

**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"/> NHQSCCOR11	3. REPLACES PD NUMBER

RECOMMENDED			
4. TITLE Soil Scientist	5. PAY PLAN GS	6. SERIES 0470	7. GRADE 11
8. WORKING TITLE (Optional) Soil Scientist (Correlation)		9. INCUMBENT (Optional)	

OFFICIAL						
10. TITLE Soil Scientist						
11. PP GS	12. SERIES 0470	13. FUNC	14. GRADE 11	15. DATE Month Day Year		16. I/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
						17. CLASSIFIER

8. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (Agency/Bureau)			
1st	Natural Resources Conservation Service		5th
2nd			6th
3rd			7th
4th			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	23. DATE
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	FL 1-7	1250	6. Personal Contacts	FL 6-3	
2. Supervisory Controls	FL 2-4	450	7. Purpose of Contacts	FL 7-C	180
3. Guidelines	FL 3-4	450	8. Physical Demands	FL 8-2	20
4. Complexity	FL 4-4	225	9. Work Environment	FL 9-2	20
5. Scope and Effect	FL 5-3	150	TOTAL POINTS		2745
GRADE					GS 11

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 05/30/2008
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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References: OPM JFS PROFESSIONAL WORK, NATURAL RESOURCES MGT & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, SEPT 05
Position is FLSA - 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) AG 16	3. SON (4)	4. MR. NO. (6)	5. GRADE (2)	6. IP NO. (8)

B. MASTER RECORD									
1. PAY PLAN (2) GS	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. SGEG 3 = Mgr. SGEG 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 = SF 278 4 = AD 392 5 = SF 849		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 = Nonsensitive 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 <i>Dorlene Locke</i>										31. DATE 05/30/2008		
32. REMARKS												

STANDARD POSITION DESCRIPTION

Official Title: Soil Scientist
Working Title: Soil Scientist (Correlation)
Classification: GS-470-11
Number: NHQSCCOR11

Date: May 30, 2008
Classified By: NHQ-HRMD-ECT
Location: MLRA Office

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

This position is Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) Soil Scientist for the assigned geographical area in the Soil Survey Update and Maintenance Office. The incumbent serves as a correlation specialist for assigned portions of the MLRA within the state. The incumbent serves as part of a team of soil scientists responsible for the update and maintenance of soil surveys within the assigned geographical area. The work is coordinated with other soil survey update activities within the state and adjoining states.

Major Duties

1. Correlation Leadership (50%)

- a. Provides leadership, and technical guidance in classifying, mapping and correlating soils in the assigned soil survey area. This includes evaluation of existing older surveys to assess their quality and the development of strategies and plans to bring them up to modern standards.
- b. Provides leadership in designing and carrying out sampling activities including gathering laboratory, transect, and other field data to characterize and reclassify existing soil survey maps in order to achieve a coordinated soil survey product throughout the assigned region.
- c. Coordinates and communicates technical functions of soil survey activities with the MLRA Regional Office. In addition, the incumbent is responsible for communication and coordination with NCSS Cooperators, other MLRA project offices, and with other regional technology teams to assure all products of the soil surveys meet customer's needs. These offices may be within the state as well as across state boundaries.

2. Project Coordination (50%)

- a. Coordinates all assigned county "subset" project correlation activities to ensure that the objectives and goals of the entire MLRA Soil Survey Project are achieved. This includes development of work plans throughout the assigned area to ensure priority projects are completed in a timely manner, as well as design and coordination of all mapping legends to ensure that all county subset maps and data join across county boundaries.

b. Emphasis is placed on field data collection and subsequent use of the data in correlation activities and in interpretation for customers. In addition, the incumbent performs map compilation manually and digitally as appropriate, updates and maintains soil data bases, and develops soil survey manuscripts for publication.

c. Participates in periodic technical field visits and progress reviews within assigned subset projects to ensure that the objectives of the MLRA project are being met as agreed to in the Memorandum of Understanding and for conformance to policy for conducting soil surveys. The incumbent assists project members with technical and administrative concerns, and ensure that National Cooperative Soil Survey standards are met.

d. Promotes maximizing efficiencies in MLRA soil survey projects by utilizing available technology and encouraging the development of new technology and techniques. Uses and promotes use of computers and automation technology to share, analyze, summarize, and manage data, develop manuscripts and publications, and to develop and maintain databases. Encourages use of Geographic Information Systems, Global Positioning Systems technology and Remote Sensing techniques to maximize efficiencies in conducting and maintaining soil surveys. Serves on regional committees, interdisciplinary teams and boards related to making and using soil surveys.

e. Practices safety and health in all areas of work assignments and stays abreast of safety rules and regulations.

3. Equal Employment and Civil Rights

a. Understands and applies personnel rules and regulations as they apply to the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Employment Programs to ensure their integration into recruitment, hiring, promotion, training, career development (including varied work assignments, details, and special developmental assignments), separations, grievances, and other personnel actions. Emphasizes meeting the objectives of equal opportunity and affirmative employment plans and requirements. Ensures that these functions are carried out without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or physical or mental handicap.

b. Provides leadership and guidance in the design, development, and maintenance of administrative procedures to ensure that delivery of NRCS programs and services are carried out without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or handicap. Reviews the implementation of civil rights policies to determine that they are translated into appropriate actions consistent with annual plans of operations.

Performs other duties as assigned.

