

Soil Scientist, GS-0470-12
(Major Land Resource Area [MLRA] Soil Survey Project Leader)

REASON FOR THIS POSITION					POSITION DESCRIPTION COVER SHEET			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. NEW	<input type="checkbox"/> 2. IDENTICAL ADDITION TO THE ESTABLISHED PD NUMBER	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. REPLACES PD NUMBER						
RECOMMENDED								
4. TITLE Soil Scientist					5. PAY PLAN GS	6. SERIES 0470	7. GRADE 12	
8. WORKING TITLE (Optional) Soil Survey Project Leader					9. INCUMBENT (Optional)			
OFFICIAL								
10. TITLE Soil Scientist								
11. PP GS	12. SERIES 0470	13. FUNC 51	14. GRADE 12	15. DATE MONTH DAY YEAR			16. I/A <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	17. CLASSIFIER Deborah M. Kaiden
18. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (Agency/Bureau)								
1st Natural Resources Conservation Service					5th			
2nd KS State Conservationists Off					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 relationship 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	Level 1-7	1,250	6. Personal Contacts	Level 3/C	180			
2. Supervisory Controls	Level 2-4	450	7. Purpose of Contacts					
3. Guidelines	Level 3-4	450	8. Physical Demands	Level 8-2	20			
4. Complexity	Level 4-5	325	9. Work Environment	Level 9-2	20			
5. Scope and Effect	Level 5-4	225	27. TOTAL POINTS ▶				27. 2,920	
						28. GRADE ▶		28. GS-12
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			
31. NAME AND TITLE Jane Medina, Human Resources Manager								
32. REMARKS This position is determined to be EXEMPT from the provisions of FLSA based on the PROFESSIONAL Exemption criteria. Evaluation statement on file.					33. OPM CERTIFICATION NUMBER			

MASTER RECORD/INDIVIDUAL POSITION DATA

THIS SIDE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CLASSIFIER

A. KEY DATA					
1. FUNCTION (1) A/C/D/I/R	2. DEPT. CD./AGCY-BUR-CD. (4) AG 16	3. SON (4) 5275	4. MR. NO. (6)	5. GRADE (2) 12	6. IP NO. (8)

B. MASTER RECORD									
1. PAY PLAN (2) GS	2. OCC. SER. (4) 0470	3. OCC. FUNC. CD. (2) 51	4. OFF. TITLE CD. (5) 0001	5. OFF. TITLE (38) Soil Scntst					
6. HQ. FLD. CD. (1) 1 = HQ 2 = FLD	7. SUP. CD. (1) 4	3. OCC. FUNC. CD. (2) 1 = Sup. SGEG 3 = Mgr. SGEG 4 = Sup. CSRA 5 = Mgmt. CSRA 6 = Leader LGEG 8 = All Others		8. CLASS. STD. CD. (1) X X = New Std. Applied Blank = NA	9. INTERDIS. CD. (1) N = No Y = Interdis	10. DT. CLASS (6) MO DAY YEAR 08/01/07			
11. EARLY RET. CD. (1) 1 = Primary 2 = Secondary		12. INACT / ACT (1) I = Inactive A = Active		13. DT. ABOL. (6) MO DAY YEAR		14. DT. INACT / REACT (6) MO DAY YEAR		15. AGCY. USE (10)	
16. INTERDIS. SER. (40) (4) (4) (4) (4) (4) (4) (4) (4) (4) (4)									
17. INTERDIS. TITLE CD. (50) (5) (5) (5) (5) (5) (5) (5) (5) (5) (5)									

C. INDIVIDUAL POSITION										
1. FLSA CD. (1) E E = Exempt N = Nonexempt	2. FIN. DIS. REQ. (1) 0Y 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) 1N 0 = Nonsensitive 1 = Noncritical 2 = Critical Sensitive		5. COMP. LEV. (4) 0470			
6. WK. TITLE CD. (4) 4710		7. WK. TITLE (38) Soil Survey Proj Ldr								
8. ORG. STR. CD. (18) 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th					9. VAC. REV. CD. (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. (2)	11. LANG. REQ. (2)	12. PROJ. DTY. IND. (1) Blank = N/A Y = Yes	13. DUTY STATION (9) State (2) City (4) County (3) 20		14. BUS. CD. (4) 8888	15. DT. LST. AUDIT (6) MO DAY YEAR		16. PAS. IND. (1) Blank = N/A 1 = PAS	17. DATE EST. (6) MO DAY YEAR	
18. GD. BASIS. IND. (1) 1 = Rev. when vacant 2 = Impact of Person 3 = Sup. / SGEG 4 = Sup. / Program 5 = RREG 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 Y = Perm N = Other	
22. MAINT. 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. DT. EMP. ASGN. (6) MO DAY YEAR		24. DT. ABOL. (6) MO DAY YEAR		25. INACT / ACT (1) 1 = Inact. 2 = Act.	26. DT. INACT / REACT (6) MO DAY YEAR		27. ACCTG. STAT. (4) 0020	28. INT. ASGN. SER. (4)		29. AGCY. USE (6)
30. CLASSIFIER'S SIGNATURE					31. DATE					
32. REMARKS										

