

## **Lamoille County Conservation District**

Position Description: Agricultural Outreach Specialist position

**Introduction:** The Lamoille County Conservation District is seeking an agricultural water quality staff position responsible for working with local farms to identify and address water quality concerns. The new staff member will focus on farms with animals, annual crops, and farm nutrient management.

**Position Title:** Agricultural Outreach Specialist

**Who we are:** Vermont's Natural Resource Conservation Districts (NRCDs) were established to protect and enhance the soil and water resources of the State by providing education, outreach, and implementation of best land stewardship practices in coordination with area towns and landowners. Each District has a 5-member board comprised of local landowners and promotes natural resources conservation through education, conservation programs, and technical services. Conservation Districts are an independent, non-regulatory subdivision of Vermont state government, which means that landowner engagement with the District is voluntary and incentive-based.

**Position Description:** Lamoille County Conservation District (LCCD) Director seeks a part-time (with hopes of making full time) Agricultural Outreach Specialist to oversee agricultural conservation outreach, program development and the implementation of conservation projects. The bulk of the work will be oversight of the Agricultural Clean Water Initiative Program (Ag-CWIP), the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCCP) organizing local agricultural work groups and taking part in other new programs such as the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES), Payment for Phosphorus (PFP) and potential Soil Health and Agro-Forestry opportunities. Ag-CWIP funding develops and supports the continual improvement of water quality across the state of Vermont by supporting farmers with education and outreach, technical assistance, identifying and implementing best management practices, planning, and more. RCCP funding supports nutrient management plans to help livestock producers meet the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) and adapt best management practices (BMPs) to their operations. This includes conducting field and farmstead assessments, assisting producers with soil and manure sampling, manure application calibration, use of tools for assessing nutrient management and working with farmers on updating their GoCrop™ accounts. This position will also be working to increase conservation district operational functions, financial sustainability, community engagement and the organization of Local Work Groups that will inform the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and their partners on local conservation needs. This position is grant funded and is under the general supervision of the LCCD Director.

Applicants can expect to spend equal time completing general administration tasks and direct

project/program coordination. The Agricultural Outreach Specialist will allocate time toward grant writing, seeking new and managing ongoing projects, while understanding that the funding received from these programs covers this position's full base pay and program expenses (base pay, benefits, mileage, taxes and insurance, and program expenses). Duties include project development, conservation implementation, grant writing, public education & outreach, work plan & budget development, and partner networking. Work will be carried out under the supervision and direction of the Director. This position will be based out of the Lamoille County USDA Service Center in Morrisville, Vermont. Entrepreneurial individuals and independent workers with solid work ethic and high personal performance standards encouraged to apply.

This position will begin at 24 hrs. and week at \$18:00-\$19.00/hr. (TBD) There is a possibility of more hours and wage increases in the future if the position responsibilities and budget allow. Due to state COVID mandates the candidate would be required to work mostly from home to begin with and have their own personal computer and mode of transportation to start with. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) will provide a work computer, a workstation, access to a work vehicle, and federal ID after the candidate has received a federal background check. This process usually takes up to one month upon being hired. Training will be provided for by LCCD, NRCS and other partnering agencies as required. LCCD is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**Responsibilities:**

- Support Director in education and outreach, program development and implementation of conservation practices.
- Provide administrative and technical assistance to farms with existing UVM GoCrop™ nutrient management plans. Provide education about nutrient management practices that will improve water quality while ideally improving farm operations, yields etc. – i.e. crop selection, crop/nutrient record-keeping, feed management, and manure management practices
- Master NRCS land treatment planning standards. Includes the completion of field and farm assessments with each farmer and summarized in a conservation plan that sets priorities to be addressed.
- Track progress in delivering technical assistance and practice implementation.
- Disseminate information on Best Management Practices, Required Agricultural Practices, and NRCD, state and federal cost share programs.
- Manage and expand district agricultural equipment rental programs.
- Development of outreach methods and materials i.e. workshops, field days, publications, newsletters, flyers to inform producers of BMPs, nutrient management strategies and provide a forum for information exchange between producers.
- Obtain appropriate certifications such as land treatment planning and nutrient

management specialist certification from NRCS and attend appropriate continuing education offerings.

- Assist with application and implementation of district grants
- Collaborate with UVM extension, NRCS and VTDEC staff
- Perform additional related responsibilities as need arises
- Collaborate programs with and facilitate among a wide variety of partners (local, state and federal) to accomplish projects and programs
- Work with Director on growth & development of the district's agricultural capacity
- Act as a liaison between the District, its partners, and the general public as an outreach and information source
- Develop, submit, administrate, and implement grant projects
- Represent the District at public functions, a responsibility shared among staff & Supervisors, including but not limited to local and regional planning commissions, town meetings, and other local civic activities as appropriate.

**Qualifications:**

Bachelor's Science Degree required in natural resources, environmental sciences, or land planning. MS preferred -OR- in addition to BS, 1 to 3 years of practical experience in the above fields accepted. Candidate must be able to clear a thorough background check which will enable him/her to work within the USDA NRCS Federal computer system.

- Project management experience including identifying and developing budgets, deliverables, and work plans;
- Fundraising, Membership Development, and Grant Writing experience;
- Knowledge of and/or experience with mitigating water quality and non-point source pollution concerns and the implementation of best management practices;
- Familiarity with agricultural systems and regulations.
- Knowledge of environmental conservation topics and natural resource concerns in Vermont;
- Computer literacy required including experience with MS Word, Excel, GIS and web-based programs;
- Self-organization and goal setting; detail-oriented in reporting and organization;
- Strong interpersonal, written and verbal communication, and public speaking;
- Ability to work cooperatively with varied audiences, landowners, municipalities, peers and staff from a variety of agencies; and
- Working knowledge of water quality concerns, regulations, and best management practices.
- Comfortable with physical and outdoor work in all types of weather.

**To Apply:**

Please e-mail [lcddirector@gmail.com](mailto:lcddirector@gmail.com) a cover letter and resume with references (as a single PDF) with compensation requirements to Lamoille County Conservation District with Job Search

Committee in the header by July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Direct any questions to this email address. No phone calls, please.

LCCD is an EOE Employer