

POSITION DESCRIPTION – PART A

Employee Name:
Agency: **Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)**
Classification Title: **State Program Administrator, Coordinator**
Working Title: **Regional Training Conservationist**
PCN:
Prepared By: Tom Gile, Resource Conservation Section Manager.

Acknowledgement that Position Description accurately reflects current job:

Employee	Date	Supervisor	Date
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POSITION PURPOSE

The purpose of this position is to provide expert ecological sciences training, coordination, leadership and associated functions, in collaboration with other BWSR, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) leaders of the Technical Training and Certification Program. This position provides ecological sciences training, consultation and technical quality assurance spot checks to develop and maintain conservation technical assistance capabilities of BWSR clientele staff, including assistance to facilitate applicable Job Approval Authority (JAA) certification by NRCS for Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) practices. This position provides training and consultation via classroom and online training, development of resources for on-the-job training, expert technical assistance, and coordination of associated peer-to-peer learning. This position serves as a technical expert, trainer and regional ecological sciences training program coordinator having substantial expertise for a wide variety of conservation practices and associated conservation planning, including erosion and sediment control, water quality protection, wetland restoration and protection, agronomic, soil health, wildlife habitat, other vegetation management, and nutrient management practices.

REPORTABILITY

Reports to: Resource Conservation Section Manager.
Supervises: No direct supervisory responsibilities.

DIMENSIONS

Budget: None
Clientele: *Primary:* SWCD, SWCD TSA, NRCS and BWSR staff involved in providing conservation technical assistance and associated technical training and certification. This includes the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) and Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees (MACDE).
Secondary: Counties, watershed districts and other conservation partners of BWSR, SWCDs and NRCS.

POSITION DESCRIPTION – PART B

RESPONSIBILITIES, TASKS, AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 1) **Provide leadership and coordination within an assigned region of the state to help identify and prioritize training needs of SWCD and SWCD TSA staff necessary to develop and maintain priority conservation technical assistance capabilities and JAA certification for applicable ecological sciences conservation practices.**

Priority: A

Percent of Time: 10%

Discretion: A

Tasks:

- a) Assist SWCDs and SWCD TSAs to identify priority natural resource concerns on private lands within their work area, in coordination with the Regional Training Engineer, Technical Training and Certification Program Coordinator and other partners, consistent with the Technical Training and Certification Strategy.
- b) Assist SWCDs and SWCD TSAs to identify and prioritize ecological sciences conservation practices for which they provide conservation technical assistance to address the priority natural resource concerns within their work area.
- c) Develop and provide guidance to SWCD and SWCD TSA staff to help prepare annual Individual Development Plans (IDPs) and prioritize their training needs for ecological sciences practices.
- d) Participate with applicable Area Technical Training Teams, other Regional Training staff, and the Technical Training and Certification Coordinator to conduct annual training needs assessment.
- e) Participate on applicable Area Technical Training Teams and coordinate across applicable NRCS and SWCD areas to define collective annual training needs priorities within the assigned region and areas of the state.

Performance Indicators:

- a) SWCDs and SWCD TSAs can clearly define their priority natural resource concerns and ecological sciences conservation practices for which they provide conservation technical assistance.
- b) SWCD and SWCD TSA staff understand and effectively utilize Individual Development Plans to identify and document their annual priority technical training needs.
- c) Technical training needs assessments are well coordinated in partnership with Area Technical Training Teams, other BWSR Regional Training staff, and the Technical Training and Certification Program Coordinator, and provide a sound basis for annual technical training prioritization within the assigned areas and region of the state.

- 2) **Coordinate, develop and provide technical training for priority ecological sciences conservation practices for SWCD, SWCD TSA, BWSR, NRCS and other applicable partner staff, to develop and maintain conservation technical assistance capabilities and priority conservation practice JAA.**

Priority: A

Percent of Time: 60%

Discretion: A

Tasks:

- a) Coordinate with applicable Area Technical Training Teams, NRCS Area and State Office staff, SWCD TSA staff, BWSR staff, experienced SWCD technicians, and other training providers (collectively, "Training Provider Partners"), to develop and/or tailor technical training for priority ecological sciences practices, including classroom, online, and field training.
- b) Provide priority technical training for ecological sciences practices, in collaboration with

applicable Area Technical Training Teams and other Training Provider Partners, and in coordination with other BWSR Regional Training staff, the Technical Training and Certification Program Coordinator, and BWSR Technical Services Section Manager.