INTRODUCTION

This position is that of a Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) Soil Survey Leader located at the Salina MLRA Soil Survey Office. The incumbent serves as MLRA Project Leader for all or assigned portions of MLRAs covering 20-40 counties, which may involve multiple states. The leadership includes coordination, quality control, technical guidance, and staff assistance for all phases of updating, maintaining, and the producing of soil surveys within the framework of the National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) Program and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) objective of a seamless digital soil survey of the nation.

DUTIES

Provides leadership, direction, and technical guidance to staff within the assigned MLRA Soil Survey Area (MSSA). Coordinates all survey activities to ensure that the objectives and goals of the entire MSSA are consistent with the NRCS objectives of achieving a consistent, seamless digital soil survey of the nation.

Works with the MLRA technical team, including state soil scientists and other agency staff and cooperators, in following the guidelines and goals established in the MSSA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to determine soil information needs and priorities, prepares workload analysis, a business plan, and schedules.

Supervises and trains assigned staff. With participation of employee(s), develops their performance measures. Evaluates employee performance, recommends appropriate performance awards, inventories training needs, develops appropriate training plans, and makes recommendations for personnel actions.

Provides leadership in managing and prioritizing the activities of the soil survey staff. Provides leadership in determining workload of the staff by conducting workload analyses, developing and implementing work plans, and other management tools as needed to ensure effective soil survey operations.

Works within the broader MSSA and the MLRA Regional Office concept to develop and implement ways to improve the efficiency, productivity and quality of the soil survey and products and/or services provided to internal and external customers. Proactively works with staff to eliminate barriers, and implements new technologies, processes, and procedures to accelerate the maintenance of existing surveys. Ensures that the quality of the work performed by project members meets NCSS standards.

Provides quality control of soil survey activities and performs periodic technical inspections typically across multi-county/state soil landscapes to ensure that objectives agreed to in the MOU and in the work plan are being met.

Works with other disciplines to document soil-plant relationships; collect production estimates for crops, trees, and grasses; and develop other information for ecological site descriptions.

Develops soil landscape predictive models and uses soil-landscape relationships to systematically map and describe the way soils occur in the landscape. Examines existing soils geospatial information using geospatial technologies to identify areas where soil types and landscapes are not correctly associated. Examines soil property and performance information to identify and correct errors and voids in data. Tests and validates data for the survey area and updates computer databases of the National Soil Information System (NASIS).

Within the framework of the MSSA and the Regional MLRA Office, studies the characteristics of soils, geology, topography, and landforms over the survey area in order to ensure consistency of mapunits. Evaluates mapunits of survey areas in order to plan the most feasible method of updating mapunits to current standards and achieve the NCSS objective of a seamless digital soil survey of the nation.

Develops and publishes written technical and non-technical materials that relate to the soils and the soils survey and leads the development of soil survey information and reports for assigned area.

Coordinates and communicates technical functions of soil survey activities with the MLRA Regional Office, NCSS cooperators, state offices, and other MLRA project offices to assure all products of the soil surveys meet customer needs.

Develops and conducts training of project members and ensures that all soil scientists within the MLRA project are adequately trained in the use of new technologies, software applications, principles and application of soil surveys, techniques of field mapping, processes for updating existing surveys, and documentation of soil mapping and map unit concepts.

Provides leadership and coordinates activities in planning and conducting special soils studies, special investigations, and data gathering necessary for the development and refinement of soil survey interpretations.

Serves on regional and national committees, interdisciplinary teams, and boards related to making and using soil surveys.

Performs other duties as assigned.

Prepares reports, maintains records, and identifies opportunities and forwards recommendations to reduce field level workload, as appropriate. 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.

Provides and maintains a safe and healthy work environment, assuring that subordinates have received available safety training and literature and requiring that employees and others use safety precautions when exposed to dangerous objects, chemicals, extreme temperatures, etc.

Provides leadership and guidance in the design, development, and implementation of administrative procedures to assure that civil rights (CR) policies regarding the delivery of NRCS programs and services and the application of personnel rules and regulations are carried out without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or physical or mental handicap. Actively supports CR policies regarding personnel rules and regulations.

CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT

Operates a motor vehicle incident to the above duties. Must possess and maintain a valid state motor vehicle operator's license for the type of vehicle(s) operated.

EVALUATION FACTORS

1. Knowledge Required by the Position, Level 1-7, 1250 points

Professional knowledge of management principles, techniques, and practices in order to administer office activities and provide supervision, leadership, training and guidance to employees in the office and to manage resources to carry out assigned technical and administrative activities.

