

**POSITION DESCRIPTION  
COVER SHEET**

REASON FOR THIS POSITION		
1. NEW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2. IDENTICAL ADDITION TO THE ESTABLISHED PD NUMBER <input type="checkbox"/> NHQSCT45808	3. REPLACES PD NUMBER

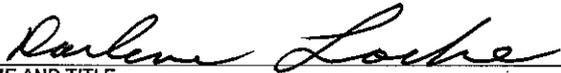
RECOMMENDED				
4. TITLE <b>SOIL CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN</b>		5. PAY PLAN <b>GS</b>	6. SERIES <b>0458</b>	7. GRADE <b>08</b>
8. WORKING TITLE (Optional) <b>SOIL CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN</b>			9. INCUMBENT (Optional)	

OFFICIAL						
10. TITLE <b>SOIL CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN</b>						
11. PP <b>GS</b>	12. SERIES <b>0458</b>	13. FUNC	14. GRADE <b>08</b>	15. DATE Month Day Year		16. I/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
						17. CLASSIFIER

8. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (Agency/Bureau)			
1st	<b>Natural Resources Conservation Service</b>		5th
2nd	<b>State Conservationist</b>		6th
3rd	<b>Assistant State Conservationist (FO)</b>		7th
4th	<b>District Conservationist</b>		8th

SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATION			
I certify that this is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of the position and its organizational relationships and that the position is necessary to carry out Government functions for which I am responsible. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information is to be used for statutory purposes relating to appointment and payment of public funds and that false or misleading statements may constitute violations of such statute or their implementing regulations.			
19. SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE		20. DATE	22. SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE
21. SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE		24. SECOND LEVEL SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE	

FACTOR EVALUATION SYSTEM					
FACTOR	25. FLD/BMK	26. POINTS	FACTOR	25. FLD/BMK	26. POINTS
1. Knowledge Required	<b>FL 1-5</b>	<b>750</b>	6. Personal Contacts	<b>FL 6-2</b>	
2. Supervisory Controls	<b>FL 2-3</b>	<b>275</b>	7. Purpose of Contacts	<b>FL 7-B</b>	<b>75</b>
3. Guidelines	<b>FL 3-3</b>	<b>275</b>	8. Physical Demands	<b>FL 8-2</b>	<b>20</b>
4. Complexity	<b>FL 4-3</b>	<b>150</b>	9. Work Environment	<b>FL 9-2</b>	<b>20</b>
5. Scope and Effect	<b>FL 5-3</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>		<b>1715</b>
<b>GRADE</b>					<b>GS 08</b>

CLASSIFICATION CERTIFICATION	
I certify that this position has been classified as required by Title 5, US Code, in conformance with standards published by the OPM or, if no published standard applies directly, consistently with the most applicable published standards.	
29. SIGNATURE 	30. DATE <b>03/03/2008</b>
31. NAME AND TITLE	

**Darlene Locke, Human Resources Specialist, Employment and Classification Team, Washington, D.C.**

32. REMARKS:	33. OPM CERTIFICATION NUMBER
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**Reference: OPM PCS SOIL CONSERV TECH SERIES, GS-458, DEC 91**  
**Position is FLSA – Non-Exempt.**

# MASTER RECORD/INDIVIDUAL POSITION DATA

THIS SIDE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CLASSIFIER

A. KEY DATA					
1. FUNCTION (1)	2. DEPT CD. /AGCY-BUR-CD. (4) <b>AG 16</b>	3. SON (4)	4. MR. NO. (6)	5. GRADE (2)	6. IP NO. (8)

B. MASTER RECORD					
1. PAY PLAN (2) <b>GS</b>	2. OCC. SERIES (4)	3. OCC. FUNC. CD. (2)	4. OFF. TITLE CD. (5)	5. OFFICIAL TITLE (38)	
6. HQ. FLD. CD. (1) 1 = HQ 2 = FLD	7. SUP. CD. (1) 1 = Sup. SGE 3 = Mgr. SGE 4 = Sup. CSRA	5 = Mgmt. CSRA 6 = Leader LGEG 8 = All Others	8. CLASS STD. CD. (1) X = New Standard Applied Blank = NA	9. INTERDIS. CD. (1) N = No Y = Interdis	10. DT CLASS (6) MO DAY YEAR
11. EARLY RET. CD. (1) 1 = Primary 2 = Secondary 3 = Foreign Svc. Blank = NA	12. INACT/ACT (1) I = Inactive A = Active	13. DT. ABOL. (6) MO DAY YEAR	14. DT. INACT/REACT (6) MO DAY YEAR	15. AGENCY USE (10)	
16. INTERDISCIPLINARY SERIES (40) (4) Per Block					
17. INTERDISCIPLINARY TITLE CODE (50) (5) Per Block					

