



## **RANGELAND SPECIALIST POSITION DESCRIPTION**

Employer: Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District  
Work Location: Graton, Sonoma County, California  
Position: Part-Full Time  
Start Date: October 1, 2016

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### **Position**

A team of innovative and motivated RCDs in Sonoma and Marin Counties are seeking a highly skilled Rangeland Manager and experienced professional to assist grazing operators and dairy producers with conservation planning, grazing plans and Carbon Farm Plans.

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### **Summary**

The Gold Ridge and Marin Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), are hiring a Rangeland Specialist. The Rangeland Specialist will assist the RCDs in engaging agricultural producers as ecosystem stewards to provide on-farm ecological benefits, improve agricultural productivity, enhance agroecosystem resilience, and mitigate global climate change through a planning and implementation process known as "Carbon Farming." The goal is to develop two countywide agricultural carbon sequestration programs with producer outreach, and technical and economic support, and to serve as a model for other regions.

Carbon can be beneficially stored long-term (decades to centuries or more) in soils and vegetation through biological carbon sequestration. Carbon Farming involves implementing on-farm practices that: 1) decrease the production of greenhouse gases on farm, and/or, 2) increase the rate at which the farm supports photosynthetically-driven transfer of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the atmosphere to plant productivity and/or soil organic matter. Enhancing agroecosystem carbon, whether in plants or soils, results in beneficial changes in other system attributes, including; soil water holding capacity and hydrological function, biodiversity, soil fertility, ecosystem resilience and agricultural productivity.

Carbon Farming involves implementing conservation practices that are known to improve the rate at which CO<sub>2</sub> is removed from the atmosphere and converted to plant material and/or soil organic matter. Carbon farming is successful when carbon gains, resulting from enhanced land management and/or conservation practices, exceed carbon losses.

The RCDs have identified and selected agricultural operations to receive Carbon Farm Planning assistance in the next 5 years. Each farm, ranch, or dairy will work together with partner agencies (Land Trusts, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, RCDs, Carbon Cycle

Institute, and others) and the Rangeland Specialist to author a Carbon Farm Plan tailored to the unique goals, objectives, and geographic features of the property.

**Position Description:**

The Rangeland Specialist serves as a rangeland resource and advisor to land users, and the interested public.

- Plans, manages, produces, and assists in implementation of Ranch Conservation Plans, grazing plans and Carbon Farm Plans. This duty includes responsibility as the principle author/editor of written Plans. These plans include working with landowners to complete full property evaluation, determinations on rangeland health, technical recommendations, and practices which sequester carbon and reduce GHG emissions. The work requires GIS experience and the collection, interpretation, and analysis of scientific data. The work requires extensive contact with the landowners and community partners to gather information, explain findings, and build consensus.
- Serves as team leader or member of an interdisciplinary team to solve complex and/or controversial resource related issues. Scopes issues, develops resource objectives, monitors programs, and evaluates data and final implementation.
- Based on well-developed experience and knowledge, significantly contributes to the development of land management practices, by suggesting process improvements to current practices, or suggesting alternative approaches to difficult issues.
- Performs a wide range of professional and administrative duties associated with RCDs grant based funding.

**Required Qualifications:**

**The Rangeland Specialist must possess the following qualifications:**

- Demonstrated verbal and written communication skills to communicate with private landowners, private contractors, government agencies, general public, and news media. References required.
- Professional knowledge of a wide range of rangeland management principles, concepts, and theories sufficient to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of rangeland management prescriptions covering diverse situations.
- Professional knowledge required to modify or adapt standard processes; to assess, select, and apply appropriate precedents; and to devise strategies needed to overcome significant resource problems.
- Practical and applied field experience in rangeland management principles.
- A working knowledge of related disciplines in order to integrate the views and findings of other professionals into the planning process.
- Knowledge of ecological processes to evaluate and assess the environmental responses of the ecosystem to various management practices on a rangeland ecosystem.
- Consensus building skills sufficient to address differences among diverse affected interests.
- The work requires some physical exertion such as long periods of walking, standing, crouching, over rough, uneven, or rocky terrain.

- Bachelor's degree in related science field (Master's or Ph.D. preferred) or equivalent experience.
- Five (5) years' professional experience working in the field of natural resource management including managing projects.
- Strong organizational and coordination skills.
- Experience working with private agricultural landowners.
- Possession of, or ability to obtain, an appropriate, valid CA Class C driver's license and automobile insurance.
- Proficient in the following computer programs: Excel, Word, Outlook.

### **Desired Qualifications**

- Certification as a "Certified Rangeland Manager".
- Experience with budget management, grant and other funding proposal writing.
- Demonstrated familiarity with the following computer programs: PowerPoint and GIS.
- Familiarity with USDA NRCS, rangeland management, and conservation practices preferred.
- Knowledge of coastal California flora and fauna preferred.
- Proven ability to work as a team player in collaboration with diverse groups of people.
- Possesses high level of integrity as well as a positive, can-do attitude.
- Goal oriented and self-directed, works well independently.
- Action-oriented, adaptable and innovative.
- Passion for conservation and good sense of humor.

### **Position Information:**

The Rangeland Specialist position is a permanent, flexible part to full-time (30-40 hours/week) position. It is expected this position will require 50% fieldwork and 50% office hours. Work schedule can be somewhat flexible based on incumbent availability, but the Specialist will be expected to maintain regular hours once a schedule has been established. Local job-related travel is required and some weekend and overnight travel may be necessary. Approved travel expenses incurred while conducting official RCD business will be paid on a reimbursable basis at the current federal rate. A valid California driver's license and proof of insurance is required.

### **Work Environment**

The Specialist will be a staff person of the Gold Ridge RCD, splitting time between the Gold Ridge RCD and Marin RCD locations. As a shared staff between 2 counties, the incumbent must travel regularly. The main office location will be in Graton, CA but time will be spent in both RCD offices. The work will be split between the outdoors and in an office preparing plans and attending meetings. The work performed outdoors is sometimes in remote areas. The work involves regular and recurring exposure to moderate risks and discomfort.

### **Hiring Agency:**



Established in 1941, the Gold Ridge RCD has been a leader in promoting the stewardship of natural resources in western Sonoma County. Since its establishment, the RCD has been providing educational, technical, and funding support to landowners in the following watersheds: Salmon Creek, Estero Americano, Dutch Bill Creek, Atascadero Creek, Green Valley Creek, Laguna de Santa Rosa, Willow Creek, and other associated tributaries to the Russian River. The Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District was awarded the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2009 Environmental Achievement Award for outstanding efforts to promoting voluntary incentive based watershed management and was named by the California Association of Conservation Districts as the 2009 District of the Year. Similarly, the Gold Ridge RCD is the recipient of the 2008 National Association of Conservation District's (NACD) award for Successful Collaborative Partnerships for the entire Pacific Region. For a description of the Marin Resource Conservation District, follow this link: <http://www.marinrkd.org/about/>

**Compensation:**

Financial compensation will be \$30-36/hour Depending on Experience. The position is benefited. Benefits include Paid Time Off, Holidays, Retirement and Health/Dental/Vision Insurance.

**Application Procedures:** Applicants must submit a letter of interest, resume, writing sample and contact information for at least 3 references by August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to: [Brittany@goldridgercd.org](mailto:Brittany@goldridgercd.org)

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