

South Yakima Conservation District Resource Conservation Technician

South Yakima Conservation District provides voluntary, non-regulatory technical assistance to landowners in the lower Yakima Valley by implementation of Best Management Practices to protect natural resources while maintaining agricultural viability. This includes dairy and livestock nutrient management planning, irrigation water management, and conservation/farm planning. SYCD is also part of the Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Management Area (LYV GWMA or GWMA) implementation team. GWMA's goal is to reduce nitrate concentrations in the groundwater.

Position Objectives: This full-time position will address on-farm natural resource issues by providing direct one-on-one technical assistance to private landowners and voluntary participants within the boundaries of SYCD. This position entails working closely with other agencies, including the Dairy Nutrient Management Program of Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). The Resource Conservation Technician will also work on farm/conservation planning, implementation of Best Management Practices, and providing educational and outreach information to local producers, agencies, partners, and the community.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Promote the organization, role, mission, goals, and programs of the Conservation District as identified in SYCD's short- and long-range plans.
- Organize and plan education and outreach activities with other agencies for landowners such as field demonstrations, presentations, workshops, etc.
- Assist in developing irrigation water management plans. Install soil moisture monitoring equipment and collect and record data.
- Assist with writing Nutrient Management Plans for dairies and other livestock operations.
- Assist district staff and partners in promoting cost-share programs.
- Leading and working with field crews in performing deep soil sampling and other soil health activities.
- Undergo training to become a conservation planner through in-class, on-the-job, and online training courses
- Attend the District's monthly Board Meetings and provide a verbal progress report to the Board of Supervisors
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- Attend regular GWMA-related meetings
- Participate on committees and in special group meetings as assigned
- Know and comply with all District Personnel Policies
- Assist with general office duties as needed
- Perform other tasks as assigned by the District Manager

Qualifications and Requirements

- Bachelor's degree and a solid background in agricultural operations, practices, and systems such as irrigation, soil and water conservation principles, and water quality concerns. Educational requirements may be waived based on experience.
- High degree of diplomacy and confidentiality is required
- Ability to maintain a professional work ethic while completing all duties assigned in a timely and professional manner.
- High level of collaboration with partners is expected, including agricultural professionals, landowners, and the community
- Strong written and oral communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to work with diverse stakeholders
- Self-motivated and able to work independently as well as in groups
- Fluent in the English language. Ability to understand and communicate in Spanish is not required but is a plus.
- Ability to walk long distances in all types of terrain with possible exposure to inclement weather; lifting and carrying equipment and materials.
- Computer skills with Microsoft office. A basic knowledge of GIS software and/or other mapping tools is a plus.
- Must be legally authorized to work in the United States and have a valid Washington State driver's license.
- Knowledge of Conservation Districts and/or Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a plus, along with other agriculture- and natural resource-related fields of study, instruction, or work experience.

- Prior to employment with South Yakima Conservation District, a background check including criminal record history will be conducted. Information from the background check will not necessarily preclude employment but will be considered to determine suitability and competence to perform in the position.

Working Conditions

Schedule: Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Work Setting: Work is performed both indoors in an office environment and in the field. Some field work will include onsite visits with landowners, district staff, and other cooperators, as well as operation of district equipment.

Travel Requirements: Occasional travel is an expectation and may be required on a regular basis within the District's boundaries. Some out-of-area travel may occur for conferences, or trainings.

Tools and Equipment: General office equipment as well as field tools and equipment, such as company vehicles, ATVs, UTVs, utility trailers, soil sampling equipment, and irrigation water management equipment.

Customer Interactions: Interactions will be frequent with other agencies such as NRCS, WSDA, other Conservation Districts, local landowners, consultants, community members, and other partners.

Salary and Benefits: FTE \$3,400 – \$4,200 per month dependent on education, experience, and qualifications. Benefits include major holidays, overtime, stipend for medical insurance premiums, accrued vacation, sick leave, and a 403(b) retirement program (employee-managed).

How to Apply: Please provide a cover letter including your contact information and your resume with work experience. Submit applications via email to South Yakima Conservation District Manager Rodney Heit (rh@sycd.us).