



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

Position Description

Title: Conservation Planner – Riparian/WQ Lead

Introduction

The Conservation Planner – Riparian/Water Quality Lead works with private landowners, District staff, and partner agencies and organizations to develop and implement conservation plans and practices to protect critical areas, improve water quality, and enhance fish habitat and riparian conditions. The Riparian/WQ Lead proactively engages with community members and partners to implement existing projects, identify local priorities, and develop projects that address high natural resource (water quality) and priority fish habitat needs. The position will implement grant activities, provide project administrative duties as needed, and conduct outreach and educational activities.

Core Functions

1. Develop custom resource management plans for land managers using their goals and existing resources, to address natural resource concerns related to improving water quality and fish habitat.
2. Plan and carry out systematic ecosystem-based inventories to identify and assess landscape characteristics and values.
3. Monitor and evaluate data to determine if land management goals are being achieved.
4. Develop, implement, and evaluate in-stream, riparian habitat, and occasionally upland restoration projects.
5. Provide technical assistance to private landowners by providing voluntary recommendations on natural resource stewardship.
6. Write grant and project funding applications as well as assist with contract negotiation and administration.
7. Develop project cost estimates and manage multiple budgets associated with a variety of grant funding sources.
8. Communicate project activities to co-workers, granting agencies, District Board of Supervisors, project partners, and the community.
9. Provide education and outreach to the public on the value of sustainable and resilient ecosystems. This typically includes tabling at community events, speaking at meetings, and teaching classes to diverse audiences.
10. Periodically supervise staff and/or volunteers.
11. Perform all actions while on official duty in a safe and healthful manner and of a nature to reflect favorably on the Okanogan Conservation District.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities

Implementation of various grants and projects that are focused on the improvement of water quality, riparian, and critical area habitat.

1. Facilitate Similkameen-Okanogan Watershed Action Team meetings in coordination with the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board. Represent the District at local and regional water quality and salmon recovery meetings and work groups.
2. Refine standard operating procedures and manage new lake and stream water quality monitoring projects in coordination with project partners and community stakeholders.
3. Work proactively with private, state, federal and tribal natural resource managers to implement conservation practices to improve riparian condition and water quality.
4. Develop and oversee the installation of riparian planting projects, sometimes managing contractors, landowner-led projects, or coordinating staff and volunteers.
5. Manage contracts associated with the planning and installation of in-stream fish habitat projects.

Required Knowledge & Skills

1. Bachelor's degree or higher with academic training and/or experience in water quality, biology, natural resource management, environmental sciences, fisheries management, agricultural sciences, engineering, or a related discipline.
2. Knowledge of a broad range of soil and water conservation principles, techniques, and practices to apply and install conservation systems, which involve complex and diverse land uses and regulations.
3. Knowledge and skill in water quality standards and criteria for watershed health, riparian restoration, and ecosystem function.
4. Knowledge and skill in riparian function and restoration processes to improve water quality and aquatic habitat.
5. Basic skill in using ArcGIS mapping software.
6. Must be able to effectively communicate verbally and in writing with a diverse range of cooperators, co-workers, and others.
7. Must be self-motivated, able to work independently and in groups, work efficiently, honestly, and positively with individuals and in group settings.
8. Ability and desire to motivate individuals to adopt and implement resource management practices on their property.
9. Organizational, report and informational writing, and research skills are required.
10. Ability to coordinate multiple projects and timelines with flexible scheduling.
11. Possess or earn and maintain, via district provided training, a valid Conservation Planning Apprentice, or higher, certification from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Equivalent planning certification may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the OCD Board of Supervisors.
12. Computer literacy (word processing, spreadsheets, and database management) is required at an intermediate level or higher.
13. Ability to organize and plan own schedule of activities related to work goals set by the district.

14. Ability to maintain accurate records regarding time-keeping and authorized expenses.
15. Must be able to traverse uneven ground in varied weather conditions and occasionally carrying up to 50 pounds of equipment and/or materials.
16. Must have or obtain and maintain a valid Washington State Driver's License.

Preferred Knowledge & Skills

1. Have or gain advanced knowledge of natural resource conditions, agricultural practices, and critical area resources in Okanogan County. Knowledge of Eastern Washington plant communities and ecology.
2. Familiarity with various land use priorities, including agriculture.
3. Knowledge and experience using Global Positioning System (GPS) devices and hand-held tablet computers to collect point, line, and area information to download to a computer system for further analysis and map making.
4. Experience developing, writing, and administering grant applications and projects funded by grants.
5. Knowledge and skill in surveying and identifying soils and/or hydrologic processes.
6. Ability to effectively use a variety of tools to collect, disseminate, and record natural resource data.
7. Ability to translate between English and Spanish verbally and in writing is preferred but not required.

Supervision

This position is under the direct supervision of the Conservation Director. This position may supervise other employees as assigned by the Conservation Director or Executive Director.

Compensation

This position's annual salary range is (Range 49) starting at \$46,644 depending upon skills and experience. This position is eligible for vacation leave, sick leave, medical benefits, 10 paid holidays per year, and Washington State DRS retirement benefits. Terms of compensation and benefits are set by the position appointment letter and may be amended at any time by the Board of Supervisors.