

The Miami County Conservation District's mission for nearly 80 years has been to promote and install soil and water conservation practices in partnership with landowners and land managers in Miami County. In recent years the Miami County Conservation District has partnered with the Johnson County Conservation District to coordinate the four county Hillsdale watershed restoration and protection effort. The Miami County Conservation District seeks an urban conservationist who will work at the urban/suburban/rural interface, which characterizes the watershed area, with regard to conservation and environment, to advance principles of green infrastructure planning and implementation, low impact development and strategic conservation.

This full time, temporary, position is located at the Miami County Conservation District Office in the USDA Service Center in Paola, Kansas and offers telework options. We seek a highly independent, yet collaborative person who will be supervised by the Miami County Conservation District board to carry out deliverable outlined in our technical assistance grant, which is the primary source of funding for the urban conservationist position.

The ideal candidate will have a minimum of three years demonstrated success working in a growing metropolitan community or region performing similar or related work. This position will require advanced communication and networking skills to navigate a complex established partnership that includes federal, state and local government entities, private and public landowners and land managers, advocacy groups, nonprofits and others. The focus of this position is result-oriented implementation as there is a plethora of plans and policy framework developed to guide actions and efforts. These include the Hillsdale Watershed nine-element plan, Southwest Johnson County Area plan, Johnson County Stormwater Watershed Master plan, KC Metro Green Infrastructure Policy framework as well as others.

Historically partners including USDA/NRCS, Kansas Forest Service, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and Kansas State University Research & Extension provide technical assistance to watershed organizations and conservation district for traditional best management practices. These partners are less familiar with best management practices associated with developing urbanized areas, which Hillsdale watershed and cities in both counties increasingly need. Practices such as parking lot bio swales, residential rain gardens, native plant landscaping, green site design, treatment wetlands, and other green infrastructure all require a different focus, which we hope to provide through this position.

Example of tasks expected of the Urban Conservationist:

- Providing technical assistance to landowners, local government, and others to apply best management practices for water quality and soil conservation. These might include enhancing public and private gardens or landscaping with treatment features such as native plants and or rain gardens as well as soil testing, urban forestry, green roofs, native planting, and storm water treatment systems.

- Plan and host a minimum of four meetings or workshops per year for landowners, residence, local government, and others for the purpose of exploring and expanding soil and water conservation opportunities and practices in urban areas.
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with federal, state and local agencies to identify areas of mutual interest and opportunities for collaboration in the area of urban conservation.
- Quickly learn about available cost share and financial incentive programs available to support installation of practices; training on Farm Bill programs and services will be provided by our partners at NRCS.
- Engage volunteers and partners to build community and create stewardship opportunities throughout Johnson and Miami counties.
- Maintain regular outreach and communications via print and digital materials, targeted mailings, blogs, articles, social media and in-person talks.
- The urban conservationist will maintain all necessary grant reporting and management documents with attention to detail and timelines. They will also work to draft future grant proposals with guidance from conservation district board for the project and communicate with current funders, as well as searching for new funding partners as needed.
- Provide administrative assistance to NRCS, specifically focused on, but not limited to the Conservation Stewardship Program as a term of the technical assistance grant and the Memorandum of Agreement between NRCS and the Miami County Conservation District.
- Other tasks as assigned by the Conservation District Board.

### **Qualifications**

This is a demanding role that work requires initiative, drive and follow through. Candidate must have at minimum:

- Bachelor degree in natural resources or related field.
- Valid drivers license and reliable transportation
- Ability to work evenings and some weekends for various events; occasional overnight travel may be necessary.
- As an employee of the Miami County Conservation District, candidate must be able to pass a federal background investigation.

In addition, candidate must have:

- Three to five years demonstrated success in urban or community conservation with the ability to work with minimal supervision.
- Knowledge of a variety of conservation fields such as soil science, hydrology, biology, water quality, soil and water conservation and other related fields; as well as familiarity with local, state, and federal laws applicable to implementation of BMPs in urban, suburban and rural areas.

- Professional knowledge of wide range of natural resources and environmental conservation concepts, principles, methods and techniques.
- Ability to analyze, interpret, evaluate and devise strategies to address environmental problems into the impacts of various practices.
- Confidence and competency with basic computer programs, social media and mapping program fluency is also desired.
- Knowledge and skills to develop discuss with clarity and to promote solutions to environmental problems via writing speaking and visual communication to individual groups and governing body.
- Fluency in written and spoken English is required, additional language skills could provide beneficial.

Starting salary is \$53,000 and includes health coverage and paid leave. This is a one-year, grant funded position, with potential for renewal and expansion. Miami County Conservation District is a subdivision of state government, governed by a local elected board, and is an equal opportunity employer. Please submit resumes and cover letters to [info@miamicountycd.com](mailto:info@miamicountycd.com) by 5 PM Friday, December 9, 2022 initial interviews will be held the week of January 9, 2023 with a desired start date no later than February 1, 2023