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Job Title: Soil Conservationist
Department: Department Of Agriculture
Agency: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Job Announcement Number: NY-629042-DH

SALARY RANGE: \$38,790.00 to \$47,448.00 / Per Year
OPEN PERIOD: Tuesday, March 20, 2012 to Tuesday, April 03, 2012
SERIES & GRADE: GS-0457-07/09
POSITION INFORMATION: Full Time - Permanent
PROMOTION POTENTIAL: 09
DUTY LOCATIONS: 1 vacancy(s) - TROY, NY [View Map](#)
WHO MAY BE CONSIDERED: United States Citizens
JOB SUMMARY:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in partnership to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

This is an "All Sources" announcement, applicants with Status or Special Hiring eligibility should also apply to the Status Announcement NY-629040-DH that runs concurrent to receive broad consideration.

Position is on the Assistant State Conservationist (FO)'s staff under the supervision of the Designated Conservationist in the Troy Service Center. The purpose of this position is to assist the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (Albany and Rensselaer) within the Watershed Team in the development of a comprehensive natural resources conservation programs. The incumbent serves as a Soil Conservationist performing all phases of conservation planning.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

- U.S. Citizenship Required
- Positive Education Requirement
- Valid drivers license required
- Subject to security and background investigation

DUTIES:

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Natural resources conservation planning and implementation

Assists landowners and operators of agricultural, residential, recreational and public lands in the planning, application and maintenance of a variety of agronomic and engineering practices that address soil, water, air, plant, animal and human resource issues.

Uses the NRCS Nine Step Planning Process and all appropriate field tools to work with landowners and operators to identify problems, determine their objectives, and inventory the resources needed to further define the problems and opportunities.

Performs all necessary field work including walking the landscape and collecting resource data. Interprets data in order to clearly define existing conditions and proposes practical and suitable alternatives for resource concerns. Documents decisions and provides technical assistance to implement the plan.

Addresses NEPA and appropriate permit requirements.

Contacts landowners and operators, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, technical specialists,

Technical Service Providers, the general public, and employees of other federal, state, local or

Agency Information:

USDA NRCS EAST
 1400 Independence Avenue SW
 Washington, DC
 20205
 USA
 Fax: (315)477-6560

Questions about this job:

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 Fax: (315)477-6560
 Email: DANIEL.HALL@NY.USDA.GOV

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private agencies located within the team boundary in order to plan, coordinate, or advise on work efforts, or to resolve issues to carry out cooperative conservation work smoothly and efficiently.

Develops conservation plans in support of NRCS programs such as CTA, EQIP, CSP, AMA, WRP, WHIP, CRP, CREP, Food Security Act, etc. These plans will be developed using Protracts, Customer Service Toolkit, RUSLE2, and other business and planning tools as needed.

Program administration and management

Contacts program participants to follow-up on conservation plans and contracts and will document accomplishments and recommend further action required to ensure conservation objectives.

Assists the Designated Conservationist in the development of the annual Team Business Plan by analyzing workload and available resources, setting priorities and goals, and ensuring that all progress is accurately reported in PRS.

Outreach Activities

Assists the Designated Conservationist in carrying out a comprehensive outreach program by participating in activities such as educational meetings, workshops, and conservation tours.

Prepares newsletter articles to disseminate information on conservation opportunities and accomplishments.

Provides leadership and guidance on the application of personnel rules and regulations as they apply to the Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Employment Programs.

Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

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Basic Qualifications for the Soil Conservationist Job Series:

You must have a 4-year degree or higher in soil conservation or related agricultural or natural resource discipline such as agronomy, soil science, forestry, agricultural education, or agricultural engineering. The study included at least 30 semester hours in a natural resource or agricultural field, including at least 12 semester hours in a combination of soils and crops or plant science. Of the 12 semester hours, a minimum of 3 semester hours have been in soils and 3 semester hours in crops or plant science.

OR

You must have a combination of education and experience--equivalent to a 4-year, meeting minimum major field of study requirements with at least 30 semester hours were in soil conservation or related agricultural or natural resource discipline such as agronomy, soil science, forestry, agricultural education, or agricultural engineering. Your coursework must also have included at least 12 semester hours in a combination of soils and crops or plant science, plus appropriate experience or additional education. Of the 12 semester hours, a minimum of 3 semester hours must have been in soils and 3 semester hours in crops or plant science. Appropriate experience would have demonstrated the application and techniques, principles, methods of soil conservation.

The educational requirement cannot be waived. You must have the academic background to be eligible. It is the responsibility of the applicant to support and prove eligibility.

To Qualify as a GS-07 Soil Conservationist you must either: One year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-5 level of the Federal service performing many of the functions of a Soil Conservationist that equipped you with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of a Soil Conservationist.

OR

You must meet the Superior Academic Achievement provision maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or better (on a 4.0 scale) for all undergraduate courses completed (or during the last two years of your undergraduate curriculum); or a GPA of 3.5 or better (on a 4.0 scale) for all courses completed in my major (or those completed in my major during the last two years of your undergraduate curriculum).

