



Natural Resource Specialist

Permanent Full Time (36 hours per week)

\$50,000 - \$60,000, DOQ

Competitive benefits package

Priority Application Deadline November 30, 2025

Position open until filled, applicants are encouraged to apply while posted.

Thurston Conservation District is looking for an experienced self-starter who is a dynamic, energetic, highly organized creative thinker with an interest in natural resources conservation and supporting local agriculture. The successful applicant must have a strong work ethic to become part of a cohesive team of passionate individuals in a hands-on and rewarding work environment.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

This position works directly with community members to help them meet their land-based goals in a non-regulatory and voluntary environment. This position works with farmers, landowners, and residents in Thurston County to provide technical assistance, conservation plans, and project development for their properties and operations. The Natural Resource Specialist assists community members with identifying and implementing a wide range of natural resource conservation practices using Natural Resource Conservation Services' conservation assessment tools and supports the implementation of cost share projects. A primary focus will be small farm planning and technical education. Additional experience in water quality topics, habitat restoration, forage and pasture renovation, and/or soil health is desired. This position coordinates and implements other field projects as assigned by the Agricultural Program Manager. This position may occasionally supervise other volunteers, interns, work crews, and/or project contractors on specific projects.

The Natural Resource Specialist is responsible for utilizing District and partner programs to benefit both the landowner/operator and the soil, water, air, plant, animal, human and energy natural resources present on the property. This position will work directly with a highly collaborative and professional technical team, under the mentorship of the Agriculture Program Manager, to identify, develop and implement projects that address natural resources, habitat concerns, and agricultural priorities of cooperators. Thurston Conservation District offers a dynamic and passionate work environment with a supportive staff team.

Eligibility for this position is contingent upon the individual's ability to perform the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation. This position requires frequent sitting, standing, walking over difficult terrain and on construction sites, interacting with livestock, lifting up to 50 lbs., occasional travel and periodic evening and weekend work.

Thurston Conservation District is governed by volunteer community stakeholders who generously donate their time to serve on our Board of Supervisors and bring additional knowledge, experience and unique perspectives to support and strengthen the mission of the District.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Builds relationships with and provides excellent customer service to community members including: a wide range of public and elected officials, technical and conservation experts, farmers, landowners, and community partners

- Identifies and guides implementation of appropriate conservation practices that meet the needs of landowners/operators and address natural resource concerns
- Has knowledge of TCD's programs and services and can help direct community members to the appropriate program and service to meet their goals and concerns
- Applies for cost-share funds and facilitates project implementation
- Monitors and documents implementation of best management practices (BMPs) at field activity locations
- Prepares reports and documents activities, program progress, and accomplishments as directed
- Collaborates with Education and Outreach staff to present at meetings, workshops, tours and educational opportunities, as needed
- Participates in regular training opportunities to maintain a high level of proficiency
- Attends public meetings as a representative of the District

The duties listed above are intended only as general illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. Specific statements of duties not included does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. Job descriptions are subject to change by the District as the needs of the District and requirements of the job change.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

- Ability to communicate, verbally and in writing, effectively with private landowners, project partners, and co-workers, and capacity to engage diverse communities.
- Must be a self-driven and resourceful team player with a proven problem-solving ability.
- Ability to manage multiple priorities in a fast-paced environment. Demonstrated ability to manage complex workload calmly and competently, including multiple grants, programs, or projects, variable timelines and deliverables, and associated administrative tasks required to meet deadlines and achieve grant/project goals
- Demonstrated communication, technical, and coordination experience.
- Demonstrated ability to work with minimal supervision, seeking oversight and guidance as appropriate.
- Demonstrated passion for collaborative work and a desire to support other staff members, balancing multiple competing demands thoughtfully and fairly. Ability to prioritize the needs of the team first.
- Ability to learn Washington's regulatory and permitting requirements, such as the Growth Management Act, Critical Areas Ordinance and policies, and other agriculturally relevant local ordinances and policies.
- Experience in natural resource management; knowledge of general agricultural systems and principles; familiarity with funding and resource programs aligned with agriculture such as NRCS.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Excellent interpersonal and conflict resolution skills.
- Ability to organize, manage, and analyze information in databases (ex. Excel, Smartsheet, basic GIS competence, etc.).

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Option 1) Bachelor's Degree (B. A. / B. S.) from an accredited institution in natural/environmental science, agriculture, agronomy, environmental planning, or closely related technical/scientific/natural resources field –AND– A minimum of 1-year professional experience working in fields of natural resource management, ecology, botany, wetland science, upland or aquatic habitat restoration, farm or ranch management, crop science, soil science, agronomy, or related work. Work experience can come from a government, corporate or other post-secondary training environment.

