Farm Planner

Full-Time (40 hours/ week), At-Will, Non-Exempt status
Pay Range: Farm Planner In-Training: $55,000–$65,000 annually /
Farm Planner: $65,000–$91,500 annually
This is a two-year position with a possible one-year extension. Position may be extended based on programming and funding availability.

Employee Benefits

- Paid sick leave
- Vacation leave
- 11 Paid holidays
- 1 Personal holiday after one year of service
- Medical/Dental/Vision insurance with the option to add dependents
- PERS Retirement
- 403B Retirement Plan in lieu of Social Security
- WA CARES
- Long-term Disability, optional
- Aflac benefits option
- Deferred Compensation Program (optional)
- Paid Family Medical Leave
- Metropolitan Life/Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance with upgrade option

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It is the responsibility of every District employee to promote the proper and responsible use of natural resources. It is expected that all duties be performed in a timely, courteous, professional and ethical manner.

All SCD Staff will cooperate with local, state and federal laws and regulations to provide technical support to public and private landowners.

Position Summary

The Farm Planner / Farm Planner-in-Training expands Spokane Conservation District's (SCD) capacity to provide producer-centered, NRCS-aligned conservation planning, certification support, and technical assistance under SCD's NACD/USDA-funded BioFarming Enhancement Program and related agricultural conservation programs. The Planner works directly with agricultural producers to identify natural resource concerns, evaluate alternatives, develop implementation-ready conservation plans, support conservation-practice implementation and verification, and coordinate Farmed Smart certification and Commodity Buffer planning activities.

SCD may fill this position at either the Farm Planner-in-Training or Farm Planner level, depending on the selected candidate's qualifications, conservation-planning experience, certifications, and demonstrated ability to work independently. A Planner-in-Training will follow a structured career pathway through coursework, mentoring, technical review, supervised fieldwork, and auditor training to build competency in the NRCS nine-step conservation planning process, progress toward Certified Conservation Planner status and applicable Job Approval Authority (JAA), and develop the skills needed to conduct Farmed Smart audits and specialized farm planning. An experienced Farm Planner will be expected to independently manage an

assigned planning portfolio within the limits of their current credentials and serve as a lead technical resource for Farmed Smart certification and related producer planning.

The Planner collaborates with the Agriculture Services Manager, Agriculture Services Coordinator, Senior Farm Planner, Regenerative Agronomist, SCD Water Resources staff, NRCS personnel, technical service providers, conservation districts, Tribes, agencies, and other partners. Work will serve participating operations of varied scales and types, including historically underserved producers, small farms, livestock operations, and commercial crop producers.

Primary Job Responsibilities

Producer Engagement & Conservation Planning

- Conduct producer outreach, intake, eligibility screening, site visits, and follow-up while building trusted, long-term relationships grounded in voluntary conservation and producer goals.
- Apply the NRCS nine-step conservation planning process to identify and document producer objectives, natural resource concerns, benchmark conditions, alternatives, decisions, and implementation schedules.
- Develop, maintain, and update complete conservation plans and associated maps, inventories, specifications, worksheets, practice schedules, and supporting records using current NRCS standards and approved SCD procedures.
- Develop Commodity Buffer/Progressive Conservation Plans, comprehensive conservation plans with integrated nutrient management components, livestock and ranch plans, historically underserved producer plans, small-farm plans, and other specialized planning products as assigned within the project portfolio.
- Coordinate with Regenerative Agronomists and qualified technical staff to incorporate soil, plant, nutrient, grazing, crop, and monitoring information into whole-farm recommendations.
- Present feasible conservation alternatives, benefits, limitations, costs, sequencing needs, and operation-and-maintenance expectations in clear producer-facing language; document producer decisions without directing participation.

