

CROW WING SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD)
Job Description
Forestry Coordinator

FLSA Status: Non-exempt
Reports To: District Manager
Supervises: Potential for intern support and management

SUMMARY

The Forestry Technician coordinates private forest management programs with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). To do this, the technician works with individual private landowners, groups of landowners, nonprofits, and/or associations to provide recommendations on how people can manage their woods for improved water quality or soil benefits.

The Technician writes individual forest management plans for landowners based on MN DNR requirements for Woodland Stewardship Plans; Complete site visits to the property to inventory and assess land and tree conditions; Prepare specific mailing and information to provide to landowners about the availability of grant funds and forestry practices; Complete tracking of landowners contacted, site visits, planned acres, and planned best management practices; Complete best management practices based on NRCS practice standards; Work with private forestry consultants to approve plans and projects for the SWCD grant funds; Develop an forestry program for the SWCD, including tree planting, invasive species management, tree and soil health, wildlife openings, and pollinator habitat, riparian buffers, windbreaks, and silvopasture. .

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Coordinate SWCD Area Private Woodland Management Program to support the implementation of the One Watershed One Plans (1W1P), Landscape Stewardship Plans (LSPs), and other forestry grants (30%)
 - a. Take phone calls, emails, and walk-in office questions from the public and answer their questions about forestry programs such as 2c managed forest land (a property tax designation that reduces forest land tax rate of .065 percent), Sustainable Forestry Incentive Act (SFIA) (State-run program to incentives keeping forest for the forest for minimum 8-year contract period), MN DNR Cost-Share Program, and SWCD Cost-Share Program.
 - b. Provide interested landowners with the MN DNR consultant forester list.
 - c. Work with the consultant forester to ensure that the paperwork is filled out correctly and that their project plans and forest management plans meet our SWCD program qualifications and NRCS standards.
 - d. Host meetings and mass e-mail communication with consultant foresters when applicable.
 - e. Meet with and coordinate with the MN DNR forestry staff on the annual tree sale open house, MN DNR program changes, and other related items.
 - f. Complete site visits to individual property owners to inventory and assess land and tree conditions and provide advice on what landowners can do regarding tree planting, invasive species control, thinning, and diseased trees.
 - g. Write individual forest management plans for landowners based on MN DNR requirements for Woodland Stewardship Plans.
 - h. As an MN DNR Woodland Stewardship Certified plan writer, maintain certification, including obtaining 20 continuing education credits per fiscal year from Sustainable Forest Education Cooperative.
 - i. Partner with other SWCD Staff, state agencies, and nonprofits to support forestland protection efforts.

2. Administer the Tree Sale Program (10%)
 - a. Order and select trees to include: selecting vendors, researching, and creating protocols.
 - b. Find and schedule volunteers to work for the annual tree sale distribution during the Spring week-long event.
 - c. Delegate specific tasks to staff and volunteers helping with the tree sale event.
 - d. Organize the bare-root trees and shrubs for pick up.
 - e. Answer questions from interested tree sale buyers in person, on the phone, or by e-mail regarding what to plant, where to plant, and how to plant trees.
 - f. Write newsletter articles about the tree sale and what species people should plant.
3. Develop and Maintain Community Partnerships (10%)
 - a. Private Consultant Plan Writers
 - Work with private Woodland Stewardship Plan Writers to approve plans and projects for the SWCD grant funds.
 - b. State agencies, local government units (LGUs), and nonprofits
 - BWSR
 - NRCS
 - MN DNR
 - Camp Ripley
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - Counties, cities, and other SWCDs
 - MN SWCD State Forestry Association
 - Great River Greening
4. Forestry, soil health, and wildlife (30%)
 - a. Develop and coordinate forestry, soil health, and wildlife programs.
 - Target and develop specific direct mailing advertisements and information to landowners about the potential availability of grant funds to implement forestry practices, including riparian buffers, windbreaks, silvopasture, invasive species, wildlife habitat, and tree planting.
 - Speak with landowners and host various events (e.g., township meetings) to help the public better understand forestry, soil health, and wildlife practices that can be completed on their property.
 - Identify landowners who are willing to implement practices on their property.
 - Provide technical assistance and grant funds to help support landowners who are implementing forestry practices on their land.
 - b. Research project opportunities and prioritize future projects.
 - c. Work collaboratively with SWCD staff, NRCS, BWSR, and other nonprofit organizations to develop and promote agroforestry and soil health.
 - To include in-person or virtual meetings and written and verbal communication.
5. Community Activities (5%)
 - a. Prepare and present conservation programs to conservation groups, lake associations, schools, and churches.
 - b. Participate in the Forestview Middle School two-day 5th grader Forestry Days at the School Forest.
 - Prepare materials and presentations for approximately 500 students.
6. Grants and Other Administration (20%)

- a. Write grants for the SWCD, meeting the mission and financial needs of the organization.
- b. Perform semi-annually or quarterly grant reporting based on funding source and grantor.
- c. To meet internal and external reporting needs, track the number of landowner interactions and site visits, the number of forest stewardship plans, landowners enrolled into SFIA, acres for soil health, forestry interactions, number of projects and acres, mailing success rates, watershed tracking, individual hours by project, monthly staff reports, and event attendance.
- d. Work with administrative staff to ensure all grants are appropriately and accurately billed and spent.
- e. Complete required online reporting for state and federal grants.

SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Complete various tasks and perform miscellaneous projects as needed by management.

JOB SPECIFICATIONS

Required Qualifications

Four college-level courses are required for this position: one qualifying plant course, Dendrology, Botany, or Plant Taxonomy, and three qualifying classes, Silviculture, Ecology, and Wildlife.

Desired Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree or two-year degree in forestry, natural resources management, wildlife, soils, or related field preferred.
- Two or more years of related natural resource professional experience.
- Experience with GPS, GIS, and other data collection applications and tools.
- Computer skills, including Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint); Adobe Acrobat Reader and Canva preferred.
- Possess a valid MN driver's license and a good driving record.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of forest ecology, soils, and management principles.
- Knowledge of forbs, grasses, and trees for identification.
- Basic understanding of soil health principles and agroforestry practices
- Strong written and verbal communication skills to communicate in person, by telephone and video within the organization, one-on-one with landowners, consultants, etc.
- Able to communicate and build relationships effectively with a diverse group of individuals.
- Able to effectively conduct presentations to the public, including large and small groups, conservation groups, schools, and churches.
- Able to work independently and as part of a team.
- Able to plan, prioritize, coordinate, and manage work in an organized manner.
- Effective listening and problem-solving ability to satisfy landowners' unique needs.
- Creativity to develop new innovative ways to engage landowners to enroll in soil health and forestry practices.
- Able to work safely to prevent on-the-job accidents and injuries.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY TO PERFORM THIS JOB

Incumbent must be able to:

- Hear and speak to give and receive detailed information through verbal communication; read and understand written documents.
- Complete highly physical fieldwork, including but not limited to: planting trees manually or using tree planter machinery, digging holes (one foot in depth) test soil, walking around wooded areas and dense vegetation, walking on pastureland, and riding on a 4-wheeler and other all-terrain vehicles.
- Walk property and identify tree and plant species within a given plot or land area to create a tree inventory.
- Walk outdoors on individual properties for 1 to 2 hours per property, depending on property acreage.
- For tree sale: pick-up, lift, and carry up to 15 tree seedling boxes (25-40 pounds each) into a truck bed, placing them for tree sale distribution (carrying 10 to 500 feet, depending on the tree sale pickup site). We sell 15,000 seedling trees packaged in 500 to 1000 per box.
- Occasionally work outside regular business hours (e.g., nights and weekends).
- Able to walk on varied terrain independently, in all-weather conditions, climbing at 60% or higher slope depending on landowner property, walking individual distances of up to two miles.
- Manual dexterity and arm/shoulder strength and mobility to grasp tools, lift and carry 25-40 lb. boxes, work on computers, drive vehicles, unload equipment, etc.
- Repetitive manual dexterity motion, such as typing on the computer.
- Physical exertion that includes pulling, pushing, reaching, bending, standing, walking, and light lifting of boxes, bags, files, and electronic equipment, typically not over 30 lbs.
- Physical stamina, including long periods of sitting and performing computer work for most of the day.

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT USED

Incumbent must be able to:

- Drive a company and/or personal vehicle.
- Use technology, including a computer, phone, GPS (phone app or tablet app), and GIS.
- Tree planter equipment attached to the rear of a pickup truck; may be required to move planter; must be able to instruct the landowner on how to use tree planter.
- Clinometer and prism for tree height identification.
- Hand tools, to include shovels, rakes, hand augers.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Incumbent must be able to:

- Regularly withstand Minnesota's hot and cold weather conditions to perform outdoor responsibilities.
- Travel locally required, up to 30-50%.
- Work a flexible schedule that may include evenings and weekends, as needed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have reviewed this job description and understand that this job description does not necessarily list all the functions or accountabilities of the job. Management may ask employees to perform additional duties and tasks, and employees are expected to continually assess where their assistance would benefit their coworkers and the organization and step in to fill those gaps. Management reserves the right to revise and update job descriptions at any time.

Employment at the SWCD is “at-will,” meaning either I or the SWCD Board may terminate my employment at any time.

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date