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## Skagit Conservation District

2021 East College Way, Suite 203, Mount Vernon, WA 98273-2373  
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## Skagit Conservation District ACEP (Agricultural Conservation Easement Program) Liaison Project position

**Annual Salary: \$57,000 - \$70,000**

**Closing Date: November 2, 2020, 4:00pm**

### **Qualifications:**

Candidates for this position should have real estate experience, legal background, land conservation experience, and/or familiarity with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) processes and/or the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) Program. Experience implementing conservation easements is preferred. It is also desired that a candidate has facilitation or conflict resolution skills to resolve issues to achieve successful project outcomes. The successful candidate will have demonstrated project management skills and the ability to advance multiple, complex projects at the same time. The position requires the use of remote technology, strong attention to detail and excellent written and verbal communication skills.

### **To apply for this position:**

Applicants must provide a cover letter, a completed application form (available from the conservation district office or website), a resume, and three professional references. Applicant will be notified before references are contacted. Applications must be received at the Skagit Conservation District (SCD) office on or before 4:00 pm, Monday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Applications will be accepted by email to [Skagitcd@skagitcd.org](mailto:Skagitcd@skagitcd.org). Applicants may be subject to a background check. For more information contact Bill Blake at 360-428-4313.

### **Introduction:**

The position of ACEP Liaison is to assist NRCS and land trust organizations/program applicants, and Conservation Districts with successfully implementing the ACEP program offered by NRCS. Funding for this position is currently provided by Washington State Conservation Commission project funding for the period of approximately 12-months with the intent to apply for future funding. This position is directly responsible to the district manager but due to the nature of serving multiple Districts and Customers will generally be self directed in day to day coordination with NRCS and land trust/program applicant partners requesting assistance.

### **Conditions of Employment**

The physical location for this position is the Skagit Conservation District office in Mount Vernon, WA with working remotely or from a home office acceptable with regular reporting of activities. May be required to provide own reliable transportation if primarily working from remote location and/or availability of district vehicles. Mileage compensation would be provided for use of personal vehicle.

**Duties:**

The primary responsibility for this position is to assist and/or support applications to the NRCS ACEP program. The measurement of success is completed conservation easements that include agricultural land and natural resource protection. The incumbent gathers and assembles data as requested by partners, independently schedules their time and follow-up, while coordinating that time with the principle planner in charge of the project, land trust and NRCS staff. This person shall become knowledgeable of NRCS ACEP program criteria, paperwork, required processes timing and submittals, community coordination, local government filing and other requirements associated with ACEP and other related conservation easement process requirements. This person will work closely with project sponsors, primarily land trusts, and NRCS to ensure applications are submitted correctly and the project successfully moves through the NRCS approval process. Duties include, but are not limited to the following:

Provide project coordination support to ACEP program participants such as:

- A. Develop and maintain a tracking tool for program activity deadlines for individual projects that is accessible to ACEP applicants, monitor adherence to required timelines and procedures, and analyze program activity data.
- B. Create a visual representation (flyer, brochure, graphic etc...) for the customer/landowner of the process from application to closing to include NRCS and matching fund milestones and deadlines.
- C. Provide timely communication to ACEP project sponsors regarding the receipt and approval of documents submitted for NRCS review, as well as the status and completion of internal NRCS documents necessary for project implementation.
- D. Coordinate with ACEP project sponsors (the project sponsors will work directly with landowners), local agency staff such as conservation districts if needed, and NRCS state and program leadership as needed to address barriers to project completion, such as establishment of landowner eligibility with FSA, appraisal expiration, etc.
- E. Assist to resolve deed and title issues and trouble-shooting
- F. Provide templates or samples of program forms to project sponsors
- G. Explore/assist in providing an FAQ or other educational resources for sponsors
- H. Assist in disseminating changes in programs or policy are communicated timely to project sponsors and partners.
- I. Timely communication and coordination with Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) leads, potential RCPP applicants, easement sponsors, and participating partners.



- J. Facilitating discussion when issues arise
- K. Providing boots-on-the-ground assistance in Western WA to NRCS ACEP Program Manager, including assistance in completing landowner interviews and environmental hazard documentation.
- L. Organize and facilitate monthly check ins between ACEP Program Manager, OFP Coordinator, WSCC RCPP lead, Skagit CD Manager, and others as needed to prioritize work tasks etc.
- M. Organize, facilitate, and convene key ACEP stakeholders and NRCS state leadership as needed to ensure robust information sharing and coordinate responses to emerging challenges and opportunities.
- N. In coordination with key partners, develop and implement workshops and training modules for ACEP project sponsors on topics of importance, such as application submittal, RMS planning, pre-closing checklists, FSA landowner eligibility, etc.
- O. Produce and maintain summary reporting of completed projects and success metrics accessible to NRCS and external stakeholders. Coordinate with partners to identify important completed projects and support external communications to highlight partnerships and success stories.
- P. Through research and meetings with funders and applicants, identify barriers to using state and local match sources and recommend policy changes. Convene NRCS and other grant-making agencies to document and compile barriers observed to inform recommendations for better coordination of funding and increased match for projects.
- Q. Other duties as assigned

**Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities:**

This position requires a solid background in conservation easements intended to address preservation of agricultural and natural resource lands that provide public benefit. It is also strongly desired that applicants have at least one year of experience with NRCS processes and ACEP program, and three-years' experience desired or certificate of training associated with the development and recordation of conservation easements.

This position requires the following skills, knowledge, and abilities to:

- A. Maintain flexibility and utilize adaptive management to lead to project success.
- B. Ability to assist the farm planner to motivate individuals to adopt and implement resource management practices on their properties. This may include presenting to public groups, students, organizations, or clubs.
- C. Use computer, database creation and maintenance, scheduling, PowerPoint, virtual



meetings, and other uses as needed.

- D. Safely operate a motor vehicle. Must possess a valid driver's license
- E. Work in the field on various terrains and under various conditions and ability to lift 30 lbs.
- F. Work alone or closely with others in the field or in a public office environment.
- G. Organize and plan own schedule of activities.
- H. Maintain accurate records regarding time-keeping and authorized expenses.

**Training and Evaluation:**

Performance standards will be developed as needed to assist in evaluating work abilities and work products.

The person in this position will be evaluated in accordance with the Skagit Conservation District policy. These guidelines include a six month probationary period and one at the completion of this project limited position.

Training needs will be developed as a result of performance evaluations described above.

The application for this position can be found at [www.Skagitcd.org](http://www.Skagitcd.org) under Employment. The Applicant must submit a resume, letter of interest outlining job skills and qualifications, AND a completed application for this position to:

**Skagit Conservation District**  
**Attention: Bill Blake**  
**2021 E. College Way, Suite 203**  
**Mount Vernon, WA 98273-2373**

**Contact:**  
**skagitcd@skagitcd.org**  
**360-428-4313 phone**