



www.okeechobeeswcd.org

USDA Service Center
452 Highway 98 N
Okeechobee, Florida 34972
863-763-3619 ext. 3

Conservation Technician

Salary Range: \$16.00-\$18.00 Per Hour

Release Date: December 5, 2022

Closing Date: Open until filled

Contact: Audrey Kuipers

audrey.kuipers@okeechobeeswcd.org

POSITION DETAILS:

The Conservation Technician position is funded through a contract with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service's (FDACS) Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP) for the implementation of the department's Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) program. While the Technician is a SWCD employee, the FDACS-OAWP Project Manager provides the primary operational oversight and direction for this position. The specific job performance standards are defined by the contract between Okeechobee SWCD and the FDACS-OAWP. This contract is renewed annually and has been in place since 2005.

POSITION LOCATION:

This position is housed within the USDA Service Center, 452 US Highway 98 North, Okeechobee, FL. The primary coverage area for this position includes the agricultural production areas of the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Area, with special attention to the St. Lucie River, Lake Okeechobee, and Caloosahatchee River Basin Management Action Plan areas.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a major course of study in agriculture, natural resources conservation, or environmental science; or Professional experience in agriculture, natural resources conservation, or a related field may substitute on a year-for-year basis for the required college education.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Requires possession of a valid Driver License with a good driving record.
- Applicant must pass a Level II background screening administered by FDACS.
- Applicant must attest in writing to their willingness to comply with all state and federal laws to include those regarding ethics, and state financial assistance prior to being hired.
- Regular day travel required within established coverage area. Occasional overnight travel for statewide training events. *Note: A vehicle is provided for travel.*

Mariano Corona
Seat 1, Chairman

Nicki Smith
Seat 2

Donald Sellers, Jr.
Seat 3

Douglas Burnham
Seat 4

Glynn Rutledge
Seat 5

JOB DUTIES:

Conduct BMP NOI enrollments with agricultural producers using commodity specific BMP manuals, checklists, and other tools. This includes effectively communicating the producer's obligations under the program as defined by Florida Statute 403.067 and Florida Rule 5M-1.

Conduct implementation verification (IV) site visits every 2 years on enrolled producers, as assigned by the supervisor. An IV includes performing on-site evaluations of agricultural operations to confirm compliance with their NOI assigned BMPs and updating the NOI enrollment to account for changes in the operation. This process requires fertilization record analysis and assisting producers within BMAPs to create and submit a Nutrient Application Record Form (NARF) in accordance with Florida Statute 403.067 and Florida Rule 5M-1. Upon completion of the IV, the Conservation Technician shall determine compliance with the assigned BMPs and fertilizer application practices that may result in the need to implement corrective measures as defined by FDACS-OAWP.

Assist producers with submitting cost share applications for qualifying projects that provide environmental protection and improve water and/or nutrient efficiencies. Manage producer cost share agreements in accordance with the applicable cost share contracts and cost share standard operating procedures (SOP).

Assist in coordination for Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) meetings in areas with the South Florida Water Management District as designated by supervisor, and coordinate/facilitates the involvement of agriculture stakeholders in the BMAP process. As needed or requested policy staff, reviews Water Management Plans, Regional Water Supply Plans, associated rulemaking, and Florida Department of Environmental Protection Total Maximum Daily Loads. Also communicates and coordinates with the local Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Extension offices and research centers regarding research and demonstration projects in support of the OAWP BMP programs. Maintains reports and updates monthly project status reports following defined formats. Performs other related duties as assigned.

Standard of Conduct, as well as all departmental and/or work unit rules, directives, policies, procedures, and/or general orders applicable to performing the duties of this position.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Knowledge of agricultural practices and techniques particularly related to Agricultural BMPs.
- Ability to interact with the public in a tactful and courteous manner.
- Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing.
- Ability to compile, organize, and analyze data and make recommendations.
- Ability to access digital information and prepare documents using a personal computer (provided) with basic understanding of the Internet, GIS, Adobe Acrobat, and Microsoft Office Products.
- Ability to work independently to plan, organize, coordinate, and complete assignments in a timely manner.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with others.
- Ability to conduct inspections in agricultural productions areas with uneven ground.

*****ATTENTION CANDIDATES*****

•Applicants: Please submit resumes to: audrey.kuipers@okeechobeeswcd.org . An application will be sent to potential candidates.

SPECIAL NOTE:

Okeechobee SWCD is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Affirmative Action Employer and does not tolerate discrimination or violence in the workplace.

Candidates requiring a reasonable accommodation, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, must notify the agency hiring authority. Notification to the hiring authority must be made in advance to allow enough time to provide the accommodation.

Okeechobee SWCD supports a Drug-Free workplace. All employees are subject to reasonable suspicion drug testing in accordance with Section 112.0455, F.S., Drug-Free Workplace Act.

VETERANS' PREFERENCE. Pursuant to Chapter 295, Florida Statutes, candidates eligible for Veterans' Preference are encouraged to apply. Candidates claiming Veterans' Preference must attach supporting documentation with each submission that includes character of service (for example, DD Form 214 Member Copy #4) along with any other documentation as required by Rule 55A-7, Florida Administrative Code. Veterans' Preference documentation requirements are available by clicking [here](#). All documentation is due by the close of the vacancy announcement.

SUCCESS FACTORS: The individual filling this position should be detail-oriented, assertive, and self-directed. This person should also enjoy interaction with the public and have a sincere interest for agriculture and natural resources.

Mariano Corona
Seat 1, Chairman

Nicki Smith
Seat 2

Donald Sellers, Jr.
Seat 3

Douglas Burnham
Seat 4

Glynn Rutledge
Seat 5