Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI) Specialist

The Oceana Conservation District seeks to fill a full-time Conservation Technician to provide information, perform resource management activities and technical assistance to private landowners in order to implement conservation programs and farming practices funded through the Farm Bill. The position is grant-funded through the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The Conservation Technician will work directly with NRCS to provide general technical assistance and implementation of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSTP), among others. Common conservation practices implemented by farmers in this area include construction of agrichemical handling facilities, on-farm secondary containment of fuel, nutrient and pest management, and grassed waterways.

**Essential Functions**

1) Serve as point of contact for USDA-NRCS and Oceana Conservation District for conservation-related questions and information.
2) Complete required online and classroom trainings with NRCS to become familiar with agency procedures and the conservation planning process.
3) Carry out conservation program administration activities such as compiling documents for and processing Farm Bill Program applications from landowners, ranking applications, managing contracts, corresponding with landowners, entering contract modifications, and conducting status reviews.
4) Assist NRCS staff with field activities such as verifying landowner implementation of conservation practices, completing inventories and evaluations for planned projects, photo-monitoring, surveying of completed conservation practices, project lay-outs, and construction inspections.
5) Assist the Conservation District in achieving its mission of promoting conservation, stewardship and sustainable use of the natural resources in Oceana County through landowner assistance and education. Duties may include assisting with tree sales, highway cleanups, household hazardous waste collections, invasive species management, meeting grant deliverables, and providing outreach and education.
6) Willingness and ability to learn and promote NRCS standards and specifications for conservation practices.
7) Job duties may require working outside in inclement weather, walking over steep or uneven terrain, and/or where biting insects and poison ivy may occur. Job sites may also involve working around heavy machinery and loud noises associated with construction work.

Published Announcement:

**Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI) Specialist** Shelby MI. Full-time Conservation Technician with Bachelor’s Degree in natural resources or agricultural related field. For additional information see posting at [www.oceanaconservation.org](http://www.oceanaconservation.org) or call (231) 861-5600. To apply, send a cover letter, resume and 3 references to Oceana Conservation District, 1064 Industrial Park Drive, Shelby, MI 49455 or by email to suzie.knoll@macd.org by November 30, 2015.
Other CTAI Grant Agreement Functions
1) Complete and implement an Employee Development Plan (EDP).
2) Participate in quarterly scheduled program reviews.
3) Attend trainings and meetings as approved by the Conservation District and USDA-NRCS.
4) Prepare and submit monthly reports regarding progress on assigned tasks.
5) Other duties and functions as assigned.

Education / Experience / Skills / Requirements
1) Bachelor’s Degree in natural resources or agriculture related field.
2) Excellent organizational, management, public presentation and written communication skills.
3) Ability to work independently and effectively with groups and individuals (including those with different viewpoints, educational backgrounds, and/or economic status).
4) Appreciation for and commitment to agricultural sustainability and conservation of natural resources.
5) Computer skills in Microsoft applications including MS Access for reporting.
6) Experience using GIS mapping software preferred.
7) Willingness and ability to learn NRCS computer programs such as Toolkit (GIS add-on), ProTracts (contracting software), and online Document Management System.
8) Prompt to work and appointments.
9) Currently holds and maintains a valid driver’s license.
10) Must be able to pass a federal background check to gain access to office computer system.

Work Schedule
1) Position is based on a 40 hour work week with schedule to be determined in coordination with NRCS and Conservation District Manager.
2) Normal office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.
3) Must be available for occasional evening meetings, weekend events, and overnight conferences/conventions/trainings.

Wages and Benefits
1) Salary range $40,000-$46,000 annually.
2) Mileage and expense reimbursement.
3) Holiday, sick, and vacation compensation (10 paid holidays per year and 4 hours of sick and annual leave earned per pay period).

Employment
The Oceana Conservation District, as an Equal Opportunity employer, complies with applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination. It is the policy of the Oceana Conservation District that no person, on the basis of race, sex, color religion, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, disability, or Vietnam-era veteran status, shall be discriminated against in employment or promotions.

Employment with the District is “at will” and an employee may be terminated at any time with or without cause and with or without notice, subject to applicable state and federal laws. Employment is at the discretion of the Board and contingent upon factors determined by the Board including, but not limited to, available funding, job performance, changes in program direction or organization.

For additional information or questions contact Oceana Conservation District Manager Suzie Knoll at (231) 861-5600.