

VENANGO CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Job Description: Watershed Specialist

DESCRIPTION

The Watershed Specialist provides technical, informational and organizational assistance that will improve watershed organization development and the quality and quantity of the Commonwealth's surface and groundwater resources. The focus of this work relates to watershed assessment, procurement of funding, technical assistance and the creation, implementation and coordination of work plans and strategies to restore and protect groundwater and surface water resources.

SUPERVISION

The Watershed Specialist receives occasional instruction and supervision from the District Manager in regard to daily work duties and program responsibilities. The Watershed Specialist also reports directly to the Venango Conservation District Board of Directors.

TRAINING PROVIDED

All appropriate training applicable to the Watershed Specialist position will be provided by the District Manager, peers, and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP).

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Primary Duties

- Utilize inventories, land use information, available water quality assessments and various water quality testing equipment to identify existing and potential sources of non-point source pollution.
- Develop programs to achieve restoration and protection goals based on stream quality, land use and input from cooperating agencies, organizations, individuals and governing agencies.
- Facilitate the transfer of technical information among local, state and federal resource agencies, watershed groups and land managers.
- Prepare and submit grant proposals to provide funding for non-point source watershed activities (technical support positions, 319 projects, mini-grants, cost share funding etc.) and other grant applications for funding watershed planning and implementation projects.
- Work closely with PA DEP Regional Watershed Manager on all proposals within the County's watersheds to avoid duplication of efforts.
- Support existing watershed organizations with technical assistance, watershed planning and educational programs.
- Provide technical assistance in the planning and implementation of riparian buffers and other structural and non-structural Best Management Practices (BMPs) designed to protect surface and groundwater quality.
- Work with municipalities and County Planning Commissions to adopt model ordinances and more flexible design criteria that promote water quality protection, flood plain management, stormwater management etc.

- Develop workshops and implement demonstration projects on the interrelationship between land use decisions and non-point source pollution prevention.
- Assist municipalities in resolving stormwater complaints and land use conflicts.
- Work with watershed groups and various government agencies to complete Watershed Restoration Action Strategies (WRAS) and assess the effectiveness of existing non-point source programs.
- Attend meetings as assigned.
- Prepare articles or newsletters and reports as assigned.
- Serve as project coordinator for PA Senior Environmental Corps in Venango County and the Venango Watershed Education Initiative.
- Other duties as assigned by Venango Conservation District Manager and Board of Directors.

Education Duties

- Provide educational programs to school groups, civic organizations or other interested parties regarding watershed conservation and planning and water quality/quantity management.
- Prepare public information “spots” for the media (and copy PA DEP) on what is being accomplished by various groups in different watersheds to restore and protect the waters of the Commonwealth.
- Encourage agencies and landowners to cooperate in watershed initiatives and inform them of the technical resources and funding opportunities that are available.
- Coordinate Venango Envirothon competition event.

Position Development Duties

- Training to enhance communication and writing skills.
- Training that enhances advancing technology related to water quality issues and best management practices.
- Familiarize with the environmental laws and regulations for which the Venango Conservation District is responsible.
- Familiarize with current land use practices, innovative planning techniques and nonstructural BMPs.
- Through trainings, improve ability to carry out the duties of the Watershed Specialist that are offered by cooperating agencies.
- Trainings declared mandatory by the PA DEP or PA Department of Agriculture.

OTHER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage program records on district program computer system as well as paper files.
- Utilize water/soil testing equipment, surveying equipment, maps, blueprints and other environmental tools as needed to perform job functions.
- Attend meetings and trainings as required.
- Participate in other district programs and duties as assigned by the District Manager or the Venango Conservation District Board of Directors.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Bachelor's Degree in biology, environmental resource management, hydrology, natural or environmental sciences or related field of study.
- Experience with watershed management, assessments, restoration and protection projects, coordination of stream programs, land use planning and GIS is recommended.
- Ability to communicate and educate effectively both verbally and in writing to a wide range of individuals and groups.
- Ability to work with minimal supervision.
- Valid PA Driver's License required.
- Irregular working hours involving evening and weekend and overnight work.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Works indoors in adequate work space, lighting, temperatures and ventilation.
- Works with average indoor exposure to noise, stress and disruptions.
- Works with normal exposure to indoor dust/dirt.
- Subject to working outdoors at construction sites and may be subject to heavy and/or dangerous equipment, poor water conditions, odors and natural elements.
- Works in an environment where may need to sit, stand, walk and drive intermittently throughout the workday, with occasional kneeling twisting, stooping, bending, climbing necessary to carry out work duties.
- Dexterity requirements range from simple coordinated movements of fingers, hands, feet, legs, torso necessary to carry out duties of the job.