Farmed Smart Certification & Commodity Buffer Program Coordination

- Serve as SCD's primary staff point person and field coordinator for Farmed Smart certification activities, including producer intake, audit scheduling, initial certification audits, periodic field checks, three-year recertification audits, and required follow-up.
- Complete and maintain required Farmed Smart auditor training and apply current program criteria consistently across participating farms while maintaining the independence, documentation, and professional judgment expected of a third-party verification process.
- Review producer records and field conditions; evaluate conservation-system performance against Farmed Smart criteria; complete required erosion-modeling, STIR, mapping, scoring, and other technical calculations; and prepare clear audit summaries and supporting records for certification review.
- Communicate audit findings, documentation needs, and opportunities for improvement to producers. Develop or update farm and conservation plans that identify practices needed to achieve or maintain certification and coordinate technical assistance to support implementation.
- Maintain the Farmed Smart certification and recertification schedule, track audit status and follow-up actions, maintain complete certification files, and coordinate with Farmed Smart program leadership, technical reviewers, producers, and partners.
- Serve as the agricultural planning liaison for SCD's Commodity Buffer Program in coordination with Water Resources staff. Evaluate producer and site eligibility; develop buffer and conservation plans;

prepare maps, buffer dimensions, practice specifications, and implementation and maintenance requirements using current program criteria.
- Assist producers with Commodity Buffer enrollment and technical documentation, coordinate related conservation-practice implementation and verification, and integrate Commodity Buffer opportunities into Farmed Smart and whole-farm conservation planning where appropriate.

NRCS Environmental Evaluation & Technical Compliance

- Prepare CPA-52 Environmental Evaluations and supporting documentation for NRCS review and approval, including identification of resource concerns, environmental effects, avoidance measures, and required consultations or follow-up.
- Coordinate early and routinely with NRCS regarding Conservation Practice Standards, planning criteria, cultural resource and environmental compliance, technical requirements, review procedures, and approval timelines.
- Apply current NRCS Conservation Practice Standards, specifications, and planning criteria under appropriate supervision and within achieved JAA.
- Complete required conservation-planning and technical training and demonstrate measurable progress toward Certified Conservation Planner status and applicable JAA.
- Route plans, environmental evaluations, designs, and certifications for appropriate technical review; respond to review comments and maintain documentation of corrections and approvals.

ESIP Readiness, Implementation & Practice Verification

- Prepare conservation-planning products needed to support producer readiness for the Ecosystem Services Incentive Program (ESIP), consistent with approved payment packages, eligibility rules, and implementation schedules.
- Provide technical assistance before, during, and after practice implementation, including practice layout, specifications, sequencing, operation and maintenance, and adaptive follow-up within achieved authority.
- Conduct field verification and support certification of completed practices in accordance with applicable standards, JAA, SCD procedures, and technical-review requirements.
- Compile complete, accurate, and traceable ESIP implementation documentation for submission to NACD, recognizing that NACD administers producer agreements and incentive payments.
- Track plan status, CPA-52 review, producer decisions, implementation readiness, installed practices, certification, follow-up needs, and barriers that may affect project schedules or deliverables.

Data Quality, Reporting & Program Support

- Maintain accurate, secure, and timely producer files, field notes, conservation-planning records, Farmed Smart audit and certification files, Commodity Buffer records, maps, contact logs, timesheets, travel records, and grant documentation in approved systems.
- Follow SCD, NACD/USDA, and NRCS quality-assurance, records-retention, privacy, and reporting procedures; promptly identify and correct incomplete, inconsistent, or duplicate documentation.
- Contribute planning and implementation data to required NACD/USDA reports, internal work planning, performance tracking, and project closeout.
- Coordinate scheduling and information exchange with producers, NRCS, technical service providers, Farmed Smart program staff and reviewers, SCD Water Resources staff, MMRV staff, and project partners while protecting confidential producer information.
- Support SCD's BioFarming and regenerative agriculture programs through cohort meetings, field days, demonstrations, producer education, and approved train-the-trainer activities.

Secondary Job Responsibilities

- Assist with Spokane CD's annual Farm & Food Symposium and other approved outreach events.
- Support execution of the District's annual Native Plant Sale as assigned.
- Complete required progress reports, purchasing documentation, time tracking, and other administrative records.
- Perform other related duties as assigned by the Agriculture Services Manager or Agriculture Services Coordinator.

