

## **SWCD Area Conservation Technician (ACT)**

### **Job Description:**

The Lucas Soil and Water Conservation District is seeking a full-time, motivated individual to help promote, assist, and educate farmers and landowners about the best management practices for maintaining clean water, healthy soils, and a sustainable landscape. This position will be challenged with developing ways to mitigate soil erosion, nutrient loading and water quality issues. The Employee will seek the cooperation of landowners in understanding, following, and utilizing nutrient management plans and conservation practices/programs to help soil health, reduce the loss of critical soil through erosion, and support water quality efforts as assigned.

This individual needs to be a self-starter with good communication skills and someone who is willing to orchestrate the development of nutrient management plans and/or conservation management plans, work collaboratively with various partners, develop landowner workshops, instruct formal and informal classes, and provide a variety of technical assistance to SWCD staff and partners in order to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff and positively impact water quality.

### **Activities Include:**

This position will provide expertise on nutrient management and conservation issues, coordinate activities with local soil and water conservation district staff, inspect, evaluate and prepare technical records and reports related to nutrient management activities, respond to inquiries concerning regulations and request for information, and provide technical assistance necessary to implement nutrient management/ conservation practice activities.

Furthermore, the position will assist in the development of policy and procedures necessary to enhance nutrient stewardship efforts, conduct site visits, meet with potential participants to assess soil quality of land, offer suggestions of conservation practices, approve conservation and nutrient management plans, provide nutrient management assistance through one-on-one consultation and/or through group settings in an effort to promote sound nutrient management practices, and conduct follow-up activities to ensure plans are being followed correctly.

### **Knowledge:**

This employee will represent multiple soil and water conservation districts, therefore, should be knowledgeable of soil and water conservation districts and partners. In addition, it is important that this employee have the following understanding:

- A strong understanding of the agriculture industry, current practices and the environmental and social-economic issues, from local to national, that the industry faces in terms of land, soil, water, air and biodiversity.
- Knowledge of agronomic production techniques, soil fertility, nutrient and manure management, crop rotations and crop management practices in the various ecological areas of the prairies under both irrigated and dry-land conditions.
- Knowledge of beneficial manure management practices and livestock production management for a broad range of livestock types.
- Understanding of soil biological processes and environmental issues related to manure nutrient management.
- Knowledge and experience in plant nutrition, manure management, and the development of nutrient management plans at scales ranging from individual fields to whole farms.
- Knowledge of the legislation governing and relating to manure management and livestock production.
- Knowledge of scientific theories, principles, research methodologies, experimental design and data interpretation. Experience in the initiation, implementation, design and data collection for research, applied research, demonstration projects and programs.

- Knowledge and training in computer statistical software, database management systems and decision support systems.

**Skills and Abilities:**

This position will lend heavily to Ohio's water quality improvement efforts, therefore, it is critical that this individual be able to communicate, collaborate, and coordinate with SWCD staff and Supervisors, local, state, and federal agencies, and partners involved in this effort. It is important that this individual maintain the following abilities:

- The ability to build, lead and work with multi-disciplinary teams.
- Provide leadership, communication, and public relations skills that are required for dealing with a wide range of stakeholders and clients.
- Provide technical information to technical and non-technical audiences
- Be a strategic thinker and be able to problem solve
- Have public speaking skills.
- Ability to be proactive, dynamic, flexible, and responsive to change within the department and industry.
- Strong computer skills to facilitate data management, analysis, report development, and communication.

**Required Training, Experience and Qualifications:**

Associate Degree or higher preferred in environmental sciences, natural resources, agronomy, or a related water quality field

Or High School Degree with 5-years of background experience and has experience in developing nutrient management plans

- Must be able to pass a background check and random drug testing
- Must be able to traverse rough terrain in variable conditions and carry 40 pounds
- Must maintain a valid Ohio driver's license, insurance, and possess a good driving record
- Must have previous experience and demonstrate exceptional public relation skills
- Working knowledge/experience of agricultural practices
- Must have knowledge/understanding of Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code, and regulatory requirements that may be involved
- Must maintain a clean and neat appearance consistent with the public contact aspect of the position
- Related work experience preferred

**Essential Functions:**

- The office duties of this position will be performed in a public building environment but the primary duties of this position will require fieldwork which includes exposure to inclement weather conditions.
- All duties and actions performed by the employee on official duty will be of a nature that reflects favorably on the Soil and Water Conservation Districts the individual represents.
- Acquire current Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) certification with training if not already possessed
- Be able to complete Conservation Management Plans and/or seek training if necessary.
- Work closely with producers to prepare and implement Nutrient Management Plans.
- Make field visits to plan, design and coordinate conservation activities with producers and landowners /users in the counties this individual was hired to serve.
- Specialists inspect and evaluate nutrient management plans developed by certified consultants to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.
- Specialists also identify problem areas and provide technical assistance to nutrient management consultants on a one to one basis or through group training programs and workshops

- Be able to read, evaluate, and understand soil test reports
- Have an understanding of manure management systems
- Have a basic knowledge of general agronomy, crop rotation, and fertility recommendations
- Must be able to make connections between soil/geographic/agricultural data and water quality issues.
- Assist pollution abatement investigations, as well as erosion control practices

**Wage:**

Beginning Wage: Established by the SWCD(s).

\*Wage is subject to increases based on yearly evaluations and achievement of job performance goals put into place at the beginning of employment. Annual Evaluations will take place with Board(s) and Staff Supervisor(s) of the SWCD this employee represents

\*Position will be funded through a grant through the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The employee is an "at-will" employee and will be supervised by the Boards he or she represents per the contract.

\*Fringe benefits will be outlined in the contract

\*Work schedule to be determined by Board and Staff Supervisor. A 40-hour work week is expected with some evening meetings a possibility.

\*\*Submit a cover letter, resume, and a minimum of three references to [jsink@co.lucas.oh.gov](mailto:jsink@co.lucas.oh.gov) or mail to 130-A W. Dudley St., Maumee OH 43537 by **close of business on September 4, 2018**.