



Program Technician Position Description

Position Purpose

The Program Technician position requires a diverse background in preplanning, problem evaluation, and conservation practice application. This position promotes and implements conservation provisions of the Federal Farm Bill, the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM), and other related wildlife and clean water conservation programs. Activities will include program promotion, contract coordination, conservation planning, conservation plan modification, site assessment, inspections, and reporting, as well as providing technical assistance for wildlife enhancement techniques to private landowners and public organizations.

As part of a greater partnership, this position works with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and other partners to promote and implement local, state, and federal conservation programs.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Understands the Federal and State financial assistance programs and can explain these programs to landowners, highest emphasis is the Conservation Reserve Program.
2. Advises and works with landowners on the installation and maintenance of conservation practices.
3. Research outreach strategies and marketing skills and distill data and analytics down to digestible communication.
4. Provides focused educational outreach in priority areas and directed at priority issues as identified in comprehensive plans.
5. Develops creative, engaging programming materials that can be distributed to landowners and local partners.
6. Assists in recognizing landowner's conservation efforts such as through online or print materials, or recognition programs.
7. Develops conservation plans and Long-Term Agreements and provides the necessary guidance for follow up to ensure implementation of plan.
8. Provide forestry stewardship and conservation planning assistance to meet natural resource and land occupier needs.
9. Provide in-season and long-term guidance for irrigation water management based on local measurements and crop specific evapotranspiration estimates.
10. Conducts the annual inspection of required buffers in the County. Assists and works with landowners investigating alternative practices for compliance with the Buffer Law. Also coordinates with the County on correspondence to non-compliant parcels.
11. Is aware of the agronomic principles associated with crop production and natural resource protection for both livestock and non-livestock enterprises and can develop conservation plan alternatives to meet resource and land user needs.

12. Assess total resource needs on each farm and develop alternative methods of addressing resource needs according to the Field Office Technical Guide.
13. Performs simple to complex surveys for design and layout, supervises construction of conservation practices, and completes performance documentation of these practices.
14. Performs technical work, such as survey note reduction, drafting, and engineering designs, according to the NRCS Technical Guide, without detailed instructions, after adequate training.
15. Prepares and assists with educational events, demonstrations, workshops, tours, newsletter articles, press releases in cooperation with NRCS, Becker County Environmental Services, local watershed districts and other agencies.
16. Prepares records and reports covering work accomplished.
17. Supervise field staff when given project responsibility.
18. Promotes the conservation philosophy of the SWCD, as outlined in the Annual and Local Water Plan
19. Assist the County Ag Inspector as needed.
20. Performs other related duties as directed or apparent.

Basic Qualification Requirements

Candidates must have a driver’s license and may be eligible for Ag Inspector I or based on the following:

Program Technician I	Program Technician II
Associates/Technical degree in natural resources, agriculture or related field, and some experience in agriculture or soil conservation or equivalent combination of education and experience. (Combination of 2-5 years)	Associates/Technical degree in natural resources, agriculture or related field, and considerable experience in agriculture or soil conservation or equivalent combination of education and experience (Combination of more than 6 years.) Bachelor’s degree in place of experience
<p>Skills and Abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficient in communication skills using a variety of media and technology. • Proficiency with Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. • Must be self-driven and able to work with minimal supervision. • Excellent interpersonal communication skills and relationship-building skills to effectively work with a diverse variety of people and personalities, including developing relationships with SWCD and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff, private landowners, and consultants/contractors. 	<p>Skills and Abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Program Technician I. • Strong Project Management skills. • Ability to apply for and secure grant funding for new district projects (both technical and outreach). • Ability and willingness to train others in Ecological JAA and trainings.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity to develop new innovative ways to engage landowners to enroll in conservation programs. • Able to work unsupervised, plan, prioritize, coordinate, and manage own work. • Effective at public speaking, community outreach and community engagement. • Ability to think outside the box to create easy to understand and attractive products to be used to promote conservation priorities. • Experience using a personal computer, GIS Software and GPS equipment is required. • Ability to work under stressful conditions. <p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District policies, practices, and procedures. • Federal and State ordinances, laws, regulations pertaining to natural resources conservation implementation practices. • Standard operating protocols for implementing District and State conservation programs. • NRCS Practice Standards. • Risk Management Agency (RMA). 	<p>Thorough knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District policies, practices, and procedures. • Federal and State ordinances, laws, regulations pertaining to natural resources conservation implementation practices. • Standard operating protocols for implementing District and State conservation programs. • NRCS Practice Standards. • Risk Management Agency (RMA). • Gopher One Call policies and procedures.
<p>Training and Certificates</p>	<p>Training and Certificates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve Certified Conservation Planning (CCP) • Achieve Job Approval Authority training.
<p>JAA and Technical Expertise</p>	<p>JAA and Technical Expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete training in at least 4 ecological JAA practices as directed by the District Manager. • To be considered for a Soil Health Tech II: Complete training in at least 6 ecological JAA practices.

Physical Requirements

This work requires

- The frequent exertion of up to 25 pounds of force.
- Occasional exertion of up to 100 pounds of force.
- Frequent standing, walking, speaking or hearing, lifting and repetitive motions and
- Occasional sitting, using hands to finger, handle or feel, climbing or balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching or crawling and pushing or pulling.
- Close vision, distance vision, ability to adjust focus, depth perception, color perception, night vision and peripheral vision.
- Operate equipment and motor vehicles while observing general surroundings and activities.
- Vocal communication for expressing or exchanging ideas by means of the spoken word and conveying detailed or important instructions to others accurately, loudly or quickly.
- Hearing to perceive information at normal spoken word levels and to receive detailed information through oral communications and/or to make fine distinctions in sound.
- Visual inspection involving small defects and/or small parts, using of measuring devices, assembly or fabrication of parts within arm's length, operating machines, operating motor vehicles or equipment and observing general surroundings and activities.
- Work frequently requires exposure to outdoor weather conditions and occasionally requires working near moving mechanical parts and Flowing Watercourse.
- Work is generally in a moderately noisy location (e.g., business office, light traffic).
- Exposure to fumes or airborne particles.
- Work in a moderately noisy location (e.g., business office, light traffic).

Performance Evaluation

Performance Evaluation is the responsibility of the Program Technician I and II and will be reviewed annually by the Planning Team Manager.

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