Comprehensive knowledge of NCSS guidelines, policies, procedures, and standards including soil classification, soil interpretations, soil correlation, soil mapping, soil investigations, and soil interpretation development in order to complete soil surveys.

Knowledge of soil-landscape relationships, soil properties, soil genesis and morphology, geomorphology, soil classification, soil interpretation, and soil-plant and ecosystem relationships in order to systematically map and describe soil landscapes.

Knowledge of the technical aspects of the soil survey program, including mapping, investigation, interpretation, reports and NASIS applications, geographic information systems (GIS), global positioning systems (GPS), remote sensing, soil landscape predictive models, and other geospatial technologies in order to produce quality soil surveys and provide technical guidance to field soil scientists and others.

Working knowledge of agronomy, geology, engineering, and ecosystems to sufficiently integrate soils information into these disciplines' activities so that customer needs are adequately addressed from a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach.

Skill in defining and managing projects in order to manage time and workloads, make decisions, set priorities, and motivate and lead professional staff in order to meet deadlines, deliver products and services, and otherwise carry out projects.

Knowledge of and skill in oral and written communication techniques sufficient to communicate procedures through directives, scientific journals, technical notes, and papers; and to develop training materials and train soil scientists and other NRCS technical personnel.

2. Supervisory Controls, Level 2-4, 450 points

Incumbent receives administrative supervision from the state soil scientist/MO leader and operates independently, working within established goals or objectives.

Incumbent interprets agency policy and procedures in carrying out responsibilities and coordinates activities with other soil scientists or specialists and technical support staff specialists such as range conservationists, biologists, foresters, agronomists, and engineers.

Completed work is reviewed to ensure compliance with policy and objectives, for soundness of approach, and overall effectiveness.

3. Guidelines, Level 3-4, 450 points

Guidelines include the MLRA Regional Technical Notes, the National Soil Survey Handbook, the Soil Survey Manual, Soil Taxonomy, General Manual, MOUs with other agencies, national bulletins and memorandums, and other related scientific data sources in agronomy, biology, engineering, and forestry.

Many tasks required of the incumbent lack specific guidelines or existing guidelines may be under revision, requiring the incumbent to apply independent judgment and considerable interpretation and/or adaptation for application to issues and problems. Incumbent uses initiative and resourcefulness in developing new methods, criteria, procedures, and/or techniques for the use of soils information by federal, state, and local agencies, as well as the general public.

4. Complexity, Level 4-5, 325 points

Assignments usually involve diverse topography, soils, climate, geology, and land use in complex patterns. The incumbent, as the recognized expert on area soils, leads the development of soils information for use by the NRCS and by many other federal, state, and local agencies and the public. Assignments include identification of multiple needs for soils information within the agricultural and urban sectors in a multi-MLRA and multi-county area. The incumbent develops and guides the use of soils information in diverse use areas. The incumbent, with support and assistance when needed from state soil

scientists and the MLRA Regional Office, interprets and evaluates new mapping techniques, proposed interpretation criteria, and new reports. Provides training to both NRCS and non-NRCS personnel.

5. Scope and Effect, Level 5-4, 225 points

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

The presentation of soils information affects the work of other soil scientists, soil conservationists, biologists, foresters, engineers, and planners in NRCS as well as in other federal, state, and local agencies and the public. 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. These programs affect the well being of millions of people in the state.

6. Personal Contacts

7. Purpose of Contacts, Level 3/C, 180 points

Personal contacts are made with landowners and operators, NRCS personnel, federal, state, and local government representatives, other agencies, and the public using or cooperating in the soil survey. Contacts are also made with representatives of consulting firms, civic groups, experiment stations and universities, students, and the news media.

The purpose of these contacts is to exchange and/or coordinate soils information and to advise and train users in the proper integration of soils information into multi-purpose conservation planning. Generally, contacts are pursuing mutual goals and are cooperative; however, the incumbent must often influence and motivate representatives of federal, state, and local government to accept NRCS standards, policies, and procedures. The incumbent uses tact and diplomacy to obtain a consensus of action among persons who may be skeptical or have dissimilar opinions.

8. Physical Demands, Level 8-2, 20 points

The work is divided between office and field. Work in the field requires regular and recurring physical exertion such as walking, climbing, bending, crossing rivers and creeks and standing in water, excavating sampling sites, and carrying equipment and heavy samples over rough terrain. Office work includes desk work and work at computer terminals.

9. Work Environment, Level 9-2, 20 points

The work involves moderate risks or discomforts which require special safety precautions such as properly lifting a soil auger, working alone in remote areas, exposure to hot and cold weather conditions, and exposure to animals and biting insects. Protective gear and clothing such as boots and gloves are normally required.

This position is determined to be exempt from the provisions of the FLSA.