

# District Technician Program Outline



Sean Brown inspects an irrigation ditch designed to improve productivity and reduce water loss. Longmont- and Boulder Valley Districts



"Bethleen initially helped out with parts of contracts, but over the last two years she has gained enough skills that we can now assign her to handle EQIP contracts from sign-up right through to practice implementation." Yuma Conservation District

## What Can the Technicians Do?

- Provide district landowners with technical assistance for conservation planning and practice implementation to NRCS standards - increasing local activity to address natural resource concerns and helping maximize USDA cost-share opportunities. This must constitute at least 80% of the technician's workload.
- Undertake a certain amount of other technical duties such as non-NRCS technical assistance, technical research, write technical pieces for education or grant purposes, technical presentations at workshops or meetings for adults.
- Raise district profile by interacting with landowners as a district employee and creating district publicity opportunities through their work activities

## What Can't The Technicians Do?

- Administrative duties such as front-desk duties, correspondence, bookkeeping, filing, reporting, meeting or event organization, district program management, grant solicitation, general NRCS administrative duties not directly connected with conservation planning or practice implementation (eg. payment administration)
- Work in children's educational programs
- Be positions held by persons who are also district managers

## Who Can Conservation Districts hire?

- Full, part time or seasonal staff (one or more)
- For themselves or jointly with other conservation districts

- People with skills according to your need - from new college graduates to licensed engineers

#### **What Are Some Of The Expectations For Districts Involved In The Program?**

- An open and competitive hiring process for technician(s)
- Undertake or contract out for technician payroll services and assume the legal responsibilities as employer of the technician (with some insurance and supervisory responsibilities covered by NRCS)
- Short quarterly report submissions to CSCB
- Do two publicity efforts about your technician during the year
- With help of NRCS District Conservationist, ensure technician workload is recorded on NRCS database system (PRS)
- Provide 25% of the cash funding from non-federal sources. We particularly encourage districts to inform their County of this opportunity to benefit from a 300% return on investment to attract government money (75c in the dollar) to protect critical natural resources and provide a skilled job

#### **What Do The Other Partners Provide?**

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - provides 50% of the cash funding, training opportunities, use of NRCS vehicles and liability coverage for technicians *when they are working on NRCS projects*
- CDA State Conservation Board- provides 25% of the cash funding, office and field support for districts in the program

#### **Who Do I Contact To Find Out More?**

**If you have any questions please contact:**

*Pam King: Colorado State Conservation Board*

*Tel: 303 239 4170 E Mail: [pam.king@ag.state.co.us](mailto:pam.king@ag.state.co.us)*

*If you are considering applying to the program, it may also be possible to arrange a CSCB visit to one of your board meetings if this would be helpful to your district.*