- c) Investigate, develop, coordinate and disseminate on-the-job training (OJT) resources for ecological sciences conservation practices.
- d) Ensure that technical training and resources provided stress the importance of practical, environmentally beneficial, enduring, sustainable, and cost-effective conservation practices and projects to address priority natural resource concerns.
- e) Coordinate with the Technical Training and Certification Program Coordinator and Training Provider Partners within the assigned region of the state to utilize effective training evaluations and continuously improve technical training.

Performance Indicators:

- a) Development and delivery of priority technical training is well coordinated with Area Technical Training Teams, BWSR Regional Training staff, other Training Provider Partners, the Technical Training and Certification Program Coordinator, and BWSR Technical Services Section Manager.
- b) Ecological sciences technical training provided is effective and efficient, including utilization of classroom, online, on-the-job and field training, as appropriate.
- c) Training sessions and OJT resources are effective to increase the technical knowledge, skills and abilities of participants, and result in improved job performance and applicable conservation practice JAA for participants.
- d) Training participants know the importance of practical, environmentally beneficial, sustainable and cost-effective conservation practices to address priority natural resource concerns.
- e) Training session evaluations are conducted systematically and used effectively to improve future training provided by the position holder and other Training Provider Partners.

3) Coordinate a regional program for ecological sciences technical assistance peer-to-peer learning for SWCD and SWCD TSA staff; help facilitate conservation practice JAA certification; and provide quality assurance spot checks for SWCD and SWCD TSA technical work.

Priority: B

Percent of Time: 15%

Discretion: A

Tasks:

- a) In collaboration with other BWSR Regional Training staff, the Technical Training and Certification Program Coordinator and others, as applicable, coordinate a program for peer-to-peer learning for SWCD and SWCD TSA staff for ecological sciences technical assistance, using online, phone and in-person methods to help develop conservation technical assistance capabilities, peer review and conservation practice JAA within the assigned region.
- b) Provide guidance and assistance to SWCD and SWCD TSA staff to develop and assemble information about their training, experience, and demonstrated competence for ecological sciences practices for which they are seeking or renewing JAA assigned by NRCS.
- c) Provide periodic technical quality assurance spot checks for the BWSR Erosion Control and Water Management Program, Clean Water Fund programs, Nonpoint Engineering Assistance Program, Reinvest in Minnesota Reserve Program, and other BWSR programs, in coordination with the BWSR Technical Services Section Manager, applicable NRCS staff, and SWCD Managers, for program accountability and as a training opportunity for SWCD and SWCD TSA staff.

Performance Indicators:

- a) Applicable coordination and methods are used to develop and maintain an effective regional

peer-to-peer learning program that supports increased technical knowledge, skills and abilities, improved job performance and applicable conservation practice JAA.

- b) Effective and efficient guidance and assistance is provided to SWCD and SWCD TSA staff to develop and assemble information about their training, experience and demonstrated competence for ecological sciences conservation practices for which they are seeking or renewing NRCS JAA.
- c) Periodic quality assurance spot checks are well coordinated, as appropriate, and performed effectively for program technical quality assurance and technical training purposes.

4) Provide expert consultation to SWCDs, SWCD TSAs and other clientele for complex ecological sciences practices and projects, and serve as a BWSR expert technical representative.

Priority: B

Percent of Time: 15%

Discretion: A

Tasks:

- a) Assist SWCD and SWCD TSA staff, and other clientele, with complex ecological sciences practices and projects in the assigned region of the state by providing expert advice and consultation via online, phone and in-person methods, as appropriate.
- b) Provide other expert ecological sciences technical assistance to SWCD and SWCD TSA staff on a limited basis for complex conservation practices and projects.
- c) Participate on technical advisory committees, other expert groups or panels, and conservation practice problem investigations, as assigned by the BWSR Technical Services Section Manager.

Performance Indicators:

- a) Expert ecological sciences advice, consultation and technical assistance is provided to SWCD and SWCD TSA staff, and other clientele, as appropriate, for complex ecological sciences conservation practices and projects, and in a way that is understandable and effective.
- b) Online, phone and in-person delivery methods are used effectively and efficiently.
- c) Technically sound and well understood oral and written input is provided on behalf of BWSR when participating on technical advisory committees, other expert groups or panels, and for conservation practice problem investigations, including presentations and reports.

