

The Nature Conservancy
Western Lake Erie Basin Agriculture Project Manager

JOB STATUS: OPEN
DEADLINE to APPLY: MARCH 2, 2017
OFFICE LOCATION: DEFIANCE, OH

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND SKILLS

The Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB) Agriculture Project Manager is responsible for developing, managing the implementing of conservation strategies and activities identified in the WLEB Agriculture Project Business Plan.

The work will include management of projects, executing activities in the field, collaboration on the development of regional strategies for agriculture conservation, and identifying strategic relationships with agribusinesses, technical service providers, and drainage managers. S/he also will collaborate and coordinate technical support from local universities and researchers. In order to enable success, the Agriculture Project Manager will build productive relationships and partnerships with farmers, water managers, agencies, and other key local stakeholders involved in nutrient and water management and use; work with agricultural landowners to understand on-farm issues and concerns; work with water managers to understand water management and delivery concerns, foster cross-site learning among conservation partners and the agricultural community; and facilitate consensus and partnerships among key stakeholders. Local knowledge and agriculture expertise will be critical as well as coordinating the long-term implementation of conservation activities. The Agriculture Project Manager reports to the WLEB Agriculture Project Director.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND SCOPE

- Cultivate relationships with agricultural retailers, producers, and water management groups in the basin and foster productive partnerships.
- Network with diverse groups, including agricultural landowners, conservation partners, water managers, government officials, and the non-farming public to support The Nature Conservancy's efforts.
- Coordinate regular meetings with staff and external partners and provide logistical support for events.
- Create and manage a database of current and potential partners.
- Coordinate, track and report on projects with several variables, work within a defined timeline and budget.
- Demonstrate sensitivity in handling confidential information.
- Financial responsibility includes working within/managing a budget to complete projects, negotiating and contracting with vendors, an assisting with budget development.
- Work within scope of the program's strategic goals and provide input through project teams for the improvement of existing programs.
- Act independently on assigned tasks and exercise independent judgment based on analysis and experience.
- Manage staff, seasonal staff and volunteers, as needed.
- Has a strong work ethic and enthusiasm for implementing conservation in an agricultural landscape.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- BA/BS and/or a minimum of 5 years of experience in agriculture, conservation, soil science, ecology, engineering or related discipline.
- Minimum 2 years of demonstrated progressive project management experience.
- Knowledge of current trends and practices in agriculture land and water management conservation practices.
- Knowledge of agricultural production.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively and build productive relationships with farmers and agencies involved in agricultural conservation.
- Experience communicating with the public and/or media both in writing and verbally.
- Experience in writing, editing, and proofreading.
- Ability to communicate clearly via written, spoken, and graphical means in English.
- Experience with Microsoft Office suite and Arc GIS.
- Experience managing and prioritizing tasks from multiple projects and project contacts
- Experience handling standard business communications.
- Experience coordinating administrative processes.
- Strong data management skills including generating reports and interpreting data.
- Demonstrated experience managing diverse activities to meet deadlines.
- Ability to take initiative and work independently and as part of a team to develop and implement project plans.
- Experience working across teams and communicating with a wide range of people.
- Strong organization skills, accuracy, and attention to detail.
- Critical thinker with demonstrated problem-solving skills. Results driven.

PREFERRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Experience working with budgets, grants and contracts.
- Knowledge of policy, economic, regulatory and/or other aspects of agricultural systems and watershed management in the Western Lake Erie Basin.
- Knowledge of and experience with nutrient problems, ideally in the WLEB.
- Familiarity with local and national agricultural-support programs.
- Familiarity with local stakeholders in the WLEB and ability to build strong, positive relationships with key agricultural and water stakeholders in the basin.
- Ability to reach agreement with farmers and water managers to collaborate with The Nature Conservancy.
- Experience with conservation easements, specifically with regard to agricultural lands.
- Ability to explain conservation practices to technical and non-technical audiences.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL EFFORT

- Requires flexible hours and domestic travel, primarily within the WLEB geography.
- Requires evening and weekend hours, as needed.

The Nature Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Employer.