OR

You must have had membership in a national honorary society (other than a freshman society) that meets the requirements of the Association of College Honor Societies.

To Qualify as a GS-09 Soil Conservationist you must either: One year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-7 level of the Federal service performing many of the functions of a Soil Conservationist that equipped you with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of a Soil Conservationist.

OR

Have successfully completed the requirements for a Masters degree in an appropriate biological field.

Applicant must submit a complete application to be considered. A complete package includes resume, transcripts (to support your educational qualifications) and any other official documents to support non-competitive or special hiring eligibility. These documents include Military Service documents (DD Fm 214), SF-15 and VA Disability Rating Letter, etc.

HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED:

Once the application process is complete, a review of your application will be made to ensure you meet the job requirements. To determine if you are qualified for this job, a review of your resume, transcripts and supporting documentation will be made and compared against your responses to the occupational questionnaire. Your application will be evaluated and rated under the Category Rating and Selection Procedures. Your resume must support your responses to the occupational questionnaire. We will review your resume and supporting documentation and compare this information to your responses on the occupational questionnaire to determine if you meet the minimum qualifications for this position. If you are basically qualified for this position, we will evaluate your application package, using a panel of subject-matter experts or HR Specialist to assess the quality, depth, and complexity of your accomplishments, experience, and education as they relate to the critical knowledge, skills, and abilities for the position. We will then place you in one of the following categories and only those in the Best Qualified category will be referred to the hiring manager for further consideration.

Best Qualified: Applicants possess all of the job related competencies identifies as important for successful job performance.

Well -Qualified: Applicants possesses a majority (i.e., more than half) of the job related competencies needed for successful job performance.

Qualified: Applicants meets the basic eligibility and minimum qualification requirements, but does not meet the definition of Well-Qualified or Best Qualified describe above.

Veterans' preference is applied after applicants are assessed. Veterans' preference eligibles who meet the qualification requirements are place in the appropriate category and are listed ahead of non-preference eligibles. Veteran preference eligibles that have a compensable service-connected disability of at least 10 percent are listed in the highest quality category, except in the case of scientific or professional positions at the GS-9 level or higher. Preference eligibility is attributed toward veterans who submit proper document to support military service and who either: entered the military service prior to October 14, 1976; served on active duty during the Gulf War between August 2, 1990 and January 2, 1992 (regardless of where the person served); served on active duty for more than 180 consecutive days at anytime between Sept 11, 2001 and the close of Operation Iraqi Freedom; or, served in a military action for which they received a campaign badge or expeditionary medal. Medal holders and Gulf War veterans must have served continuously for at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty. Additional considerations is granted to the eligible ratings of disabled veterans; Purple Heart recipients; spouses or mothers of a 100 percent disabled veteran; or the widows, widowers, or mothers of a deceased veteran. Applicants must submit proof of preference in order to receive preference points.

[View Assessment Questions](#)

BENEFITS:

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The Federal government offers a number of exceptional benefits to its employees; visit <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.asp> for an overview of Federal Employee benefits.

OTHER INFORMATION:

1. If you are an eligible Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) applicant you may apply for special selection over other candidates for this position.

To be well-qualified and exercise selection priority for this vacancy, displaced Federal employees must be rated at 85 or above on the rating criteria for this position. ICTAP eligibles must submit one of the following as proof of eligibility for the special selection priority: a separation notice; a "Notice of Personnel Action" (SF-50) documenting separation; an agency certification that you cannot be placed after injury compensation has been terminated; an OPM notification that your disability annuity has been terminated; OR a Military Department or National Guard Bureau notification that you are retired under 5 U.S.C. 8337(h) or 8456.

2. If you are a current career or career-conditional Federal employee or former Federal employee who has reinstatement eligibility, you **must submit** a copy of your latest SF-50 "Notification of Personnel Action" and/or a copy of the SF-50 that reflects career or career-conditional tenure, or you will not be considered under the merit promotion process. Also, **you must** submit your most recent performance appraisal.

3. If you are a veteran with preference eligibility and you are claiming 5-point veterans' preference, you must attach a copy of your DD-214 or other proof of eligibility. **If you are claiming 10-point veterans' preference**, you must attach an SF-15, "Application for 10-Point Veterans' Preference" plus the proof required by that form.

4. If you are a male applicant who was born after 12/31/59 and are required to register under the Military Selective Service Act, the Defense Authorization Act of 1986 requires that you be registered or you are not eligible for appointment in this agency.

5. All qualification requirements must be met at the closing date of this announcement. Additional information on the qualification requirements is outlined in the OPM Qualifications Standards Handbook of General Schedule Positions. It is available for your review in our office, in other Federal agency personnel offices, and on OPM's web site at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications>.

6. Relocation Entitlements: No Relocation entitlements are authorized.

7. Probationary Period: Selectee is subjected to 12-month probationary period and can be removed for performance, budget, suitability, background (see #9 below) or other reasons.

8. Background Check: Selectee is required to complete OF-306 and submit SF-85; Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive positions as part of the suitability and hiring process. Questionable background findings impact employment eligibility.