Summary of Priorities, Percent of Time, and Discretion for Primary Responsibilities

Responsibility	Priority	Percent of Time	Discretion
1	A	10%	A
2	A	60%	A
3	B	15%	A
4	B	15%	A

Definitions:

Priority A: Results are essential and must be accomplished.

Priority B: Results are important and should be accomplished, but not at the expense of A priorities.

Discretion Level A: Employee investigates, makes decisions, takes appropriate actions and reports by exception through normal communication and review processes.

Discretion Level B: Employee investigates, makes decisions and confers with supervisor before, or immediately after, action is taken, depending on time sensitivity of action.

POSITION DESCRIPTION – PART C

RELATIONSHIPS

The position holder must develop and maintain strong working relationships with NRCS, SWCD, SWCD TSA, BWSR, and other Training Provider Partners, Area Technical Training Team members, the Technical Training and Certification Program Coordinator, his/her supervisor, and partner organizations, in order to effectively and efficiently provide coordination for BWSR's regional ecological sciences technical training program, including consultation and mentoring, for employee development and NRCS JAA certification of SWCD, SWCD TSA, and BWSR staff.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

The position holder must possess a university undergraduate or graduate degree in soil conservation, agronomy, biology, forestry, animal science, agriculture, natural resource science, soil science or a related field. The position holder must be an NRCS Certified Conservation Planner within one year of being hired, and must have substantial experience in water and soil conservation, including erosion control, soil health, vegetation management, nutrient management, water quality protection, wildlife habitat, and related resource conservation work. The position holder must have knowledge of the mission, structure, and interrelationships of local, state, and federal government units involved in conservation on private lands in Minnesota, and associated conservation programs. Knowledge, skills and abilities must also include:

- 1) Leadership experience pertinent to conservation technical assistance.
- 2) Knowledge of the principles and practices of resource conservation sufficient to integrate ecological science principles and conservation practices into effective land management systems.
- 3) Knowledge of agronomy, biology, soils, vegetation management, nutrient management, water quality protection, irrigation water management, livestock production and waste management, wildlife habitat, and associated ecological science principles for planning and implementation of technically sound land management systems in agricultural and urban landscapes.
- 4) Advanced knowledge and experience for planning and implementation of a variety of ecological science conservation practices, including applicable federal, state and local regulations.
- 5) The ability to provide expert technical training, consultation, review and related assistance for a wide variety of ecological sciences conservation practices, including for project site investigation, planning, and implementation.
- 6) Advanced skills in oral and written communications sufficient to very effectively discuss, explain, present, teach, and advocate soil and water conservation and associated conservation planning to diverse clientele.
- 7) Training and/or experience in adult learning methods, technical training and evaluation, including classroom, online, and field environments, as well as on-the-job training.
- 8) The ability to develop and maintain strong working relationships with BWSR, NRCS, SWCD and SWCD TSA staff, and other partners, in order to plan, promote, coordinate and deliver conservation technical assistance training, capability development, and maintenance.
- 9) The ability to independently plan, schedule and organize work in order to concurrently manage multiple clientele needs, sources of information and requests for assistance.
- 10) The ability to conduct site investigation, training, and project quality assurance review in the field on rough terrain.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Key problem solving areas are related to coordination and leadership to meet the priority technical training needs of a diverse, regional clientele including SWCD, SWCD TSA, BWSR and NRCS staff for ecological sciences conservation practices and projects. The employee must be able to assess training needs, lead and coordinate effectively with Training Provider Partners and other clientele to develop and deliver training in various formats to best suit the needs of conservation partners, and navigate working relationships for technical training, mentoring and quality assurance review.

FREEDOM TO ACT

The incumbent has substantial freedom to act under the general direction of the Technical Services Section Manager. The incumbent will need to make frequent independent decisions regarding courses of action and problem resolution within the guidelines established for the position. These decisions can be made independently, consistent with BWSR program and administrative policies. When application of policy to a complex situation is unclear, he/she shall defer decisions until direction is received from his/her supervisor. The incumbent shall confer with, or defer to, the appropriate program manager regarding program administrative policy interpretation and compliance.