C. INDIVIDUAL POSITION														
1. FLSA CD. (1) E = Exempt N = Nonexempt	2. FIN. DIS. REQ. (1) 0 = None 1 = CD 219 2 = CD 220	3. POS. SCHED. (1) A = Sched A B = Sched B C = Sched C	4. POS. SENS. (1) 0 = Excepted but not A,B,C 1 = Noncritical 2 = Critical Sense	5. COMP. LEV. (4)										
6. WK. TITLE CODE (4)	7. WK. TITLE (38)													
8. ORG. STR. CODE (18) 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th								9. VAC REV CODE (1) 0 = Position Action No Vacancy A = No Change B = Lower Grade C = Higher Grade D = Different title and/or series E = New Position/New FTE						
10. TARGET GD.	11. LANG. REQ. (2)	12. PROJ. DTY. IND. (1) Blank = NA Y = Yes	13. DUTY STATION (9) State (2) City (4) County (3)			14. BUS. CD. (4)	15. DT. LST. AUDIT (6) MO DAY YEAR	16. PAS. IND. (1) Blank=NA 1 = PAS	17. DATE EST. MO DAY YEAR					
18. GD. BASIS. IND (1) 1 = Rev. when vacant 2 = Impact of Person 3 = Sup./SGEG 4 = Sup./Program 5 = RGEG 6 = Policy Analysis G E G 7 = Equipment Devel. Guide 8 = Agency Use 9 = Agency Use ALPHAS = Agency Use							19. DT.REQ. REC. (6) MO DAY YEAR	20. NTE. DT. (6) MO DAY YEAR		21. POS.ST. BUD (1) Y = Perm N = Other				
22. MAIN. REV./CLASS.ACT. CD. (2) (1st Digit = Activity and 2nd Digit = Results)														
Normal Act 1 = Desk Audit 2 = Sup. Audit 3 = Paper Rev. 4 = PME/Activity Rev.				Maintenance Review Act 5 = Desk Audit 6 = Sup. Audit 7 = Paper Rev. 8 = Panel Rev.				Results 1 = No Action Req. 2 = Minor PD Change 3 = New PD Req. 4 = Title Change 5 = Series Change 6 = Pos. Upgrade 7 = Pos. Downgrade 8 = New Pos. 9 = Other						
23. DATE EMP. ASGN. (6) MO DAY YEAR			24. DATE ABOL. (6) MO DAY YEAR			25. INACT/ACT(1) I = Inact. A = Act.		26. DATE INACT/REACT (6) MO DAY YEAR			27. ACCTG. STAT. (4)	28. INT. ASGN. SER. (4)	29. AGENCY USE (8)	
30. CLASSIFIER'S SIGNATURE											31. DATE			
32. REMARKS														

## STANDARD POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Official Title:** Soil Conservation Technician  
**Working Title:** Soil Conservation Technician  
**Classification:** GS-458-08

**Date:** 03/03/08  
**Classified By:** NHQ  
**Number:** NHQSCT45808

**Note:** This is a standard position description and can not be modified without the approval from the Human Resources Management Division, Employment & Classification Team, NRCS, in Washington D.C.

### INTRODUCTION

As a soil conservation technician assigned to the field office (FO), the incumbent provides assistance to the conservation district (CD). The incumbent is responsible for providing technical support services and scheduling the installation and application of conservation practices. Works within a team concept to develop and implement ways to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of the products and/or services provided to internal and external customers. The work requires review of cost-sharing requests under the provisions of federal, state, and possibly local agricultural programs.

