



Adams County Soil & Water Conservation District

975 South 11th Street Decatur, IN 46733

260-724-4124, ext.3

www.adamscountysoilandwater.com

Job Description: Conservation Technician

JOB SUMMARY:

Incumbent serves as a conservation technician under the Amish Implementation Cooperative Agreement. This position will continue throughout the duration allocated funding or deadline of agreement: Sept. 2022 whichever comes first. This position is responsible for the works under the cooperative agreement.

PURPOSE OF AMISH IMPLEMENTATION COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT:

The purpose of this agreement is to provide technical assistance focused on the Amish farming communities in Adams County, but not to the exclusion of other communities within the WLEB. This agreement will build on the successful outreach efforts of previous agreement that established relationships with key Amish communities' basin in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) identified phosphorus watersheds.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Provide individual knowledge in the inventory, evaluation, and application of conservation practices and systems.
- B. Gather and compile planning data on rural sites, including physical features such as soil limitations, erosion, surface drainage, and sedimentation, under the guidance of a supervisor or higher-grade specialist for evaluation and development of natural resources conservation plans by a professional Soil Conservationist.
- C. Assist NRCS in conservation planning by delineating Planning Land Unit (PLU) boundaries within the Customer Service Toolkit framework, determining acreage, identifying land use, and detailing the proposed practice placement. Assist NRCS staff with project data collection as requested.
- D. Follow both oral and written instructions to schedule practices to complete the planning, program application, and contracting processes in the current available software.
- E. Check completed practices to determine if specifications are met. Complete job sheets and provide final certification within limits of engineering job approval authority. Advise landowners/operators to complete proper maintenance.
- F. Establish and/or carry out a follow-up schedule to check progress made in carrying out conservation plans. Recognize when revisions in plans are needed and obtain data which expedites revision of plans.



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G. Make contact with landowners and/or operators to make them aware of opportunities to receive technical assistance for adopting conservation practices and technologies on their land and set up a time to meet to discuss further if interested.

H. Make direct face to face contacts with interested landowners and/or operators to inventory and evaluate resource concerns. Listen to ideas the farmer has to remediate these concerns. Explain in detail the practices available to them to address their soil and water quality related resource concerns. Provide landowner with a conservation plan and map from Toolkit.

I. Schedule Amish farm visits with appropriate field office staff in order to build and strengthen relationships with Amish communities.

J. Explain financial assistance and technical help programs available to address resource concerns. Work with interested farmers to apply for cost-share for the implementation of eligible conservation practices. Work with office staff to submit completed applications for funding consideration.

K. Use agreement funds to pay for soil and manure tests on Amish farms to help reinforce conservation needs. Follow up by interpreting tests and providing maps.

L. Explain manure value to producers. Help them learn to balance manure applications based on soil and manure test results.

M. Coordinate and emphasize the SWCD cover crop discount program. This will entail individual visits with producers. Provide education on the value of cover crops and how the use of cover crops affects water quality and soil health issues.

N. Plan and implement pasture walks. These pasture walks allow valuable hands-on teaching moments. It also allows a terrific opportunity to create relationships among staff and local producers. Coordinate with a core group of Amish producers and help this group to develop a plan to organize and hold pasture walks that are done by themselves. The goal would be to hold 3-4 a year.

O. Organize 3 trips to Stone Labs at Bass Island, Ohio to continue efforts to teach landowners how phosphorus affects water quality.

P. Plan and hold 2 field days. One will be an Amish No-till field day to showcase the use of no-till drills modified to be pulled by horses and a horse-drawn hi-boy seed spreader to demonstrate broadcasting cover crops.



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Q. Track and report all conservation applied through conservation technical assistance (CTA) efforts.

R. Submit a written quarterly report of conservation activities and successes with coordinating numbers and data. Also, to provide other reports as requested. Assist in financial reports as needed.

S. Support the SWCD's conservation equipment rental program.

JOB REQUIREMENTS:

Contract position.

Prior work experience pertinent to current job responsibilities.

Proficient with computer skills required. Working knowledge of standard office procedures and computer software applications used by the department, with the ability to apply such knowledge to a variety of interrelated processes, tasks and operations.

Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with associates, consultants, governmental representatives, media representatives, and the general public.

Be willing to develop in depth understanding of the purpose, programs, and responsibilities of the District and its conservation partners.

Good oral and written communication skills.

Ability to work alone with minimum supervision; also, to work with others in a team environment, often under time pressure, and on several tasks at the same time.

Travel within and occasionally outside of Adams County.

Work should strive to be accurate and complete since mistakes can result in project delays and/or ineffectiveness, increased expenses or needless waste of SWCD funds, and compromised relations with other agencies and organizations.

Ability to maintain a valid Indiana driver's license with safe driving record.

WORK RELATIONSHIPS:

Incumbent is responsible to the County Conservationist. Incumbent performs work independently and within work teams. Incumbent is in frequent contact with other personnel of the Conservation Partnership: The IN-DNR; IDEM; US Fish and Wildlife Services; Purdue Extension; other Federal, State, and local government agencies; environmental organizations;



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watershed groups; media representatives; land users; school boards; and the general public. All duties must be performed in an accurate, ethical, and courteous manner.

PHYSICAL EFFORT AND WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Incumbent works equally in office and in outdoor environments. Work outside may include many types of weather and terrain conditions. Occasional work in dirty and noisy environments is required. Incumbent is occasionally exposed to normal hazards associated with outdoor construction or farming activities. Occasional use of government vehicles, canoes, boats, all-terrain vehicles, tools, sampling chemicals, and other equipment if necessary.

APPROVED:

The job description was reviewed and approved by the Adams County SWCD Board at the board meeting held on March 19, 2019.