

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION SHEET WASHINGTON STATE

Thank you for your interest in employment with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Washington State! NRCS is the conservation leader in America, helping private landowners, land users, and local governments to reduce erosion, protect wildlife, promote good land use, and implement other measures to preserve the nation's natural resources for future generations. NRCS offers exciting career opportunities in natural resources and the environment to students who are still in college and to those who have already graduated.

Please consider the following programs and opportunities that may be of interest to you:

- **The Student Career Experience Program (SCEP).** This program is intended for students interested in long-term employment with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The SCEP allows students to gain paid work experience while pursuing a degree in a natural resources-related career field. The work may be either full-time or part-time depending on the needs of the agency and the student's availability, and the duties are designed to provide hands-on experience and training in the specific discipline for which hired. Upon graduation from college, students may be eligible for non-competitive conversion to permanent full-time federal employment.

To be eligible for this program, you must be currently enrolled or accepted for enrollment as at least a half-time student in a degree program at an accredited 2 year or 4 year college or university, graduate, or professional school; must be a U.S. citizen; must remain in good academic standing (maintain a 2.0 overall scholastic average in a 4.0 scale or have a C or above in your major field of study) and must be mobile to all locations in the state for which selected. Participants in the SCEP must sign an agreement of understanding and successfully complete at least 640 hours of full-time career-related work prior to graduation to be eligible for permanent placement with our agency.

Each state hires its own SCEP students. In Washington State, hiring for the Student Career Experience is normally done in the early part of the year as funding allows. The announcement for this opportunity gets posted to <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov> each fall, or can be obtained by calling our Human Resources staff at (509) 323-2934.

- **The Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP).** This program allows an agency to hire qualified students non-competitively for temporary work assignments. Work may be either full-time or part-time depending on the needs of the agency and the student's availability. The STEP program allows a student to gain valuable experience in resource-related field work, but provides maximum flexibility to both students and managers because the nature of the work assignments does not have to be directly related to the student's academic or career goals, and there is no obligation on either the student's or the agency's part for permanent employment.

To be eligible for this program, you must be currently enrolled or accepted for enrollment as at least a half-time degree-seeking student at an accredited high school, technical or vocational school, 2 year or 4 year college or university, graduate, or professional school; must be a U.S. citizen; and must remain in good academic standing.

Each state hires its own STEP students. See <http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/> for further information on both the Student Temporary Employment Program and the Student Career Experience Program.

- **The 'Register':** If you have already graduated or are a college senior within 9 months of graduation and your educational background focused on Soil Science, Soil Conservation, or another natural resources-related discipline that included at least 30 semester hours in a natural resource or agricultural field you may want to apply to our 'register' for Soil Scientist positions and/or Soil Conservationist positions. This vacancy announcement is continuously open. You apply once, list your preferences as to location and job types you will accept, then your application package is 'rated' or scored. If you are rated as qualified, you will be placed on a list of eligibles for Soil Scientist and/or Soil Conservationist positions at either the GS-05 or GS-07 level and your application will be forwarded for consideration whenever we go to fill these positions in the future.

To apply for Soil Conservationist positions through the register you must apply through USAjobs vacancy announcement #UK535257

http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/getjob.asp?JobID=43312565&AVSDM=2007%2D02%2D12+10%3A12%3A26&Logo=0&pg=4&jbf574=AG16&FedEmp=N&sort=rv&vw=d&ss=0&brd=3876&FedPub=Y&caller=/agency_search.asp

To apply for Soil Scientist positions through the register you must use vacancy announcement # UK535258

http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/getjob.asp?JobID=43314297&AVSDM=2007%2D02%2D12+10%3A12%3A26&Logo=0&pg=4&jbf574=AG16&FedEmp=N&sort=rv&vw=d&ss=0&brd=3876&FedPub=Y&caller=/agency_search.asp

- **Career Intern Program.** If you have already completed your degree program, the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Career Intern Program (CIP) allows agencies to offer 2-year internships to exceptional men and woman who have diverse professional experiences, academic training, and competencies for careers in public service. Selected candidates participate in a formal training program to provide needed skills, receive on-the-job training to learn to handle the everyday situations of a career at USDA, and participate in rotational assignments to expose interns to a variety of challenges in the state in which they are hired. Upon your satisfactory completion of all Career Intern Program requirements you will be eligible for non-competitive conversion to a competitive service career-conditional appointment with our agency. To receive information and/or application materials for the CIP program in Washington State, please contact Human Resources in the Spokane State Office at (509) 323-2934.
- **Other internships and scholarships.** The Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture participate in several internship, fellowship, scholarship, and other special hiring programs, including the Summer Intern Program, the Career Intern Program, the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, the Presidential Management Intern Program, the 1890 National Scholars Program, the Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Internship Program, the Washington Internships for Native American Students, and more. Information and application procedures for these programs is available on the USDA website at <http://www.usda.gov/da/employ/intern.htm>.
- **Volunteer Program.** Volunteers in NRCS' Earth Team Volunteer Program play an important role in keeping our long-standing commitment to working with people to protect and conserve natural resources. The Earth Team is now recruiting in more than 3,000 locations across the country - that means that the Earth Team is at work near you! The Earth Team needs a variety of people with all types of skills who are willing to commit their time and talents to work directly with local farmers and ranchers in putting conservation practices on the land, organizing and developing conservation tours and exhibits, writing articles and speaking to community groups, entering and editing computer data, providing office assistance, and performing a myriad of other necessary tasks either outdoors or in a local NRCS office. To learn more about the Earth Team or sign up as a volunteer, contact your local NRCS Office or call 1-888-LANDCARE and leave your name, address, and phone number. This national referral network will pass the information on to an office near you.
- **Other employment opportunities.** In addition to the resources listed above, NRCS routinely advertises for temporary and permanent positions of all types throughout the nation. All NRCS job openings are posted to the Office of Personnel Management's website at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>. We encourage you to become familiar with this site; it contains a wealth of federal job information, and all federal agencies use it to fill new positions. Qualification requirements, application procedures, and application deadlines are outlined in each vacancy announcement. You will need to apply separately, following the procedures outlined in each announcement, to any specific vacancies we have that may interest you.