### MAJOR DUTIES

#### **1. Technical Application (50%)**

- a. Assists in conducting field investigations, surveys and assembly of data needed in the development of conservation practices for structural solutions to problems with water quality, erosion, drainage, and irrigation.
- b. Assumes responsibility for determining priorities and scheduling of the application workload in the FO. Receives all requests for layout and establishment of practices, including state and federal referrals, and develops and carries out a schedule to apply all requested conservation practices.
- c. Independently explains cost-share payment procedures to farmers, inspects proposed sites, determines need and feasibility of conservation practices applicable for geographical location, advises on-site selections, performs layout work, and supervises construction of practices for which the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has technical responsibility.
- d. Checks completed practices to determine that specifications are met. Completes field sheets and recommends acceptability of completed practices to the supervisor for final certification. Advises landowner/operator to complete proper maintenance. Prepares recommended adjustments in basic plans for the conservationist.
- e. Establishes and/or carries out a follow-up schedule to check progress made in carrying out conservation plans. Suggests best methods and time for installing additional practices,

recognizes when revisions in plans are needed, and obtains data which expedites revision of plans.

f. Performs duties in a manner supportive of a safe and healthy work environment, and exercises safety precautions when exposed to dangerous objects, chemicals, extreme temperatures, etc.

## **2. Data Collection (30%)**

a. Gathers and compiles planning data on rural and/or urban sites, including physical features such as soil limitations, erosion, surface drainage, and sedimentation for evaluation and development of natural resources conservation plans by a professional soil conservationist.

b. Assists the district Conservationist in resource planning by laying out farm boundaries on aerial photos, determines acreage with grid scale and planimeter, prepares cartographic orders. Performs simple conservation planning for basic resource protection for conservation compliance plans.

c. Provides planning information to local governmental units for development of flood control projects, paths, trails, and wildlife habitats.

d. Assists in the collection of basic field hydrologic supply forecasting (water/snow). Installs and maintains necessary equipment as designated by geographical location for measurement that may include; snow pillows, precipitation gauges, shelters, antenna towers, meteorological sensors, and related electronics.

e. Checks application feasibility and makes preliminary engineering surveys gathering design data for structures requiring engineering application. Records field notes and prepares tentative designs based on standard designs for review and approval by others. Lays out construction ground controls by location cut and fill stakes, running level lines and other control lines, using rod, level and transit.

f. Prepares basic natural resources conservation plans where soil survey information is available and precedent planning information is applicable to physical conditions such as topography and specific type of land unit.

g. As conservation plans are written, contacts farmers and ranchers to develop a systematic application schedule for practices included in the plan. Schedules own time, or that of other employees in the FO, for the necessary on-site assistance required in the application of practices.

### **3. Marketing and Training (20%)**

- a. Provides information to farmers, ranchers, and other rural residents on the kinds of assistance available from NRCS and other USDA agencies, including nature of programs and how and where to apply for assistance.
- b. Assists with public information activities providing NRCS guidance and policy for the application of practices. As appropriate, conducts practice demonstrations and discusses conservation practices on tours.
- c. Presents material on practice application and specifications at community or contractor meetings.
- d. Writes news stories relative to the application of conservation practices.

### **4. Civil Rights**

Performs duties in a manner which actively supports civil rights policies regarding personnel rules and regulations and delivery of NRCS programs and services without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or mental or physical handicap.

**Performs other duties as assigned.**

**CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT** - Must possess and maintain a valid state motor vehicle operator's license for the type of vehicle(s) operated to perform the duties of this position. This will require the operation of a motor vehicle on both public and private roads during daylight hours and occasionally after dark.

### **EVALUATION FACTORS**

#### **1. KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION - LEVEL 1-5 (750 POINTS)**

- a. Knowledge of soil characteristics and agronomy to assist in developing complete or partial conservation plans for land units with several types of agricultural enterprises. The incumbent applies knowledge in order to install and maintain conservation practices.
- b. Knowledge of agricultural and community land-use operations is required in order to acquire planning data to implement conservation techniques. Skill is required to interpret acquired data and develop basic conservation plans through application of precedent controlling criteria.
- c. Skill in applying written and oral communication techniques in order to address groups interested in conservation techniques during farm tours, practice demonstrations, and in meetings. This knowledge is also applied in the preparation of conservation articles for publication in local newspapers.

d. Knowledge and skill in surveying and identification of soils using the Unified Classification System.

e. Knowledge of federal, state, and applicable local cost-share NRCS programs sufficient to advise landowners on eligibility prerequisites and conditions that must be satisfied to qualify for program acceptance and payments.

f. Knowledge and skill sufficient to conduct engineering surveys and to design mechanical practices to be utilized in conservation planning.