Option 2) An associate degree in natural resource management from an accredited institution in combination with 3 years direct experience in natural resource management as described above.

Option 3) Five years of on-the-ground working experience in natural resource management as described above.

Applicants who feel they have 5-year minimum combination of education, training, and experience that demonstrates the ability to perform the duties of the position are welcome to apply.

Experience in project management, managing multiple deadlines, and clear professional report writing are essential. Knowledge of local and regional agricultural and conservation issues is important, as is interest in supporting and working with an active and sustainable farming community in South Puget Sound. This position must have the ability to respect, collaborate, and work with diverse populations and perspectives and experience participating in discussions on contentious resource management issues with community members and other stakeholders. This position requires excellent verbal and written communication skills, including proficiency with the Microsoft Office suite. Applicant must possess a valid driver's license.

ADDITIONAL PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience in crop and/or orchard production or management is highly desirable
- Knowledge of agricultural industry and/or farming experience
- Familiarity in grass identification, forage restoration, and grazing systems
- Interest in soil science, testing, and analysis
- Proficiency in GIS
- Particular interest in working with livestock and horse owners, crop systems, and small farm operations
- Familiarity with conservation project implementation, regulatory requirements, permitting, and critical areas is strongly preferred
- Experience developing and completing conservation plans
- Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) and Conservation Planner Certified from NRCS or interest in becoming certified
- Familiarity with Washington's Growth Management Act, Shoreline Master Program and policies, and various local ordinances and policies
- Knowledge of the local, state and federal regulations and permitting processes
- Knowledge of scientific and engineering principles relative to conservation planning applications both in the field and in the office

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Here at Thurston Conservation District our employees and the people we serve come from all walks of life. We strive to hire 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 source of strength and knowledge. It is through the combination of talents and abilities that we can find effective ways to best serve our community. We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace for everyone. All qualified applicants receive consideration for employment 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 position is permanent, overtime non-exempt, and full-time (36 hours per week) with flexible work hours. Local and

out-of-town travel, occasional evening and weekend hours are needed. TCD offers a hybrid work environment where office work may be performed at home or, as well as in the field. District employees may choose to work from the office more if they would like.

Employees are provided with necessary TCD-owned equipment to perform their job responsibilities outside of the office and supported with a gear stipend. At times, this position spends as much as 45% of work time in the field conducting site visits with farmers, land operators and community partners.

This position description represents a general outline of the job duties, essential functions and minimum required qualifications and is not intended to be comprehensive in nature. Specific statements of duties not included does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. Job descriptions are subject to change by the District as the needs of the District and requirements of the job change. Eligibility for this position is contingent upon the individual's ability to perform the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation. This position requires frequent sitting and standing.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

This position is budgeted for an annual salary starting between \$50,000-\$60,000 depending on the applicant's qualifications. Per the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Thurston Conservation District currently observes seventeen (17) paid holidays (including six personal holidays). Employees also accrue sick and vacation leave. The District offers medical, dental, vision and life insurance coverage for employees paid at 100% by TCD, with an option for coverage at 75% for spouse or dependents by TCD. Additional voluntary supplemental insurance opportunities are also available. Participation in regular professional development opportunities are strongly encouraged and supported. Thurston CD employees participate in [Public Employees Retirement System \(PERS\)](#). Staff also has access to an additional voluntary retirement savings programs within the State of Washington's Department of Retirement Systems – [Deferred Compensation Program \(DCP\)](#). This position is represented by the Washington Federation of State Employees, AFSCME Council 2. The current Collective Bargaining Agreement is available on the staff page of our website.

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TO APPLY

Priority application deadline is November 30th, 2025. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt. This position is open until filled and applicants are encouraged to apply while the position is posted on our website. **Please note, TCD is hiring an Agricultural Program Manager position concurrently. These positions are different with different duties and experience levels required. We encourage applicants to review both descriptions and apply for the position that best matches their experience and interest.**

Please include the following in your application package:

1. Resume
2. Cover letter
3. Three (3) professional references

Be sure to describe your interest and unique qualifications for the position and the skills that you bring to the Conservation District team. Your cover letter is not to exceed one page. Letters of recommendation may be included.

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

Please include **Natural Resource Specialist – YOUR NAME** in the subject line.

Priority application deadline: November 30, 2025

Position open until filled with an ideal start date on or before January 1, 2026.

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