



Natural Resource Specialist or Senior Specialist

1 FTE, full-time permanent

\$55,000 - \$70,000 per year DOQ

A competitive benefits package

First review of applications: July 8th, 2024

Thurston Conservation District is looking for an experienced self-starter who is a dynamic, energetic, highly organized creative thinker with an interest in natural resources conservation and supporting local agriculture. The successful applicant must have a strong work ethic to become part of a cohesive team of passionate individuals in a hands-on and rewarding work environment.

POSITION DESCRIPTION:

The Natural Resource Specialist or Senior Specialist works directly with community members to help them meet their land-based goals in a non-regulatory and voluntary environment. This position works with farmers, landowners, and residents in Thurston County to assist with the planning and development of conservation plans for their properties and operations. This position conducts the Thurston CD's Soil Testing Program and is responsible for providing soil test analyses, guidance, and technical education about soil management for the community. Additional experience in forage and pasture renovation, invasive weed guidance, and livestock husbandry is helpful. The Natural Resource Specialist or Senior Specialist occasionally develops, coordinates, and implements other projects as assigned by the Conservation Program Manager. This position may occasionally supervise other volunteers, interns, work crews, and/or project contractors on specific projects.

The Natural Resource Specialist or Senior Specialist is responsible for utilizing District and partner programs to benefit both the landowner/operator and the soil, water, air, plant, animal, human and energy natural resources present on the property. This position will work directly with a highly collaborative and professional technical team, under the mentorship of the Agriculture Programs Manager, to identify, develop and implement projects that address natural resources, habitat concerns, and agricultural priorities of cooperators. Thurston Conservation District offers a dynamic and passionate work environment with a supportive staff team.

Eligibility for this position is contingent upon the individual's ability to perform the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation. This position requires frequent sitting, standing, walking over difficult terrain and on construction sites, lifting up to 50 lbs., occasional travel and periodic evening and weekend work.

Thurston Conservation District is governed by volunteer community stakeholders who serve on our Board of Supervisors and bring additional knowledge, experience, and unique perspectives to support and strengthen the mission of the District.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Operates the Soil Testing Program at TCD, including but not limited to: Interprets soil analysis results, creates soil amendment recommendations for landowners, provides general support for soil health concerns, and manages supporting databases and records. Proficiency in chemistry and mathematics are necessary to carry out these tasks.

- Provides specific technical guidance and recommendations to landowners and to the public through email, telephone, or in-person visits.
- Builds relationships with and provides excellent customer service to community members including: a wide range of public and elected officials, technical and conservation experts, farmers, landowners, and community partners.
- Identifies and guides implementation of appropriate conservation practices that meet the needs of landowners/operators and address natural resource concerns.
- Has knowledge of TCD's programs and services and can help direct community members to the appropriate program and service to meet their goals and concerns.
- Applies for grant funds to support cost-share projects or programs, and facilitates project implementation.
- Monitors and documents implementation of best management practices (BMPs) at field activity locations.
- Prepares reports and documents activities, program progress, and accomplishments as directed.
- Collaborates with Education and Outreach staff to present at meetings, workshops, tours, and educational opportunities, as needed.
- Participates in regular training opportunities to maintain a high level of proficiency.
- Attends public meetings as a representative of the District.

The duties listed above are intended only as general illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. Specific statements of duties not included does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. Job descriptions are subject to change by the District as the needs of the District and requirements of the job change.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Option 1) Bachelor's Degree (B. A. / B. S.) from an accredited institution in natural/environmental science, agriculture, agronomy, environmental planning, or closely related technical/scientific/natural resources field –AND– A minimum of 2-year professional experience working in the fields of natural resource management, soil science, crop science, agronomy, , farm or ranch management, ecology, botany, or related work. Work experience can come from a government, corporate or other post-secondary training environment. Three or more years of professional experience is preferred and could qualify applicants for the Senior Specialist role, depending on overall qualifications.