## **2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS – LEVEL 2-3 (275 POINTS)**

a. The incumbent receives administrative and technical supervision from the District Conservationist. The incumbent works independently and uses good judgment in carrying out his/her duties. Normally, standard type structures and solutions are utilized with minor modifications when needed. Work requiring new criteria or techniques or involving significant deviations from standard practices will be performed with consultation from the supervisor. Work schedules are developed by the incumbent from requests from the field offices.

b. Technical review of work is based on the engineering job approval assigned to the employee by the agency. Jobs that require review are reviewed by an engineer for technical accuracy and compliance with agency standards.

## **3. GUIDELINES - LEVEL 3-3 (275 POINTS)**

a. NRCS procedures cover assigned work and include the FO plan of operations, engineering handbook, technical standards, specifications and supplements, cost-share program requirements, soil survey data, and textbooks on natural resources conservation. Administrative activities are covered by the General Manual.

b. Employee uses individual discretion on making resource decisions addressing site specific criteria relating to soils, landowner needs, engineering structures, agronomic structures, etc.

c. Often, guidelines are only partially applicable and an in-depth analysis is needed to formulate alternative solutions to complex resource problems. The employee is responsible for recognizing problems in interpreting guidelines and referring them to the supervisor.

## **4. COMPLEXITY – LEVEL 4-3 (150 POINTS)**

a. Applies and installs a wide range of soil and water conservation practices and measures which are different in character and applied under widely varying environmental conditions. Considers local conservation conditions in selecting appropriate guidelines

for design of different practices or proper implementation of conservation methods. The technician usually develops a complete conservation plan for review, or revises a current plan recommending installation or modification of established conservation practices on individual land unit(s) or agricultural enterprises. Such recommendations may lead to a change in basic land use or farm enterprise.

b. Assists landowners with the planning and application of conservation practices to protect and prevent pollution of ground and surface water in order to bring farm enterprises into compliance with state and federal water quality mandates. These practices are highly complicated involving a dynamic technology and sophisticated interplay of technical assistance, incentive programs, education, and regulations. Projects involve developing preliminary designs for alternative solutions to these problems.

#### **5. SCOPE AND EFFECT – LEVEL 5-3 (150 POINTS)**

a. The purpose of the work is to furnish technical expertise on planning and installing structural practices to field offices by providing direct assistance on specific jobs to landowners, or by reviewing work done by field office personnel and by providing training to field office personnel. Work contributes to the installation of practices by landowners that are consistent with agency guidelines.

b. Completed work results in developing and implementing a conservation system or application of combined conservation measures to land units with complex physical conditions and problems such as ground water quality which are not readily apparent to the landowners. Incumbent recommends structural and non-structural practices, which are critical elements of long-term environmental improvement programs within hydrologic units. Responsible for insuring that practices are properly installed and functioning as planned and designed.

#### **6 & 7. PERSONAL CONTACTS AND PURPOSE - LEVEL 2-B (75 POINTS)**

**a. Personal Contacts** - Personal contacts are typically in the employing agency, with soil conservationists, soil conservation and engineering technicians, engineers, and others who are at a different organizational level (such as state office). Contacts outside the agency often include other federal agencies, local public officials, district personnel, and rural and community residents, either singly or in groups, to provide and obtain NRCS conservation information through tours, demonstrations of conservation techniques to landowners, or exchanges with contractors.

**b. Purpose of Contacts** - Contacts with other NRCS personnel are to discuss technical and operational problems such as when designing or installing a complex grade stabilization system, waste management systems, or streambank protection practices. Advises landowners on need to apply sound soil and water conservation practices, describing advantages and disadvantages of specific practices in terms of preventing soil erosion and water conservation problems. Contacts with contractors are for providing

proper installation specifications. Contacts outside the government are for the purpose of providing factual information regarding conservation practices and NRCS criteria.

**8. PHYSICAL DEMANDS – LEVEL 8-2 (20 POINTS)**

The work requires regular and recurring prolonged walking over field terrain and bending, lifting, and stretching when utilizing survey instruments and equipment.

**9. WORK ENVIRONMENT – LEVEL 9-2 (20 POINTS)**

The work involves regular and recurring exposure to agricultural and construction type equipment while in operation. There may be exposure to heat, snow, and ice as well as herbicide and chemical spray operations, which require safety precautions.

Total = 1715 (1605-1850)

**This position is determined to be nonexempt from the provisions in the FLSA as defined in 5 CFR 551.204.**