



# Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District

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*To protect, conserve and restore the natural resources of Dubuque County for present and future generations by actively seeking resources and partnerships to promote Soil Conservation and improve Water Quality.*

## Conservation Agronomist

**Position Objective:** To guide, assist, and engage Dubuque County farmers in addressing agronomy delivery leading to increased farmer participation, agronomy, soil health principles, and conservation practice adoption. Additionally, assist the Soil & Water Conservation District in implementing a performance-based conservation approach in Dubuque County including Ag retailer integration and engagement.

**Location:** Dubuque County, Iowa.

### Essential Functions

- Be a conservation and agronomy technical specialist for the Dubuque SWCD, and landowners in designated watershed project areas.
- Provide technical assistance support to landowners and farmers for integrated conservation and agronomy delivery including:
  - Identification of appropriate in-field and edge-of-field agronomy and conservation practices for soil and water resource management practices and systems to address resource concerns, farmer/landowner goals, and watershed project goals.
  - Monitoring conservation practice performance for continual improvement.
  - Connecting farmers and landowners with cost share and securing necessary technical design standards for practice application.
- Implementation of watershed management plans.
- Promote new performance-based conservation opportunities to farmers.
- Provide technical assistance and support to integrate ag retailers and agronomy staff in engaging farmers in conservation.
- Build relationships and coordinate projects with project partners and a variety of audiences in the ag retail territory including farmers, landowners, USDA Service Center personnel, local partners, and other commodity organizations.
- Participate in partner meetings, trainings, events, and field days.
- Follow partner safety guidelines and requirements when working in their facilities
- Prepare work plans, quarterly and annual reports, and support grant development.
- Coordinate with other Dubuque SWCD, IDALS and NRCS and staff.
- Research related to conservation issues, best practices, best science, service providers, permitting requirements, and potential cost share or funding assistance.
- Manages and coordinates the implementation of the water quality grants and other associated funds. This includes administering, maintaining quality control, developing effective lines of communication and involving many partners in the watershed management authority and at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Conducts routine field surveys and site investigations.
- Works one on one with landowners, farmers and other decision makers to facilitate the

- adoption of best management practices.
- Provides technical assistance to landowners in site analysis, planning, and design.
- Has knowledge of and implements innovative and traditional water quality and soil conservation practices.
- Project administration including cost share management, activity report preparation, documentation of environmental benefits, and tracking of project implementation. Presents annual reports to the public and sponsoring agencies.
- Use social media for outreach, including website, Facebook, etc.
- Create and distribute flyers, newsletters, and articles
- Hold public workshops and field days
- Attends training sessions, seminars, and professional meetings

## **COMPETENCIES**

- Practical understanding and application of agronomy and environmental science
- Coordinating project activities
- Setting a strategic vision
- Establishing relationships
- Evaluating and implementing ideas
- Navigating organizations
- Acting as a champion for change
- Communicating effectively

## **TRAVEL**

- This position requires remote work in the field and requires regular travel within the assigned region. Regular travel to the Dubuque County West Campus and the Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District in Epworth is also required. Occasionally travel is outside the local area and overnight.

## **SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY**

- This position reports to the Watershed Program Director.

## **REQUIRED EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

Bachelor's degree or higher in environmental sciences, soil science, agricultural engineering, biological sciences, ecology, sociology, or related field

OR

Four or more years' of experience working in retail agronomy, watershed project implementation, and/or conservation delivery services.

Strong understanding of:

- agricultural industry and the ag retail system
- cropping systems
- conservation delivery systems
- promotion of conservation practices
- Capable of working in a team environment while working independently to achieve specific project deliverables.
- Ability to work remotely and from affiliated office locations
- Understanding of computer technologies including data storage, statistical software, GIS, and monitoring equipment interfaces.
- Valid driver's license required.

#### **PREFERRED EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

- Master's degree in or related field.
- Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) certification

#### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally required to stand; walk; sit; drive long distances; walk in fields and uneven terrain; collect water samples from streams, tile outlets, and other water sources; balance; stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is exposed to weather conditions prevalent at the time. The noise level in the work environment will vary.

#### **WORK ENVIRONMENT:**

This job operates in a professional office environment. This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, and software platforms such as Office 365. Occasional field work is required and sampling equipment such as water sampling equipment, , soil probes, and GPS equipment are also used.

#### **OTHER DUTIES**

Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

## **COMPENSATION**

**\$46,217 - \$69,721 (DOE)**

Flexible work hours. Some evening and weekend events as required. Medical and dental insurance. Iowa Public Employees Retirement System (IPERS). Holiday and Sick Leave.

## **AAP/EEO STATEMENT**

The Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

Job Type: Full-time

### **To Apply:**

Submit a PDF cover letter, resume, transcripts and three references to Colleen Siefken at [colleen.siefken@ia.nacdnet.net](mailto:colleen.siefken@ia.nacdnet.net) and CC Eric Schmechel @ [eric.schmechel@dubuquecounty.us](mailto:eric.schmechel@dubuquecounty.us) by October 9, 2020.