



Soil Health Intern Position

Temporary part-time; flexible work schedule of 5-20 hours a week.

Can work with ILA or other school intern requirements

Application Deadline: December 10, 2021

Thurston Conservation District seeks an enthusiastic learner who is highly organized, thorough and detail oriented with strong math, analysis and computer skills to intern with our Soil Health Program.

POSITION DESCRIPTION:

This internship focuses on learning applied soil science and nutrient management, particularly as it's used as part of Thurston Conservation District's Soil Health Program and our soil testing services.

The first part of the internship will involve an overview of basic soil science concepts and agronomy, covering the importance of macronutrients and micronutrient management for local crops. The proper management of these nutrients, particularly nitrogen, is key for environmental health and water quality, and we'll learn about the intersections between the two.

Soil testing at Thurston Conservation District is provided for a wide range of crops, including but not limited to vegetables, pasture, orchard crops, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, cut flowers, turf and lawns. We'll cover nutrient management in the context of these crops.

We provide recommendations for amending based on soil test results using both organic and conventional agriculture practices.

The second part of the internship will focus on writing and sharing soil test interpretations and recommendations with customers. With supervision from a Natural Resource Specialist, the intern will learn to put together those reports and results, share them with customers, and follow up with any questions customer have.

In addition to a focus on soil testing and interpretation, there may be additional opportunity for the following:

- Overview of manure testing and how to pair with (and properly recommend) manure as a fertilizer to match nutrient needs identified in soil tests.
- In-field collection of soil samples
- Discussion of cover crops, green manures, and other agricultural practices that conserve resources and improve soil health.
- Opportunity to assist with educational events and outreach about the Soil Health Program.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The main learning tools for creating soil test interpretations and recommendations for customers will be university extension publications and existing spreadsheets set to auto-calculate fertilization rates. We'll review past and current soil test results submitted to Thurston CD for analysis throughout the internship as examples prior to trying out an interpretation on your own.

Intern should have their own computer, access to Microsoft Excel or Open Office, and ability to use video conferencing software.

NECESSARY & HELPFUL EXPERIENCE

- Familiarity with and ability to work within Excel spreadsheets
- Math competency such that you can understand and complete application rate calculations
- Familiarity with agriculture, nutrient cycling, fertilizers, and basic chemistry is helpful.
- The ability to communicate complex concepts in "easy to understand" language. This will be used to write recommendations for soil nutrient management. Examples of past reports will be provided as guides.
- Passion for and interest in agronomy, soil health, agriculture, and/or chemistry
- Clear communication skills
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY WORKSPACE

Here at Thurston Conservation District our employees and the people we serve come from all walks of life. We strive to hire and work with great people from a wide variety of backgrounds. We believe in the importance of recognizing the value that each of us contributes to the success of the District's mission. Having a diverse workforce is the District's greatest resource of strength and knowledge. It is through the combination of talents and abilities that we can pursue finding effective ways to best serve our community. We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace for everyone. All employees, interns, and volunteers receive consideration without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status. Please let us know if you need accommodation to participate in the application process.

SCHEDULE & WORKING CONDITIONS:

This intern position is temporary and un-paid. Internships are generally part-time (20 hours per week maximum) with flexible work hours. Thurston Conservation District has the flexibility to work with school or program internship requirements in order to support interns in meeting their academic goals and requirements.

Local travel, occasional evening and weekend hours are possible and negotiable. During the current Coronavirus pandemic, work will primarily be performed at home with occasional work in the District offices. Access to internet, video conferencing materials, and a computer are necessary to complete the internship. Employees, interns, and volunteers working in a shared work space are required to wear a facemask covering their nose and mouth.

THURSTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT, a non-regulatory government agency, educates and assists the citizens of Thurston County in the management of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations, inspiring voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices.

TO APPLY:

Please submit your application by end of the day on December 10, 2021. Please include the following in your application package:

1. Resume, including relevant work experiences and course experience
2. Cover letter sharing how this specific internship helps meet your academic or personal goals
3. Two (2) professional/educational references
4. If relevant, a copy of any internship requirements from your school that you would be using this internship to complete and contact information for the academic advisory or faculty you would be reporting to.

Your cover letter is not to exceed one page. Letters of recommendation may be included. Applications are reviewed upon receipt and interviews may begin prior to the application deadline.

Send electronically (*please no paper copies*) to: ***job-applications@thurstoncd.com***

Please include: **Soil Health Intern – YOUR NAME** in the subject line.

**We sincerely thank you for your interest in interning with the
Thurston Conservation District team!**