



AGRICULTURAL SPECIALIST POSITION DESCRIPTION

Employer: Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District
Work Location: Graton, Sonoma County, California
Position: 30-40 hours/week
Application Period: Through March 8th, position open until filled
Approximate Start Date: May 2019

Position

The Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District in Sonoma County, CA, is seeking a highly skilled Agricultural Specialist and experienced professional to assist land owners and land managers for a variety of agricultural operations, including vineyards, orchards, vegetable crops, ranches, dairies, and diverse farms with conservation planning and implementation.

Summary

The Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (RCD), is hiring an Agricultural Specialist. The Agricultural Specialist will assist the RCD in engaging agricultural producers as ecosystem stewards through the development and implementation of LandSmart and Carbon Farm Plans, designed to provide on-farm ecological benefits, improve agricultural productivity, enhance agroecosystem resilience, and mitigate global climate change through the regional LandSmart program.

LandSmart is a regional collaborative program that helps land managers meet their natural resource management goals while supporting productive lands and thriving streams. LandSmart was developed by the Sonoma Resource Conservation District (RCD), Napa County RCD, Mendocino County RCD and Gold Ridge RCD in collaboration with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), land managers, and environmental agencies. LandSmart Plans describe the natural and agricultural resources of a property and identify and prioritize practices to protect and enhance those resources. <http://landsmart.org/>

Carbon Farming involves implementing conservation practices that are known to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester atmospheric carbon in plant material and/or soil organic matter. Carbon farming is successful when carbon gains, resulting from enhanced land management and/or conservation practices, exceed carbon losses.

<http://landsmart.org/programs-services/landsmart-carbon-farm-plans/>

Position Description:

The Agricultural Specialist serves as a technical resource and advisor to land users, and the interested public.

- Plans, manages, produces, and assists in implementation of LandSmart Plans, Carbon Farm Plans, and other natural resource management plans. This duty includes responsibility as the principle author/editor of written Plans. These plans include working with landowners to complete full property evaluation, determinations on soil health, technical recommendations, and practices which sequester carbon and reduce GHG emissions, enhance natural resources, and promote sustainability. The work requires GIS experience and the collection, interpretation, and analysis of scientific data. The work requires extensive contact with the landowners and community partners to gather information, explain findings, and build consensus.
- Serves as team leader or member of an interdisciplinary team to solve complex and/or controversial resource-related issues. Scopes issues, develops resource objectives, monitors programs, and evaluates data and final implementation.
- Based on well-developed experience and knowledge, significantly contributes to the development of land management practices, by suggesting process improvements to current practices, or suggesting alternative approaches to difficult issues.
- Participates and contributes to soil monitoring, data collection and reporting of results.
- Performs a wide range of professional and administrative duties associated with the RCD's grant-based funding.

Required Qualifications:

The Agricultural Specialist must possess the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated verbal and written communication skills to communicate with private landowners, private contractors, government agencies, general public, and news media. References required.
- Professional knowledge of a wide range of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management principles, concepts, and theories sufficient to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of land management prescriptions covering diverse situations.
- Professional knowledge required to modify or adapt standard processes; to assess, select, and apply appropriate precedents; and to devise strategies needed to overcome significant resource problems.
- Practical and applied field experience in natural resource management principles.
- A working knowledge of related disciplines in order to integrate the views and findings of other professionals into the planning process.
- Knowledge of ecological processes to evaluate and assess the environmental responses of the ecosystem to various management practices on a variety of ecosystems.
- Consensus-building skills sufficient to address differences among diverse affected interests.
- The work requires some physical exertion such as long periods of walking, digging, bending over for data collection, carrying field study equipment, standing, crouching, often over rough, uneven, or rocky terrain.
- Bachelor's degree in related science field (Master's preferred) or equivalent experience.
- Four (4) years' professional experience working in the field of natural resource management including managing projects.
- Strong organizational and coordination skills.

- Experience working with private agricultural landowners.
- Possession of, or ability to obtain, an appropriate, valid CA Class C driver's license and automobile insurance.
- Proficient in ArcGIS.

Desired Qualifications

- Experience with budget management, grant and other funding proposal writing.
- Familiarity with USDA NRCS conservation practices, particularly in vineyard and crop management
- Knowledge of coastal California flora and fauna
- Proven ability to work as a team player in collaboration with diverse groups of people.
- High level of integrity as well as a positive, can-do attitude.
- Goal oriented and self-directed, works well independently.
- Action-oriented, adaptable and innovative.
- Passion for conservation and good sense of humor.

Position Information:

The Agricultural Specialist position is a permanent, flexible part to full-time (30-40 hours/week) position. It is expected this position will require 50% fieldwork and 50% office hours. Work schedule can be somewhat flexible based on incumbent availability, but the Specialist will be expected to maintain regular hours once a schedule has been established. Local job-related travel is required, and some weekend and overnight travel may be necessary. Approved travel expenses incurred while conducting official RCD business will be paid on a reimbursable basis at the current federal rate. A valid California driver's license and proof of insurance is required.

Work Environment

The main office location will be in Graton. The work will be split between the outdoors and in an office preparing plans and attending meetings. The work performed outdoors is sometimes in remote areas. The work involves regular and recurring exposure to moderate risks and discomfort.

Compensation:

Financial compensation will be \$28-35/hour depending on experience. The position is benefited. Benefits include Paid Time Off, Holidays, Retirement (CalPERS) and Health/Dental/Vision Insurance.

Application Procedures: Applicants must submit a letter of interest, resume, writing sample and contact information for at least 3 references by March 8, 2019 to:

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