phone stipend is provided. A health benefit program is provided after a 6-month probationary period.

Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. Lincoln SWCD is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.