**South Yakima Conservation District**

**Resource Conservation Technician**

South Yakima Conservation District (SYCD) in Zillah, WA provides voluntary, non-regulatory technical assistance to landowners by implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect natural resources while maintaining agricultural viability. Natural resources include soil, water, air, plants, animals, energy, and human considerations. SYCD is one of 45 conservation districts in the state of Washington under the coordination of Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC).

SYCD’s programs assist landowners with a broad range of BMPs and planning categories for farm/conservation planning, including (but not limited to) dairy and livestock nutrient management planning, irrigation water management, riparian habitat enhancement, rangeland wildlife habitat and fire suppression, and soil health. SYCD is also part of the Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Management Area (LYV GWMA or GWMA) implementation team and Yakima County Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). GWMA’s goal is to reduce nitrate concentrations in the groundwater, and VSP seeks to protect critical areas on agricultural lands.

**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 Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE), and many other agencies and organizations. The Resource Conservation Technician will also work on farm/conservation planning, implementation of BMPs, 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.
* Lead and work with field crews in performing deep soil sampling and other soil health activities.
* Undergo training in classroom settings, on the job, and online to become a certified conservation planner
* Attend the District’s monthly Board Meetings and provide a verbal progress report to the Board of Supervisors
* Attend regular meetings related to district programs
* 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 along with 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 may 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 at the field office in Zillah, WA 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.

**Salary and Benefits:** FTE $3,400 – $4,200 per month dependent on education, experience, and qualifications. Benefits include major holidays, paid 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 along with your resume with work experience. Submit applications via email to South Yakima Conservation District Manager Rodney Heit (rh@sycd.us).