Conservation Program Assistant
Mecosta Conservation District

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT:
Mecosta Conservation District is seeking a candidate to serve as full-time Conservation Program Assistant in Big Rapids, Michigan. This is a full-time (40 hours/week) position, typically working between the hours of 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. The employee will be employed by the Mecosta Conservation District and housed at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center. This is an administrative and technical support position under the day-to-day supervision of the of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) District Conservationist.

POSITION OBJECTIVE:
To perform resource management activities that assists the conservation partnership in efficiently processing and maintaining records. The purpose of the work is to provide oversight, administrative, and technical support for voluntary conservation programs implemented through the Farm Bill.

JOB DUTIES:
- Provides landowners information and assistance pertaining to program and eligibility requirements, and guidance on completing application materials, payment process, and paperwork requirements
- Reviews customer applications for completeness and eligibility
- Enters contract and program data into NRCS Software programs and prepares reports
- Reviews payment requests and verifies payment documents to ensure complete information is provided and all data is added to files
- Works with land operations to ensure they are current with program eligibility and payment limitations
- Reviews and processes administrative letters and documents, waiver requests, status reviews, contract implementation contract modifications, and cancellations or terminations
- Tracks the status of Farm Bill contracts through reports and communications with staff
- Tracks program performance and generates reports on workload process, contract status, expiring contracts, required modifications and payments
- Assists with the presentation of progress reports and expiring contracts
- Receives and completes requests for statistical or informative material regarding NRCS programs
- Assists with assigned function related to financial and programmatic audits
- Serves as the programmatic support specialist for the designated NRCS representative within the service area, or as directed by NRCS
- Works closely and maintains a good working relationship with other resource management professionals, both public and private, in support of a holistic approach to the management of natural resources
- The assistance provided by the program assistant shall be in accordance with applicable NRCS policy, procedures, and practice standards
- The program assistant shall work cooperatively with other conservation districts and employees in the service area to support the goals and programs of the Mecosta Conservation District
- Completes other essential activities as required by the grant agreement
QUALIFICATIONS:
• General knowledge of local agricultural production and forestry practices preferred but not required
• Ability to work independently of direct supervision and effectively with co-workers as a team
• Ability to build relationships with individual landowners, various agencies, and other conservation partners
• Knowledge of administrative processes in order to follow filing and tracking procedures
• Proficient use of a PC and Microsoft Office Suite, including MS Excel and Power Point
• Proven ability to analyze problems and take corrective actions
• Excellent organizational, written, and verbal communication skills
• General office and customer service experience
• Pass a federal background check and hold a valid Michigan’s driver’s license

SALARY, BENEFITS, WORK HOURS, LOCATION:
This position will be based in Big Rapids, MI. This region is home to a variety of agriculture, including row crops, orchards, dairy, livestock and horticulture. Forestry and wildlife habitat management are also a large component of workload in the area. The majority of work time will be spent in the office, with occasional field work. The Mecosta Conservation District office is co-located with NRCS and this strong organizational relationship generates a fun, charismatic and busy workplace. This is an hourly position including some benefits (paid federal holidays, vacation, and sick leave). Pay rate will be $13-$17, based on experience. Typical work hours will be Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Some evening and weekend work will be required. This position is a grant funded position with the opportunity for yearly renewal on October 1st.

TO APPLY:
Please submit a cover letter, resume, supplemental questions, and up to 3 references by email to Brook Baumann, District Administrator, at brook.baumann@macd.org by midnight on December 22nd. Please combine all application materials into one PDF file for review and state “Application-Conservation Technician” in the email subject line. Contact Brook Baumann at the above email address with any questions related to the position. To obtain further information about the Mecosta Conservation District visit our website at www.mecostacd.org.

Mecosta Conservation district is an equal opportunity employer and provider.