

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Forest Health and Fire Resiliency Project Manager

August 26, 2022

BACKGROUND

The San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) seeks a Project Manager to support the fire resilience and ecological health of local forests and help protect communities at the Wildland Urban Interface.

RCDs across California serve as local hubs for conservation, connecting people with the technical, financial, and educational assistance they need to conserve and manage natural resources. RCDs help landowners, land managers, government agencies, and others to voluntarily protect, restore, and enhance natural resources on private and public lands. A defining characteristic of RCDs is that our assistance is non-regulatory, confidential, and free.

POSITION

The Project Manager position is full-time and funded by grants. The Project Manager will advance projects to improve wildfire resiliency for at-risk communities and critical infrastructure and/or improve ecological function and resiliency of forests, scrub and grasslands. These activities are often designed to incorporate various natural resource management considerations and produce multi-beneficial outcomes. The work generally involves leading or supporting diverse efforts, from general technical assistance to regional prioritization and planning, to designing and implementing programs and projects.

Current projects include the Neighborhood Chipper Program that helps homeowners create defensible space and a large-scale strategic fuel break to improve wildfire resilience for an at-risk community in the heart of the wildland urban interface. Also, the Project Manager would help other RCD staff as needed, such as assisting with development and implementation of a 2,100-acre forest health project in a state park.

To accomplish this work, the Project Manager will work closely with a broad array of internal staff, partner organizations, government agency staff, and public and private landowners, and will require high levels of engagement and personal interactions, sometimes during non-regular business hours.

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Manage projects with technical advisors, partners, and stakeholders to ensure satisfactory completion.
 - Manage contracts with funders, consultants, and subcontractors.
 - Manage bid processes for hiring contractors and developing contracts.
 - Manage budgets, invoicing, and reporting.
 - Manage communications between project partners and stakeholders.
 - Manage and develop environmental documents and permits, sometimes with the support of consultants.
 - Manage the development of project designs and logistics for project implementation.
 - Oversee implementation activities, including contractor management and coordination, permit compliance, and biological monitoring.
 - Oversee monitoring activities, including data collection in the field, data entry, equipment preparation and supply maintenance (the employee will be trained in all required protocols).
- Seek funding opportunities through private, local, state, and federal sources.
- Prepare grant proposals and communicate with funding agencies and grants managers.
- Help identify and support strategic opportunities for partnerships, resources, and communications to advance program goals.
- Support and sometimes lead the identification of emerging fuel reduction and vegetation management opportunities through collaboration with key external partners such as fire agencies, public land managers, and private landowners.
- Contribute to overall RCD goals and mission through tasks and special projects as needed.
- Communicate regularly with partners and foster positive relationships.
- Engage with communities in need of wildfire resiliency support through individual communication, site-visits, and occasional after-hour community meetings.
- Respond to timely needs and pivot resources, such as in the case of fire recovery.

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

Successful applicants will “wear many hats” at the RCD. They will benefit from previous experience in stakeholder engagement, identifying emerging opportunities, responding to timely requests, utilizing new and streamlined permitting and environmental compliance routes, and high levels of collaboration. They will work across many disciplines and therefore must have technical, administrative, communication, and interpersonal skills.

Minimum qualifications

- Knowledge in one or more of the following areas: wildfire behavior, fire ecology, forest health, watershed stewardship, natural resource management, hydrology, soil science, native plant and animal communities, restoration ecology, or similar field
- Demonstrated ability in or transferable to conservation, program management, or a related field
- Strong written and verbal communication skills and ability to work with a variety of people with diverse interests and temperaments
- Strong computer skills, including Word and Excel

- Highly organized, motivated self-starter with the ability to prioritize in a fast-paced work environment
- Ability to work independently as well as part of a team
- Ability to walk on rugged terrain, lift and carry supplies, and utilize equipment during all seasons
- Creativity, sense of humor, “can do” spirit, collegiality, flexibility, strong desire to learn
- Valid California driver’s license, clean driving record, and current auto insurance

Desired qualifications

- Experience with community engagement
- Familiarity with wildfire resiliency and forest health
- Familiarity with local threatened and endangered species, including habitat needs and legal protections
- Familiarity with local, state, and federal permits required for restoration projects
- Experience working with watershed, restoration, or other conservation groups
- Experience with environmental construction management
- Experience with grant writing, contract management, and procurement procedures

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Financial compensation for the Project Manager will be commensurate with applicable experience up to \$90,000 per year. Benefits include a health, dental, and vision plan; paid time off; a retirement plan; and a flexible work schedule with the ability to work remotely as well as in the office; and a fun, fast-paced, positive work environment with excellent coworkers.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We strive to foster diversity and inclusion, from hiring and management practices to board recruitment to community service to professional development and beyond. Candidates reflecting the social diversity of California and of San Mateo County are strongly encouraged to apply for this position.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

To apply, email a cover letter, resume, and three or more references to **fire[at]sanmateoRCD.org**. Applicants may later be asked to submit a driving record. Applications will be accepted through **September 28, 2022**. The position is anticipated to start work in November 2022. The RCD is an equal opportunity employer.