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## Job Description: **Soil Health Specialist**

### **About the Alliance:**

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (Alliance) is a regional nonprofit organization whose vision is clean streams and rivers flowing through resilient landscapes, cared for by the people who live, work, and play in the Chesapeake Bay watershed; and whose mission is to bring together communities, companies, and conservationists to improve our lands and waters. The Alliance was founded in 1971 and has offices in Annapolis, MD, Lancaster, PA, Washington, D.C., and Richmond, VA.

### **Job Description:**

The Soil Health Specialist is a fast-paced full-time position that will work directly with farmers and a broad set of project partners on agriculture conservation, water quality improvement, and climate-smart practices. The Specialist will engage directly with farmers to provide technical guidance for field-based practices aimed at improving the soil health of crop and pasture lands. This position will guide farmers in troubleshooting common obstacles to changing in-field practices and manure management techniques. The Specialist will utilize their field expertise to collaborate with the Alliance's corporate partners by providing ground-level feedback on the development of climate-focused programming.

This position will work under the supervision of the Senior Agriculture Projects Manager to help advance the Alliance Agriculture Program's implementation of conservation practices that promote improved soil health, water quality, and climate resilience throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The position will participate in, develop, and/or lead farmer and partner relations, internal team learning, project management, grant applications, partnership development with corporate and nonprofit partners, and programmatic and financial reporting. Substantial fieldwork is necessary, and, thus, field-saviness is integral to this position.

### **Specific Duties of the Position:**

- Provide technical consultation for farmers within current Alliance-corporate partnership frameworks:
  - Advise farmers on land and manure management practices that impact soil health, water quality, biodiversity, and greenhouse gas emissions.
  - Tasks may include farmer outreach, conservation farm assessments, data collection/entry, soil sample collection, mapping, surveying, hosting workshops, etc.
  - Support a rolling portfolio of over 30 concurrently running farm projects.
  - Develop and maintain relationships with farmers, agricultural consultants, contractors, federal and state agencies, corporate partners, soil and water conservation districts, and other industry stakeholders with a specific focus on regenerative agriculture and climate-related practices.
- Strengthen and guide corporate partners' agricultural conservation strategy
  - Use environmental modeling software such as RuFaS, COMET- Farm, COMET- Planner, FARM Environmental Stewardship, etc to assess the climate impacts of projects.
  - Assist agriculture team in the development of incentive structures used to pay for the implementation of conservation practices for corporate partner farms
  - Stay current on innovative soil health techniques, while working to removing barriers for small farmers to overcome adoption challenges
- Support the Alliance's overall Agriculture Program strategic efforts:
  - Pursue funding that enables the Agriculture Program to contribute to Alliance Strategic Goals. Includes leading and collaborating in multiple, varied, successful grant proposals.

- Participate in Alliance strategic planning efforts, internal committees, and problem-solving oriented teams as assigned.
- Support management of project tasks, contracts, budgets, workloads, and grantor reporting obligations. Ensure project deliverables are successfully met.

**Qualifications:**

- Bachelor’s degree in agronomy, agricultural science, natural resources management, biology, environmental science, or other relevant field. A Master’s degree may be substituted for 1 year of experience. Candidates with alternative education, but with extensive relevant professional experience, will also be considered.
- 4+ years of experience with agronomic, crop, and/or soil health consulting
- Experience with GIS and/or climate modeling softwares such as CoolFarm or COMET
- Passion for agricultural, regenerative, and climate-related conservation
- Experience successfully working with farmers or landowners on agricultural conservation.
- Working technical knowledge of agricultural BMPs and climate-smart practices.
- Excellent communications skills, both internally with the team and with external audiences.
- Great time management skills, including the ability to prioritize tasks effectively and manage 30+ farm projects concurrently.
- Independent problem-solver, objective decision maker. Comfortable working remotely.
- Certification in Conservation or Nutrient Management Planning is a plus, but not required

**Hours and Location:** The Specialist is based at the Alliance’s Lancaster Office with the ability to work from home. Candidates located outside of Lancaster are encouraged to apply. This position will have extensive fieldwork and cover Southeast and Central PA. Some night and weekend work may be required. Travel throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed is needed at times. The position is full-time (40 hours per week).

**Salary & Benefits:** \$60,000 - \$67,500, commensurate with experience. Competitive benefits include: health, dental, and vision insurance, 403b retirement fund, life insurance, professional development opportunities, vacation, sick, and holiday and other leave, and more.

**Application Questions:** The information listed below should be emailed to [Careers@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:Careers@allianceforthebay.org). Application will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Indicate “Soil Health Specialist ” in the email subject line. No telephone inquiries please.

- Your resume
- A Please address the following in your cover letter that address the following questions:
  - (a) What is your understanding of the most important climate-smart practices on a farm?
  - (b) Describe your approach when consulting with a landowner about the change in management of a conservation practice.
- A list of 3 professional references

The Alliance aspires to be an inclusive multicultural organization that celebrates the rich dimensions of diversity such as race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs. We are committed to ensuring diversity and inclusion remain integral to our organizational structure, policies, board of directors, staff, strategic goals, grants, partnerships and program delivery. The Alliance believes a broad base of participation and partners reflecting all of society is needed to be successful in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed restoration effort. Visit [www.allianceforthebay.org/DEI](http://www.allianceforthebay.org/DEI) to learn more.

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay offers a family friendly, flexible work environment. We are committed to building a diverse team and strongly encourage candidates from all backgrounds to apply. If you meet at least 75% of the qualifications of this description, we encourage you to submit an application.