



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: Executive Director

Job Title: Executive Director
Hours: Full time, salary
Start Date: October, 2017
Pay: Commensurate on experience; submit pay scale expectations

About the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD)

Soil and water conservation is crucial to the state of Illinois. Clean water and healthy soil is necessary to agricultural production and vital to sustaining growth of communities across the state. According to the United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS), Illinois had 72,000 farms as of February 2017. Illinois farmland covers nearly 27 million acres or about 75 per of the state's total land area, according to the Illinois Department of Agriculture's website. Equally, the state of Illinois has a very large urban population that depend on natural resources, clean water and healthy soils, to grow their communities. Clean water is important for drinking and recreation along with the protection of natural areas for wildlife, tourism and to build communities.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) were formed, across the nation, in response to the devastating 1930s Dust Bowl. This tragic natural disaster brought about ecological, economic and social devastation to hundreds of thousands of Americans because of farming without proper conservation techniques. Today there are more than 3,000 Soil and Water Conservation District across the nation. In Illinois alone, there are 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Every county in Illinois has a Soil and Water Conservation District who provides tools for both urban and rural land owners to educate and provide technical assistance and funding for conservation practices for both urban and rural land.

AISWCD's mission is to represent and empower the 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Illinois.

Position Description

AISWCD Board of Directors is seeking a qualified candidate for the position of Executive Director.

The Executive Director is responsible achievement of the AISWCD mission through partnership with the Board of Directors. The Executive Director is accountable for implementation of policies set by the Board of Directors and Member SWCDs. Guidance and direction is provided by the President, Executive Committee and Board of Directors. AISWCD's Executive Director works with one full-time Administrative Coordinator, one part-time Financial Manager and one full-time Grants Manager. Additional staff may be hired with concurrence with the AISWCD Board of Directors.

Responsibilities *include but are not limited to:*

- Provide support to AISWCD officers, Board of Directors, staff, Districts and partners.
- Oversee and coordinate with staff, provide yearly performance reviews each November and supervise their workload.
- Work in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Land and Water Resources to assist with District-wide programing, the state's water quality goals and funding requests and needs.
- Develop agendas and materials in conjunction with the AISWCD Officers and FAC Chairs for all board and business meetings.
- Represent AISWCD to national and state partners. Travel to state-wide meetings and national conferences as directed by the AISWCD Executive Officers. Visit Districts around the state at Land Use Council (LUC) meetings, each quarter.
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with members of Congress, State Legislature and their staff; the Governor's office; county and city governments; federal, state, and local agencies; private organizations which share mutual interests with AISWCD and SWCDs; and the media.
- Speak and present to various audiences about the work of Districts, AISWCD and partnerships.
- Attend public events to inform partners and potential partners the purpose of the organization, programs and work of the Districts.
- Assist in planning and implementation of Quarterly Board meetings, Annual Meeting/Summer Conference, Envirothon and other events and trainings.
- Attend and facilitate events related to SWCDs.
- Help Districts speak with one voice in terms of state and national policy.
- Implement state and federal partnership agreements that provide staff for conservation across the state.
- Oversee the completion and implementation of the SWCD strategic plan to provide greater support for the SWCDs, Directors and staff.
- Fundraise through grants for projects and solicit donations for Summer Conference.
- Oversee and grow the AISWCD communication including website, social media, press releases, weekly updates, legislative outreach and newsletters.

- Prepare the AISWCD annual report.
- Develop, with the AISWCD Executive Officers, an annual plan of work each December for the upcoming year's goals.
- Report to the AISWCD Executive Committee and full Board.
- Administer day-to-day operations and supervise AISWCD staff.
- Work with AISWCD Financial Manager and AISWCD Treasurer to develop and prepare the annual operating budget.
- Oversee the preparation of the financial reports for each Quarterly Board and Annual meeting.
- Review bank statements and monitor cash flow.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor degree in a related field or commensurate with experience.
- Experience with supervising employees and delegating tasks.
- Familiarity with or an interest in agriculture, conservation, environment, political science or a similar field.
- Exemplifies a strong conservation ethic.
- Passion for soil and water conservation.
- Proven experience in fund raising and grant writing.
- Clear and concise oral and written communication skills.
- Public speaking and facilitating skills.
- Prioritization of tasks and ability to work on multiple projects simultaneously.
- Strong attention to detail.
- Experience with fiscal management.
- Self-motivated, reliable and ability to work independently.
- Proficiency with Microsoft applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Publisher) and website management (WordPress).
- A leader who can mentor staff, effectively and support the AISWCD Board of Directors as well as the 97 Soil and Water Conservation District Directors and Staff.

To Apply:

Please submit the following materials to Christina.Branham@aiswcd.org by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 29, 2017.

1. Cover letter
2. Resume
3. One writing sample that best illustrates your qualifications for the position
4. Pay scale expectations
5. Three professional references