



Position Description for Conservation Specialist

Position Summary

The Conservation Specialist position is focused on helping to conserve natural resources on private and public land in Gladwin County. Wildlife habitat conservation planning needs may also be addressed by this position.

The Conservation Specialist provides technical assistance and education to both private landowners and public entities for the successful development and installation of conservation practices to conserve natural resources. The specialist evaluates natural resources (soil, water, animals, plants, and wildlife) and assists in conservation planning with specifications for conservation actions. This may involve using Geographic Information Systems software and other software solutions.

The Conservation Specialist works in the community to provide environmental education to local schools, agencies, partners, and the public. The specialist serves as an information gateway to landowners, connecting them to the right resources for their needs.

The Conservation Specialist must have strong project management skills; field and data management skills; the ability to work independently and as part of a team; and the ability to clearly communicate with District staff and project partners. The person in this position is a key member of the district's conservation planning team. The Conservation Specialist is expected to provide superior customer service and to behave in a professional manner.

Work is accomplished independently from, but may be coordinated with, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), using NRCS resources, technical standards, and specifications where appropriate. Work will often involve collaboration with other partner organizations.

Job Description

This position works both in the field and in the District office to:

- Develop plans to address natural resource needs such as managing water, preventing erosion, controlling sediment loss, improving wildlife habitat, managing stormwater, reducing pesticide and fertilizer usage, controlling/eradicating invasive species, and any other natural resource needs deemed appropriate.
- Conduct site visits with landowners, observing and recording site conditions, and capturing the concerns expressed by these landowners.
- Assist in local projects that promote outdoor recreation in Gladwin County.

- Have a strong understanding of local, state, and federal programs that can assist private landowners in addressing resource concerns on their property.
- Provide technical information and support to local conservation efforts by teaching workshops, meeting with community groups and organizations, and presenting information to citizens.
- The Conservation Specialist may, from time to time, help train and/or supervise technicians, volunteers, interns, or contractors as needed or assigned.
- Assist in the Gladwin Conservation District Annual Spring and Fall Tree Sale.

Field work will include working in and around such locations as rivers, streams, and ponds; properties with dense vegetation or woodlands; and other areas with steep, slippery, muddy, rocky, or other hazardous terrain. The ability to navigate rough terrain and to work and drive in a variety of weather conditions is essential.

This position may require work outdoors related to workshops, tours, field days, and other District-sponsored programs and events. These events may occur during inclement weather.

The Conservation Specialist will be required to travel to conferences, workshops, training sessions, and attend daytime and evening meetings that may be away from the office. Travel may occur outside the normal workday; these events may require overnight stays and may be as long as one week.

The specialist shall perform all duties in a prudent and sensible manner, following established protocols that ensure safety.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Maintain working knowledge of conservation practices applicable to farm and rural properties for the conservation of natural resources.
2. Demonstrate the ability to install, or direct installation of, conservation practices.
3. Assist landowners in selecting conservation practices that comply with land use/zoning restrictions on land and water use for specific parcels.
4. Participate in meetings with District staff, Board of Directors, and other partnering agency staff to coordinate work and prioritize where technical assistance will be provided.
5. Partner with other agencies/organizations to implement the District's conservation objectives and strategies, and communicate with federal, state, and local agency personnel involved in similar work to coordinate work and avoid duplication.
6. Work in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, providing service without discrimination according to District policies.
7. Participate in meetings with landowners or operators and agencies with jurisdiction over proposed activities to provide information and assist in resolving issues.
8. Assist in the development of annual reports, fact sheets, newsletters, brochures, fliers, guidebooks, podcasts, and videos that promote and explain the District's conservation objectives and strategies.
9. Act as the District liaison or representative at meetings as directed by the Executive Director.
10. Possess strong communication, writing, and interpersonal skills.
11. Demonstrate the ability to work independently, with flexibility and adaptability to provide technical leadership and responsibilities across a variety of land uses. Education or experience in

natural resources outreach that includes working one-on-one, in group settings, and/or public speaking is beneficial.

12. Use a district computer for information entry and retrieval, correspondence, development of data spreadsheets, graphs, and maps, and conservation practice design. Proficiency with Microsoft Excel, Word, and PowerPoint is required. Working knowledge of ArcView and/or ArcGIS is helpful.
 13. Work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.
 14. Possess the ability to work within a team environment.
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Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in an agricultural or natural resources-based field of study AND two years of directly related conservation planning experience; OR,
 - Five years of directly related conservation planning experience; OR,
 - Any equivalent combination of experience, training, and/or education.
 - Proficiency using personal computer applications and programs is required.
 - Excellent oral and written communication skills are required.
 - Sufficient mobility and ability, with or without reasonable accommodations, to perform the physical functions of the job, in the office or in the field (see "Job Conditions" below).
 - The ability to operate a motor vehicle during daylight hours, after dark, and during inclement weather. To carry out these assigned duties, a valid driver's license is required.
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Job Conditions

This position works in the field and in the District office and includes significant time working at a desk; using a computer; standing at a table; and using office equipment. Work will often occur outdoors related to site visits, workshops, and other District programs and events. These events may occur during inclement weather. The Conservation Specialist must be able to bend and lift at least 40 pounds.

This position requires some travel to conferences, workshops, and events, as well as daytime and evening meetings outside the office.

General Information

The Gladwin County Conservation District is a local government entity, governed by an elected board of directors and supported through real property taxes, grants, and tree sales. District employees provide technical assistance and outreach to residents of Gladwin County to help them appropriately and responsibly use our renewable natural resources, including soil and water.

This position has been identified as a safety/security sensitive position. Therefore, the District requires satisfactory results for the following: degree verification, and investigation of criminal background, employment history, and driving record.

Compensation

This is a full-time, **exempt** position with a salary range of \$40,000.00–\$60,000.00 annually, depending on qualifications. The District offers a 401(a) retirement plan with employer matching contributions up to 6%, paid vacation and sick leave, and mileage reimbursement.

Application Deadline

Applications will be accepted until May 31, 2026, or until the position is filled. The District may fill the position prior to the deadline if a suitable candidate is identified.

How to Apply

Please send a resume, cover letter, references, and college transcripts to Tristan Hewitt, Executive Director, at Tristan.Hewitt@macd.org, or mail to 750 N. M-18, Gladwin, MI 48624.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The Gladwin County Conservation District prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the District. The District is an equal opportunity employer.

Disclaimer

The District retains the right to modify compensation, benefits, and job duties for this position at any time.