

TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

JOB DESCRIPTION

Opening Date: October 11, 2023

Closing Date: Open Until Filled

Position Title: Natural Resource Specialist IV-Conservation Planner

Number of Positions: Five (5)

Group/Class: 2685 / B21

Monthly Salary: \$5,301.00

Work Location: Service areas will be determined by a number of factors including candidate preference and willingness to relocate, project priority areas, agency regional office locations, and location of project participants. TSSWCB will assign all selected candidates to an agency regional office for administrative support. Service areas will be negotiated cooperatively with selected candidates. Qualified individuals interested in these positions should apply as the TCSI is a statewide project.

Travel: EXTENSIVE: These positions will be engaged directly with each project participant on their property numerous times during the project period.

Reports to: TSSWCB's Texas Climate-Smart Initiative Project Manager

Position Description: The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) is seeking applicants for five (5) positions to serve as Climate-Smart Conservation Planners in support of the Texas Climate-Smart Initiative (TCSI). The TCSI is a statewide multiagency initiative lead by Texas A&M AgriLife Research that is seeking to incentivize climate-smart conservation practice implementation across the state. Funding for the TCSI is being provided by the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) through Texas A&M AgriLife Research to the TSSWCB.

Position Term: Funding for these **TEMPORARY** positions will terminate on May 29, 2028 along with the positions.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

Performs advanced (senior-level) natural resources work. Work involves overseeing and/or performing conservation, management, protection, preservation, or utilization of natural resources work of the TSSWCB. The TCSI will expand markets for climate-smart commodities, leverage the greenhouse gas benefits of climate-smart commodity production, and provide direct, meaningful benefits to production agriculture, including for small and underserved producers.

Planners hired through this announcement will be involved in recruiting participation in the project, as well as facilitating the completion and submittal of applications, conservation plans, contracts, and on-site meetings for preliminary planning discussions. The primary function of the planners will be climate-smart conservation plan development, therefore, experience in soil health and other climate smart practices will be important during candidate selection.

Planners may be required to utilize the USDA-NRCS CarbOn Management & Emissions Tool (COMET) to estimate greenhouse gas emissions reductions and carbon sequestration benefits (training will be provided).

Planners will be involved in providing consultation on climate-smart planning options for participants, particularly when calculating incentive payment amounts during contracting. Planners will also coordinate status reviews and performance certifications prior to payment distribution.

EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED

Participates in the recruitment of participants for the TCSI.

Facilitates the completion and submittal of project applications.

Consults with participants on planning options and impacts to potential incentive payments.

Conducts planning discussions with participants and develops a climate-smart conservation plan that results in increased climate-smart conservation practice implementation.

Utilizes the USDA-NRCS COMET Model; training will be offered through project partners.

Participates in the ranking of TCSI applications.

Facilitates the completion of project contracting for each participant, including the final payment schedule and contract terms.

Schedules and performs performance certifications and status reviews to measure adherence to the climate-smart conservation plan implementation schedule and terms of the contract.

Performs other duties as assigned.

EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION

Applicants should have at least 5-years experience in natural resources conservation fieldwork involving the development and implementations of conservation plans and have graduated from a college or university with a degree in agriculture or a natural science field.

Applicants must possess a Level III planning certification from USDA-NRCS (formerly known as Certified Conservation Planner). This planner certification builds on the Level I coursework with additional AgLearn courses and three in-person courses requiring space reservations to attend.

NRCS planner level certifications and requirements may be viewed at this website: <https://www.wactd.org/certification/nrcs-certification>

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Selected applicants will be those familiar with USDA-NRCS climate-smart mitigation categories, particularly soil health, agroforestry, and forestry, and the specific conservation practices associated with them. Specific practices include, but are not limited to, conservation cover, conservation crop rotation, residue and tillage management (no-till and reduced till), cover crop, filter strips, nutrient management, waste separator facilities, pasture and hay planting, irrigation water management, wetlands restoration, and a variety of forestry-related practices.

Applicants should be familiar with the traditional conservation planning partnership in Texas between 216 local soil and water conservation districts, the Texas NRCS, and the TSSWCB. Additionally, applicants should have the ability to communicate (in-person) directly with landowners and agricultural producers about their current activities and the potential impacts of a climate-smart conservation plan on their existing operations.

Planners may be required to utilize the USDA-NRCS COMET tool to estimate greenhouse gas emissions reductions and carbon sequestration benefits (training will be provided).

Planners must be able to keep records of meetings, sufficient to document participant planning decisions, and produce a physical conservation plan formatted to TSSWCB specifications. Applicants must be able to coordinate their activities with multiple TCSI partners as well as other TSSWCB program staff and local soil and water conservation districts.

Applicants should have general knowledge of local, state, federal laws related to TSSWCB program areas.

Extensive travel is required, as well as the availability to work extended and/or irregular hours.

Excellent written and verbal communications skills are required along with the ability to work in an office and outdoor environments. Knowledge of computer software programs and other office equipment is needed.

Incumbent must be able to safely and legally operate a motor vehicle, safely accomplish moderate lifting (15 to 44lbs), maintain moderate physical activity with full range of motion and possess the ability to work alone and as a member of a group.

REGISTRATION, CERTIFICATION, OR LICENSURE

Must have or obtain a valid Driver's License.

Applicants must possess a Level III certification from USDA-NRCS (formerly known as Certified Conservation Planner). This planner certification builds on the Level I coursework with additional AgLearn courses and three in-person courses requiring space reservations to attend.

APPLICATION PROCESS

A completed, signed State of Texas application for Employment is required for this position. Mail an original application to the address below. Resumes may be submitted but will not be accepted in lieu of the application. A State of Texas application for Employment may also be completed on the WorkInTexas website at <http://www.workintexas.com>.

For additional information, visit our website at <http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov> or contact:

Human Resource Department
Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board 1497 Country View Lane
Temple, TX 76504-8806

Veteran's Preference

Veterans or members of the Reserve or National Guard with an MOS or additional duties that fall in the fields of OS, YN, YNS, 611X, 612X, 641X, OSS or other related fields pertaining to the minimum experience requirements may meet the minimum qualifications. Additional Military Crosswalk information can be accessed at: https://hr.sao.texas.gov/Compensation/MilitaryCrosswalk/MOSC_ProgramManagement.pdf

Selection Information

Criminal background checks maintained by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) will be conducted before an offer of employment is extended. Evidence of a criminal conviction or other relevant information obtained from the DPS shall not automatically disqualify an individual from employment with the TSSWCB.

At the time of hire, selected applicants must show proof of eligibility to work in the U.S. in compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act. All males who are age 18 through 25 and are required to register with the Selective Service may be asked to present proof of registration or exemption from registration upon hire.

TSSWCB participates in E-Verify and will provide the Social Security Administration (SSA) and, if necessary, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), with information from each new employee's Form I-9 to confirm work authorization.

******Important Notice******

These **temporary** positions exist due to Federal Grant funds available to the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board toward the execution of the provisions of an interagency contract with Texas A&M AgriLife Research, the lead entity administering the Texas Climate-Smart Initiative.

The Texas Climate-Smart Initiative is a grant project funded by USDA-NRCS' Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Grant Announcement [USDA-NRCS-COMM-22-NOFO0001139](#).

Applicants must understand these are TEMPORARY positions that will terminate on May 29, 2028. Applicants should realize that, if selected, their employment may terminate with the unexpected cancellation of federal grant funds prior to May 29, 2028.

All other employment policies and procedures are the same as those that apply to all Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board employees.

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against job applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), if you require reasonable accommodation in the interview and selection process, please call the agency's ADA Coordinator at (254)773-2250x227.