



Job Description for the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Regional Urban Soil Health Specialists

Introduction

The Regional Urban Soil Health Specialists will be the technical field staff implementing the new IASWCD Urban Soil Health Program, promoting a systematic conservation approach to agriculture in urban settings and with farmers otherwise new to agriculture. The Regional Urban Soil Health Specialists will work to develop and maintain strong working relationships with the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and other local partners in their service area, supporting the development of the local urban soil health working groups, and providing one-on-one technical assistance, education and outreach. Currently, **IASWCD is hiring three (3) Regional Urban Soil Health Specialist positions** in each of the following Indiana regions: northwest, northeast, and southeast.

Duties

The duties outlined below will be carried out under the direction of the IASWCD Urban Soil Health (USH) Program Director:

- I. **Facilitate and lead local SWCD Boards to work with existing and new local partners to establish urban soil health working groups to promote an urban soil health program:**
 - a. Assist USH Program Director with formal discussions and communication with all SWCD Boards in the service area (at least 5 formal meetings each year) regarding the need and potential for an urban soil health program.
 - b. Assist SWCDs and local partners to develop independently operating soil health working groups.
 - c. Assist local urban soil health working groups with financial planning to enable their programs to be self-sustaining.
 - d. Organize and facilitate an annual regional training for ICP staff and other partners within the service area to provide technical training, promote the effort, and discuss issues relating to urban soil health in Indiana.
 - e. Evaluate and identify issues facing local urban soil health working groups and collaborate with the USH Program Director, other Regional specialists, and partners to address them.

- II. **In conjunction with the Urban Soil Health Program Director, provide technical assistance and education and outreach to local soil health working groups:**
 - a. Encourage local urban soil health working groups to provide 25 landowners per year with on-site soil health resource assessments that will include evaluations of resource concerns related to soil, water, plants, and animals, including soil assessments that analyze nutrient levels, pH, contaminants, organic matter, etc. in the service area.
 - b. Encourage local urban soil health working groups to provide one-on-one technical assistance to 20 landowners per year to assist in the planning and implementation of urban soil health practices including, but not limited to, cover crop plantings, nutrient management plans, erosion and runoff control measures, and crop rotations.
 - c. Encourage local urban soil health working groups to conduct 5 soil health education events within the service area per year to promote urban soil health to farmers and the general public.
 - d. Encourage local urban soil health working groups to develop/administer a minimum of 10 educational programs or materials per year to the general public related to Urban Soil Health and Conservation in the service area.

- III. **Coordinate with Partners to cultivate coverage of urban agriculture and soil health programming regionally and statewide:**
 - a. Attend urban agriculture, soil health partner and other relevant meetings and events in the service area to provide program updates and keep up-to-date on other regional and local efforts.
 - b. Continuously cultivate new partnerships, and maintain existing ones, with outside organizations that will be beneficial to the program.

- IV. **General Public:**
 - a. Represent the IASWCD as needed in public appearances to inform the public of the purpose of the Urban Soil Health Program, its events and the SWCDs and local soil health working groups.
 - b. Represent the Association at various meetings, hearings, conferences, forums, workshops and conventions which may necessitate travel and/or overnight accommodations.

- V. **Perform other duties as assigned by the IASWCD Urban Soil Health Program Director and/or the IASWCD Executive Director.**

Skills, Knowledge, Abilities and Experience Required

- Knowledge of state and national natural resource and conservation programs and issues.
- Experience working with farmers to implement the principles of soil health.
- Knowledge of soil health issues facing farmers in urban settings and with farmers otherwise new to agriculture.
- Strong interpersonal communication skills for consensus building and professional partner development
- Ability to work alone or with others in a team environment with minimum supervision, work on several tasks simultaneously, and complete assignments effectively amidst frequent distractions and interruptions.
- Training and meeting facilitation skills.
- Fostering and maintaining cooperative working relationships with traditional and non-traditional urban soil health partners.
- Fiscal budget management.
- Flexibility and versatility.
- Work independently and initiate efforts when needs arise.
- Ability to travel and use personal vehicle for job-related activities. Some overnight travel may be necessary.
- Ability to occasionally work extended, weekend, and/or evening hours, and travel out of town, sometimes overnight.
- Ability to work outdoors which may involve working in cold, wet, hot, humid, or otherwise uncomfortable conditions.
- Possession of a valid Indiana driver's license and demonstrated safe driving record.

Supervision

The Regional Urban Soil Health Specialists shall be under the supervision of the IASWCD Urban Soil Health Program Director, but shall exercise individual initiative and wide latitude in implementing the IASWCD Urban Soil Health Program on the regional level. The IASWCD Urban Soil Health Program Director and Executive Director will evaluate the performance of the incumbent on an annual basis.

Qualifications

Minimum education: Bachelor degree preferably in a field that relates to the responsibilities of this position such as agriculture, horticulture, natural resources, or environmental management, with work experience in natural resource related programs.

Benefits

A benefit package is available and will be negotiated depending on individual needs.

Salary

This is a grant funded position of 5 years contingent upon further funding. Initial annual salary is \$48,000, and annual salary increases will be available based upon job performance.

Location

It is expected that the hire will be regionally located due to travel budget constraints. Office space will be provided in a USDA service center, or other partner office space. The exact location will be determined on office availability.

Email cover letter, resume and 3 references to:

Electronic copies only to Joe Schmees, IASWCD Executive Director, at Joseph-Schmees@iaswcd.org. Please **note in your application if you have a regional location preference**.

Deadline

Close of business: **Friday January 8, 2021 or until filled. Interviews may be scheduled as resumes are received.**

INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

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