9. Vehicle Operation: Incidental Motor Vehicle operation may be required, have a valid State Drivers license is essential in the performance of required duties.

HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED:

Your application will be evaluated and rated under the Category Rating and Selection Procedures. Your resume must support your responses to the occupational questionnaire. We will review your resume and supporting documentation and compare this information to your responses on the occupational questionnaire to determine if you meet the minimum qualifications for this position. If you are basically qualified for this position, we will evaluate your application package, using a panel of subject-matter experts or HR Specialist to assess the quality, depth, and complexity of your accomplishments, experience, and education as they relate to the critical knowledge, skills, and abilities for the position. We will then place you in one of the following categories and only those in the Best Qualified category will be referred to the hiring manager for further consideration.

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HOW TO APPLY:

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To apply for this position, you must provide a complete Application Package, which includes both of the following parts:

1. Your responses to the Assessment Questionnaire, and
2. Your résumé, transcripts and any other documents specified in the Required Documents section of this job announcement.

Use Application Manager for convenience and quickest processing. Track your progress to a Complete Application Package using the My Application Packages checklist and status displays in Application Manager. Your Application Package status must be Complete by TAG:Closing

Date.

Option A: Application Manager

To begin, choose one of these options:

- If your résumé is going to come from the USAJOBS Resume Builder, you begin the process by clicking the Apply Online button near the bottom of this page. Your résumé will be attached only to the Application Package you complete and Submit immediately after you click the Apply Online button for this job announcement, not to any Application Packages you may already have created.

- If your résumé is going to be one you prepared outside of USAJOBS Résumé Builder, click this link to begin the process: TAG:Online Questionnaire.

To return to Application Manager at any time, use whichever one of the links you used to begin as described above, or simply go to <https://applicationmanager.gov/>.

Option B: Paper Qualifications Questionnaire

If it is not possible for you to use Application Manager, you can write your answers on paper.

Follow these steps:

1. You can print a copy of this job announcement so that you can read the questions offline.

2. Obtain and print a copy of the OPM Form 1203-FX, which you will use to provide your answers. You can obtain the form at this URL http://www.opm.gov/Forms/pdf_fill/OPM1203fx.pdf or by calling USAJOBS by Phone at (703) 724-1850; after the introduction, press 1, and listen for instructions.

3. You may submit the Form 1203-FX, resume, and any supporting documents either by fax, by mail or in person.

- By Fax: If you are faxing a Form 1203-FX, do not use a separate cover sheet. Simply make sure the Form 1203-FX is on top of any other documents you are faxing. If you are faxing any documents without the Form 1203-FX on top, always use the official cover sheet which is here -- <http://staffing.opm.gov/pdf/usascover.pdf> -- and be sure to fill it out completely and clearly. The fax number is 1-478-757-3144. Feed all documents into your fax machine top first so that we receive them right-side up.

- By mail or in person:

USDA/NRCS-HR
Ste #354, Room 520
441 S. Salina Street
Syracuse, NY 13202-2450

Attn: Daniel Hall; 629042

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

Step 2

For this job announcement the following documents are required:

Resume

Transcripts

Veterans Preference documentation (as applicable)

Miscellaneous Documents

To submit the documents requested follow the options listed above. Your resume, curriculum vitae, the Optional Application for Federal Employment (OF 612), or any other written format you choose to describe your job-related qualifications can be submitted electronically using the document upload process, fax, mail or by hand-deliver. Please ensure that your resume contains your full name, address, phone and at least your last four digits of your social security number.

As a Review, the required minimal documents are: Resume and College Transcripts.

Veteran's must submit DD Fm 214 or Statement of Service and an SF-15 and VA Disability Rating letter if applying as Disabled Veteran. Veteran's, if eligible, will be reviewed and possibly considered non-competitively.

Current Status and Prior-Status Government Employees must submit last SF-50 - Notice of Personnel Action to include Series, Grade, etc and last completed Appraisal/Performance report.

Limit Resume to 10 pages or less, unsolicited materials, such as copies of position descriptions and publications will not be considered in the review process.

Call or e-mail the POC listed at the end of this job announcement if you have questions on application documentation requirement. Failing to submit a complete package directly impacts ability to be considered for this position.

AGENCY CONTACT INFO:

*Daniel F. Hall
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Fax: (315)477-6560
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*Agency Information:
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1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC
20205
USA
Fax: (315)477-6560*

WHAT TO EXPECT NEXT:

Once the online questionnaire is received you will receive an acknowledgement email that your submission was successful. After the announcement closes a review of your complete application will be made and you will be notified of your rating and or referral to the hiring official. If further evaluation or interviews are required you will be contacted.

Instructions for answering the questions in the Occupational Questionnaire: If you are applying to this announcement by completing the OPM 1203-FX form instead of using the Online Application method, please use the following step-by-step instructions as a guide to filling out the required questionnaire. You will need to print the vacancy announcement and refer to it as you answer the questions. You may omit any optional information; however, you must provide responses to all required questions. Be sure to double check your application before submission.

[View Occupational Questionnaire](#)

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