



Employment Opportunity

Position: Lower Russian River Pathogen TMDL Ombudsperson
Status: 80% of full time (32 hours/week) plus benefits, 2-year position
Application Deadline: March 12, 2018; position open until filled

POSITION SUMMARY

The Russian River Ombudsperson will assist the residents of the lower Russian River watershed (within Sonoma County) in understanding and complying with the lower [Russian River Pathogen Total Maximum Daily Load \(TMDL\)](#), by providing information, identifying appropriate tools and technologies, and acting as an impartial intermediary between residents and the agencies implementing the TMDL and who make up the Interagency Committee (North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Permit Sonoma, Sonoma County Community Development Commission). The Ombudsperson will be an employee of the [Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District](#) and will also work closely with the [Sonoma Resource Conservation District](#), serving residents of both Districts.

The Ombudsperson will be a non-regulatory informational resource to the lower Russian River community regarding the pathogen reduction requirements as detailed in the TMDL. They will assist landowners and residents to identify tools and options to effectively manage Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS, e.g. septic systems), as well as working with landowners, residents, the Interagency Committee, livestock facility operators, and homeless task forces as detailed below.

JOB DESCRIPTION

General Activities

- Participate in meetings of an Interagency Committee to both coordinate efforts among pertinent agencies and foster collaboration and feedback from community members. Ombudsperson may also assume role as convener of these meetings, if needed.
- Hold "office hours" where residents can meet individually with the Ombudsperson to discuss their individual circumstances and get confidential assistance on options and next steps. Follow-up from these meetings may include facilitating communication between the citizen and implementing agency(ies), assisting the citizen in applying for grant funds, onsite visits with individuals, and/or providing anonymous feedback to the implementing agencies on how the implementation program is working for/impacting residents, and any suggestions for improvement.
- Participate in community events to raise awareness of Ombudsperson's role in the community and the resources available to the community.
- Maintain email list(s) of residents interested in TMDL implementation efforts, and share periodic updates, including the informational materials developed above.
- Stay apprised of grant opportunities relevant to assisting residents in complying with TMDL requirements, and apply for grants as available, in partnership with residents, implementing agencies, and community organizations.

- Report periodically to the County on the above efforts and the outcomes of those efforts.

Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems

It is anticipated that the majority of the Ombudsperson's time would be dedicated to activities associated with Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS, e.g. septic systems) and the people who operate them.

- Attend all public meetings and citizen advisory group meetings related to OWTS in order to stay apprised of TMDL requirements, status of implementation, and options for OWTS owners.
- Develop and disseminate clear and succinct informational materials, in consultation with implementing agencies, in order to communicate requirements, status, and options to OWTS owners, and/or disseminate informational materials developed by implementing agencies.
- Contribute to a "toolbox" (web-based platform) that would serve as an online library for public information and resources related to: important contacts, past studies, available technologies, easy-to-understand breakdown of regulatory requirements and resident-friendly evaluation tools for OWTS.
- Host public meetings and/or informational workshops, either independently or with partners and/or implementing agencies, to share information regarding OWTS requirements, status, and options.

Recreational Uses & Homeless Encampments

Water quality impacts of both recreational uses and homeless encampments are of concern to many residents of the Russian River watershed. The Ombudsperson should be aware of implementation efforts related to these potential pathogen sources, so that he or she can provide information to concerned residents.

- Attend any public meetings, or meetings of community groups (as invited) regarding recreational uses and homeless encampments in order to stay apprised of and dissemination information about implementation efforts, such as Clean River Alliance and other environmental education activities.
- Incorporate updates on these topics into hosted public meetings.
- Refer residents wishing to file complaints to the appropriate implementing agency.
- Assist Permit Sonoma and the Water Agency with grant applications relating to homeless issues.

Livestock

- In consultation with RCD staff and with Regional Water Board staff, develop clear and succinct informational materials to communicate TMDL requirements for livestock facilities.
- In cooperation with RCD staff, host workshops to provide information regarding TMDL requirements for livestock facilities.
- Refer livestock facilities to RCD or other appropriate resources for technical assistance.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

Effectively apply the required knowledge and skills in the daily performance of assigned duties; procedures, rules, regulations, and ordinances that are necessary for the position.

- Act with diplomacy, maintain confidentiality and impartiality, and build relationships with the lower Russian River community and the involved regulatory agencies.
- Learn, interpret, and explain rules and regulations and policies of the lower Russian River TMDL.
- Perform technical and responsible office administration, working independently and accurately.
- Retain and recall information to respond to inquiries, and efficiently search files to retrieve data as

required.

- Organize, plan, and prioritize workload and adjust to changes in workload and assignments to meet critical deadlines under pressure.
- Problem-solve, compile and analyze data, and use sound judgment.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those encountered during performance of duties.
- Type at a rate sufficient to perform assigned duties.
- Use database, spreadsheet, web interface and/or internet applications depending on assignment.
- Communicate effectively in English, both verbally and in written form, sufficient to convey information and instructions to the public and other employees in situations requiring tact, courtesy, and poise.
- Understand information requests of others and respond courteously, efficiently, and accurately.
- Ability to make site visits to residences with your own vehicle.

Minimum Requirements:

- Combination of education and experience, typically, equivalent to possession of an Associate of Arts degree and four years of responsible professional experience in relevant subject areas such as natural resources, community engagement, and/or public or nonprofit administration, which has included considerable exercise of initiative, attention to detail, and independent judgment.
- Possession of a valid California driver's license at the time of appointment and a satisfactory driving record. Must have access to your own vehicle.
- An interest in working with people and creatively solving complex problems.
- Basic proficiency in Word and Excel programs.

Other Requirements:

Willingness to hold community office hours during traditional work hours (9am-5pm, Monday - Friday) and non-work hours (some weekday evenings and weekends); and work under diverse and challenging conditions, such as in agricultural operations, around heavy construction equipment, and in inclement weather.

Essential duties require the mental and/or physical ability to: work in a standard or independent office environment; drive a vehicle; read fine print on computer monitors; converse by telephone and in person; use calculators and personal computers; and have strength to safely lift and maneuver office supplies and boxes weighing up to 30 pounds.

TO APPLY

To apply, please send a cover letter stating your interest in the position. Please also include a resume and a minimum of three professional references with contact information. Please send application materials to sierra@goldridercd.org with the subject line: Lower Russian River Pathogen TMDL Ombudsperson.

Policy of Non-Discrimination: Gold Ridge RCD is an equal opportunity employer to all regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, disability, religious or political affiliation, age or sexual orientation.