Option 2) An associate degree in natural resource management from an accredited institution in combination with 3 years direct experience in natural resource management as described above.

Option 3) Five years of on-the-ground working experience in natural resource management as described above.

Applicants who feel they have 5-year minimum combination of education, training, and experience that demonstrates the ability to perform the duties of the position are welcome to apply.

Experience writing professional reports and technical guidance is essential. Knowledge of local and regional agricultural and conservation issues is important, as is interest in supporting and working with an active and sustainable farming community in South Puget Sound. This position must have the ability to respect, collaborate, and work with diverse populations and perspectives and experience participating in discussions on contentious resource management issues with community members and other stakeholders. This position requires excellent verbal and written communication skills, including proficiency with the Microsoft Office suite. Applicant must possess a valid driver's license.

ADDITIONAL PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Robust experience in the field of soil science, testing, and analysis
- Knowledge of agricultural industry and/or farming experience
- Experience with vegetable and fruit crop production.
- Familiarity with pasture management, grass species identification, forage restoration, and grazing systems
- Interest in working with diverse types of farms, equestrian communities, and other small agriculture operations
- Familiarity with conservation project implementation, regulatory requirements, permitting, and critical areas
- Experience developing and completing conservation plans
- Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) and Conservation Planner Certified from NRCS or interest in becoming certified
- Familiarity with Washington's Growth Management Act, Shoreline Master Program and policies, and various local ordinances and policies
- Knowledge of the local, state, and federal regulations and permitting processes
- Experience managing data and databases
- Proficiency in GIS

OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER:

Here at Thurston Conservation District our employees and the people we serve come from all walks of life. We strive to hire great people from a wide variety of backgrounds. We believe in the importance of recognizing the value that each of us contributes to the success of the District's mission. Having a diverse workforce is the District's greatest source of strength and knowledge. It is through the combination of talents and abilities that we can find effective ways to best serve our community. We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace for everyone. All qualified applicants receive consideration for employment without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status. Please let us know if you need accommodation to participate in the application process.

SCHEDULE & WORKING CONDITIONS:

This position is permanent, overtime non-exempt, and full-time (40 hours per week) with flexible work hours. Local and out-of-town travel, occasional evening and weekend hours are possible. Work is hybrid between remote and in person, with more in office time during probationary period.

At times, this position spends as much as 45% of work time in the field conducting site visits with farmers, land operators and community partners. Employees are provided with necessary TCD-owned equipment to perform their job responsibilities outside and inside the office.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:

\$55,000 - \$70,000 per year, DOQ

The Thurston Conservation District observes thirteen (13) paid holidays (including two personal holidays). Employees also accrue sick and vacation leave. The District offers medical, dental, vision and life insurance coverage for employees, with an option to cover 75% of spouse or dependent coverage. Additional voluntary supplemental insurance opportunities are also available. Participation in regular professional development opportunities are strongly encouraged and supported. Thurston CD employees participate in [Public Employees Retirement System \(PERS\)](#). Staff

also has access to an additional voluntary retirement savings programs within the State of Washington's Department of Retirement Systems – [Deferred Compensation Program \(DCP\)](#). This position is represented by the Washington State Council of County and City Employees (WSCCCE)- Council 2.

TO APPLY:

Please submit:

1. Resume (no more than 2 pages)
2. Cover letter (1 page)
3. Three (3) professional references

Be sure to describe your interest and unique qualifications for the position. Highlight the skills that you can offer to our entire conservation district team. Your cover letter is not to exceed two pages. Letters of recommendation may be included.

Send electronically (*please no paper copies*) to: [**job-applications@thurstoncd.com**](mailto:job-applications@thurstoncd.com)

Please include **Natural Resource Specialist/Senior Specialist – YOUR NAME** in the subject line.

First review of applications: July 8, 2024

Position open until filled with an ideal start date on or before September 1, 2024.

Thurston Conservation District is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Please let us know if you need any accommodation to participate in the application process.

We sincerely thank you for your interest in joining the work we do at Thurston Conservation District!