

Walsh County Three Rivers Soil Conservation District
13351 Hwy 17
Park River, ND 58270

Agricultural Outreach Specialist

If you enjoy establishing new relationships and have a background in agriculture, the Walsh County Soil Conservation District has an excellent opportunity for you! This position is part of a small office that is driven to make a difference in the lives of people in Walsh County by working with producers and landowners to improve soil health. Our focus is to work with as many producers as possible in a given year within the county to incorporate education and outreach in topics like strip-till, no-till and cover crops. Work closely with the members of the Walsh County Soil Health team and draw from their knowledge and join in collaboration with them.

Desirable candidates have some formal college education in an agricultural field such as general agriculture, Ag economics/Ag lending, agronomy, crop and weed science, soil science, range science, or another agricultural field. At least two years of formal education and one year of coordination with producers in an outreach or coordination role are needed to be successful in this position. The specialist must take initiative to find producers to work with and to adapt to the scheduling needs of producers. The workload fluctuates at times and includes scheduling field days and tours, as well as working 1 on 1 with producers to bring them information and troubleshoot conservation issues. The position is also in charge of grant writing and grant management with the outreach program. The start date for this position may be negotiable, but the desired date is prior to September 28th. Office hours are Monday- Friday, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm during winter, and longer at times in spring or fall. Overtime may be required at times to meet project deadlines. It may also be necessary to assist other positions in the office, incorporating teamwork. Hours worked over 40 hours per week will accrue in compensatory time. The employee will be reviewed at the end of 90 days, upon completion of the introductory period. This position reports directly to the District Manager.

Pay and Benefits

\$41,600- \$45,000 per year starting wage. This position has the potential to earn more as the district expands and succeeds with the program. This is a M-F position with mainly daytime hours, most often 40-45 hours per week, at time more during field season. Overtime is accrued as Compensatory time for use later on.

Benefits: Employee discount, Paid time off, Retirement plan 3% match, Health Insurance is paid for the employee (50% of premium paid during first 90 days, then 100% paid for afterwards). This paid policy is for the employee only and additional members can be added at the employee's expense (payroll deduction). All health insurance coverage begins day 1 of employment.

Duties & Responsibilities: 1. Educate producers on conservation practices and cost-share programs. Identify and promote the use of best management practices and/or set up public demonstrations that promote their use. Assumes responsibility and exercise own initiative in furthering the outreach program and achieve goals set within the program to implement conservation with producers. Conduct producer follow up and document the effectiveness of practices implemented.

2. Maintain personal contacts with cooperators, records contacts and significant follow-up items in their files. Contact all producers within the boundaries of the watershed through one on one contact and small group meetings to determine their interest and needs.
3. Coordinate with the ND Department of Environmental Quality to report success of the program through regular communication with the state coordinator.
4. Assist the district manager in assessing the need for conservation work within the district and recommends actions and programs to meet these needs.
5. Become familiar with all aspects of the EPA 319 grant held by the district. Pursue financial assistance from alternative sources to match EPA 319 program. Exercise initiative in furthering the district's program from a financial standpoint for producer cost share and for continued partial funding of this position with EPA 319 funds. Write grants and prepare grant presentations according to deadlines.
6. Conduct planning activities for conservation programs and contracts using the Technical Guide, Soil Survey and other available tools.
7. Prepare and present water quality and soil conservation programs to schools, groups and agencies. Publicize water quality, soil health, and conservation activities in cooperation with district, NRCS and ND Department of Environmental Quality staff through news media.
8. Test Homme Dam for harmful algae blooms during the summer. Run analysis as requested on other water bodies using a microscope and test strips.
9. Assist the district with the coordinating the Soil Health Team and producers currently working with them.
10. Maintain records and accomplishments; submit necessary grant applications, reports and in-kind documentation to proper individuals.
11. And coordinate requests for assistance with NRCS and other appropriate resource agencies. Maintains a cooperative relationship with all natural resource agencies operating within the district.
12. Conduct workshops, organize tours and coordinate with other watershed projects .
13. Compile annual and semi-annual reports. Prepare monthly reports for the district's board on activities and accomplishments.
14. Disseminate information through media, newsletter articles and direct mailings. Write a monthly newspaper column and assist with the district's web page, Facebook and newsletter.
15. Assist with field work and field operations as requested by the district manager during spring planting. Perform other related duties as requested by the board of supervisors and district manager.
16. Perform physical duties such as lifting 30 lbs, walking on uneven terrain, working in a variety of hot and cold environments outside.
17. Must possess a valid driver's license and comply with the rules of a drug free workplace, including pre-employment and random drug screening.

Essential Skills:

--Ability to lift 30 lbs, walk on uneven terrain and in a variety of weather conditions along with working independently in the field.

-Must be excellent with customers and establishing collaborate relationships with clients. Getting to know each client of the district is important. Customer service in our organization is the #1 priority.

-Organized and able to multitask. Must have ability to keep excellent records.

-Maintain an excellent driving record and comply to the rules of a drug free workplace.

-Excellent communication skills in verbal and written forms, along with the ability to compose written reports, correspondence, grants and technical documents.

-Ability to provide a high level of customer service to clients and establish new relationships with producers in the priority areas of the outreach program.

-Ability to cultivate new project work with limited leads using an outgoing and educated approach with producers. Be willing to greet producers and get acquainted as they visit our office.

-Ability to coordinate resources for producers and handle multiple projects at once using organization, prioritization, and work under pressure during busy times.

-Ability to be a self starter, manage a shifting workload and responds to challenges constructively, and work independently.

-Must be available to travel out of the area on occassion, less than 10% of the time, with a few overnight travel opportunities, notably within the week of Thanksgiving but not including Thanksgiving day. Must be available to work Memorial Day if needed during planting season and work steadfastly in May and June to organize tours that take place in early July.

To APPLY: Send your resume and cover letter to Sarah Johnston at walshcounty319@polarcomm.com. You will receive a confirmation email of its receipt. Please include college transcripts and addresses/phone numbers of employers, along with dates of employment and compensation history. This position is open until filled and will be removed from our webpage once the position is no longer vacant.

Contact:

Sarah B. Johnston

Walsh Co. Three Rivers SCD

Walshcounty319@polarcomm.com

701-284-7363