Qualifications

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in agriculture, agronomy, soil science, natural resources, environmental science, range science, conservation, or a related field; or an equivalent combination of relevant education and professional experience.
- Foundational knowledge of soil, water, plant, and agricultural resource-conservation principles.
- Demonstrated interest in working directly with farmers, ranchers, Tribes, and land managers in a voluntary, producer-driven conservation setting.
- Ability to complete accurate field inventories, follow technical procedures, manage multiple producer projects, and maintain detailed and traceable records.
- Strong written, verbal, interpersonal, organizational, analytical, and time-management skills.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office and willingness and ability to learn NRCS planning tools, GIS/mapping platforms, databases, and project-management systems.
- Ability to work independently in the field and collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team.
- Ability to conduct detailed farm and field evaluations, interview producers, review farm records, apply objective program criteria, and document findings consistently and professionally.
- Willingness and ability to complete Farmed Smart auditor training and maintain any program-specific qualifications required to conduct certification and recertification audits.

Desired Qualifications

- Experience with conservation planning, farm planning, agronomic technical assistance, grazing planning, nutrient management, or agricultural field work.
- Familiarity with NRCS Conservation Practice Standards and programs such as EQIP, CSP, or RCPP.
- Experience preparing maps, resource inventories, implementation schedules, environmental documentation, practice certification records, or technical reports.
- Familiarity with no-till, reduced tillage, cover crops, conservation crop rotation, nutrient management, forage establishment, prescribed grazing, carbon amendments, or livestock systems.
- Current NRCS Certified Conservation Planner status, applicable JAA, or equivalent demonstrated conservation-planning experience is strongly preferred for placement at the Farm Planner level but is not required for consideration at the Planner-in-Training level.
- Experience conducting agricultural certification, verification, compliance, or quality-assurance audits; Farmed Smart auditor experience or training is preferred.
- Experience with conservation-related erosion modeling, STIR evaluation, GIS/mapping, riparian or water-quality buffers, and preparation of whole-farm planning documentation.

Licenses & Other Requirements

- Valid driver's license and ability to meet SCD requirements for operating a District or personal vehicle for work-related travel.
- Ability to complete required field-safety, data-security, NRCS, and partner training.
- Ability to meet applicable NRCS requirements for Certified Conservation Planner status and JAA.

- Ability to complete and maintain Farmed Smart auditor training and any continuing education or calibration requirements established by the program.
- Successful completion of any employment screening required by SCD.

Classification at Hire

- Farm Planner-in-Training: Appropriate for a candidate with strong foundational agricultural or natural-resource knowledge who can develop required conservation-planning, Farmed Smart auditing, and technical competencies through structured training, mentoring, and technical review.
- Farm Planner: Appropriate for a candidate with demonstrated experience producing technically sound conservation plans and the ability to independently manage producer projects, conduct or quickly qualify to conduct Farmed Smart certification work, and complete assigned planning and verification responsibilities within applicable credentials and review requirements.

Physical Requirements & Working Conditions

This position includes both office and field work and requires regular travel to farms, ranches, partner locations, and training sites. The employee must be able to work outdoors in variable weather and field conditions, sometimes for extended periods; walk over uneven terrain; bend, kneel, and complete field inventories; and safely carry field equipment consistent with SCD policy and reasonable accommodation requirements. Occasionally early-morning, evening, weekend, and overnight travel may be required. This position must be able to lift and move items weighing up to 50 pounds.

Why Work at Spokane Conservation District

SCD partners with landowners, communities, and local organizations to conserve natural resources and support sustainable land stewardship across Spokane County. Our staff work across a variety of programs including water resources, forestry, agricultural conservation, and community education.

SCD operates a collaborative campus at The Quarry, which brings together conservation partners, community programs, and public events to support natural resource stewardship in our region. Staff have the opportunity to contribute to meaningful projects that benefit local landscapes, working lands, and the broader community while working in a collaborative, mission-driven environment.

How to Apply

Applicants should submit a resume, cover letter and three references and the SCD Application Form by email to jobs@spokanecd.org.

If you have any questions, please contact Alex Case-Cohen or Ty Meyer.

Alex Case-Cohen, *Ag Services Coordinator*
Ty Meyer, *Ag Services Manager*
jobs@spokanecd.org
509-535-7274

Equal Opportunity Statement

All programs and services of the Spokane Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status or disability.