Competitive Level – (Designated by state)

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 1-7 (1250 POINTS)

- a. Professional knowledge of all technical aspects of the soil survey program, including mapping, manuscripts, correlations, classification, investigations, interpretations, and database in order to make and implement sound decisions regarding map unit design, map compilation, application of soil taxonomy in classification of soils, and in interpreting the soils for many uses.
- b. Expert skill in gathering technique, analyzing, and interpreting field and laboratory data (both new and old) in order to coordinate the names and interpretive data for all soil map units throughout the assigned multi-county area.
- c. Working knowledge of agronomy, geology, biology, forestry, and engineering to sufficiently integrate soil information into these disciplines' activities so that soil and water conservation needs are adequately addressed from a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach.
- d. Knowledge and skill in oral and written communication sufficient to communicate procedures through directives, scientific journals, technical notes, papers, and to develop training materials and train soil scientists and other NRCS technical personnel.

2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS – LEVEL 2-4 (450 POINTS)

- a. The incumbent receives technical and administrative supervision from the MLRA Project Leader (or representative) and operates independently working within established goals or objectives.
- b. The incumbent interprets agency policy and procedures in carrying out responsibilities and coordinates activities with other soil scientists or technical support staff specialists such as the biologist, forester, agronomists, and engineers.
- c. Completed work is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with policy and objectives, for soundness of approach, and overall effectiveness.

3. GUIDELINES – LEVEL 3-4 (450 POINTS)

- a. Guidelines consist of National Soil Survey Handbook, Soil Survey Manual, Soil Taxonomy, General Manual, and Memorandums of Understanding with other agencies, National Bulletins and Memorandums, and other related scientific data sources in agronomy, biology, engineering, and forestry.
- b. NRCS is just beginning the process of updating and modernizing existing (but outdated) soil surveys. As a result, many of the tasks required lack specific guidelines or are under revision, requiring the incumbent to be creative and develop, test, and implement new and unique methods, criteria, procedures, and techniques for updating soil surveys. Consultation is available with the incumbent's supervisor, Data Quality Specialist, at the MLRA regional office, or other more experienced soil scientists.

4. COMPLEXITY – LEVEL 4-4 (225 POINTS)

a. This position deals with a high degree of complexity. This assigned area represents a wide range of soils and land forms. In addition to the physical complexity of the soils and land forms of the assigned area, the nature of the assignment itself is complex. The incumbent must evaluate all existing soil surveys in the region to determine each one's specific needs for update and maintenance. The goal is to achieve a modern, coordinated, uniform product for the assigned area. These older projects were completed during the past 3 decades and represent soil survey technology of the time. The incumbent must develop and implement techniques that capitalize on the preservation of all the good aspects of the current soil surveys and concentrate efforts on activities to build upon and improve the existing product. Accomplishing this requires a high degree of expertise in assembling large amounts of information (both new and some of which is decades old), organizing and interpreting the information, and making decisions which bring all of the information together in a coordinated fashion.

b. The incumbent's assignments will include identification of multiple needs for soil information within the agricultural and urban sectors. The incumbent develops and guides the use of soil information to serve these two diverse use areas with a minimum of conflict. The incumbent, with support and assistance when needed from the MLRA Regional Office, interprets and evaluates new mapping techniques, proposed interpretations criteria, new manuscript formats, and implements those that are adopted.

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

a. The purpose of the work is to inventory the soil resource and develop the soil survey data into publications, manuscripts, guides, and tables that will effectively accelerate the utilization of soil information by users and potential users in the NRCS field offices, state conservation and resource agencies, and local planning groups. The interpretations made of the data have a major impact on land use decisions. The incumbent must determine the diverse needs of these groups and promote coordinated use of the information.

b. The presentation of soils information affects the work of other soil scientists, soil conservationists, biologists, foresters, engineers, and planners in NRCS as well as other Federal, State, and local agencies. Soils information must be sound and accurately interpreted. Errors or inadequacies would seriously impair the effectiveness of NRCS programs in the state and other agency programs dependent on soil survey.

6. & 7. PERSONAL CONTACTS & PURPOSE - LEVEL 3-C (180 POINTS)

a. Personal Contacts - Personal contacts are with NRCS and DENR employees and with groups, landowners, and individuals outside of NRCS. Contacts are with soil scientists, engineers, district conservationists, resource conservationists, agronomists, biologists, foresters, and technicians. Contacts are also made with representatives of consulting firms, civic groups, experiment stations and universities, students, and the news media.

b. Purpose of Contacts - The purpose of the contacts is to coordinate soils information and to advise and train users in the proper integration of soils information into the planning process by addressing a wide range of soil and water conservation needs. Representatives of federal, state,

and local governments contacted at this level are generally pursuing mutual goals and are cooperative. Contacts are generally routine and within a structured setting.

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

The work is primarily performed in the field, but some is in an office setting. While in the field either mapping or during field visits, and reviews it may involve substantial walking, climbing, bending, carrying heavy samples, excavating samples sites, carrying sampling and testing equipment over rough terrain, fences, streams, or up steep slopes.

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

The work involves the risks and discomforts normally associated with such places. Frequently, work is performed outdoors during mapping activities, field visits, and reviews and is subject to variable weather conditions during the field season.

Total Points = 2745

Point Range 2355-2750 = GS-11

This position is determined to be exempt from the provisions in the FLSA as defined in 5CFR 551.