

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Agricultural Stewardship Program Manager

BACKGROUND

The San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) seeks an Agricultural Stewardship Program Manager to advance environmental stewardship in the agriculture of San Mateo County. You will work with agricultural producers, landowners, local communities, ag industry leaders, non-profits, academic researchers, and public agencies to support voluntary conservation in agriculture. You will also support agricultural viability more broadly through your role as the county's Agricultural Ombudsman.

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

You will oversee a team that assists agricultural producers to build soil health, provide pollinator habitat, sequester carbon, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce waste, and more. 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, and supervising two project managers. Typical projects range from development and implementation of conservation and carbon farm plans, supporting farmers in accessing funding programs, and compost technical assistance and distribution.

Additionally, you will serve as the county's agricultural ombudsman. The ombudsman supports agricultural viability in San Mateo County by reducing burdens and barriers related to permitting and licensing, as well as helping to advance economic development initiatives.

The operations you will support are diverse in size, production method and crop type. They include larger and smaller scale; conventional and organic production; ranches, greenhouses, row crops, vineyards, orchards, urban farms and community gardens. You will work closely with RCD staff, partner organizations, government agencies, and public and private landowners, with high levels of engagement and personal interactions. This position is full-time and funded by grants and contracts.

TYPICAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Supervise a staff of two project managers. Provide support in project management, permitting, and logistics. Ensure timely project completion and meeting deliverables. Oversee and support project communication as needed among partners, with individuals, communities, and media. Assist staff with administrative responsibilities.
- Coordinate with RCD staff from other programs regarding cross-cutting goals and issues.

- Continuously develop and iterate program vision and goals.
- Identify and pursue strategic opportunities for partnerships, resources, and communications to advance program goals.
- Identify emerging agricultural conservation opportunities and priorities through collaborations and partnerships.
- Coordinate project development with staff, partnering agencies, and consultants.
- Oversee program budgets.
- Seek funding opportunities through private, local, state, and federal sources.
- Prepare grant proposals and communicate with funding agencies and grants managers.
- Contribute to overall RCD goals and mission through tasks and special projects as needed.
- Communicate regularly with partners and foster positive relationships.
- Engage with agricultural community through individual communication, site-visits, and after-hour community meetings.
- Respond to timely needs to provide technical assistance.
- Serve as the agricultural ombudsman: assist agricultural producers with permitting and licensing projects, identify opportunities to improve and streamline agricultural permitting processes, disseminate regulatory and programmatic updates to the agricultural community, participate in stakeholder meetings, and engage in agricultural viability/ economic development efforts.

Minimum requirements

- Knowledge in one or more of the following areas: agriculture, natural resource management, soil science, or similar field
- Demonstrated interest in conservation and agriculture
- Demonstrated ability (including direct experience as well as transferable skills) to manage programs including budget development and management; supervision of staff; administration of grant-funded projects; and project management
- 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
- Able to begin work no later than February 1, 2023

Desired qualifications

- Experience working with farmers, ranchers, agricultural stakeholders, and conservation groups
- Experience conducting outreach to farmers and ranchers
- Experience with conservation planning and carbon farming
- Familiarity with local, state, and federal permits required for agriculture, development, and/or restoration projects
- Spanish language skills
- Familiarity with native flora and fauna
- GIS experience

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Financial compensation for the Program Manager will be commensurate with applicable experience up to \$110,000 per year. Benefits include a health, dental, and vision plan; paid time off; a retirement plan; a flexible work schedule and hybrid work environment; and a fun, fast-paced, positive work culture 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. The RCD is an equal opportunity employer.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

To apply, email a cover letter, resume, and three or more references to Adria Arko at [adria\[at\]sanmateoRCD.org](mailto:adria[at]sanmateoRCD.org) with the subject, "Program Manager." Applications will be considered on a rolling basis through December 31, 2022. If a suitable candidate is found during that time, an offer may be made before the application deadline.