Environmental Conservation Specialist – Invasive Vegetation Management and Forest Restoration

Class Title
Environmental Conservation Specialist

Class Definition
An Environmental Conservation Specialist performs environmental analysis to assess impact of proposed recreation and construction projects, coordinates projects to preserve and restore municipal park and forest areas and provides community conservation engagement and education with a special emphasis on invasive vegetation management. Work of this class involves leading technical support personnel, but does not involve full supervisory duties or responsibilities.

Incumbents receive general supervision from a technical superior. Employees in this class work a conventional workweek that may involve evening and weekend work. Work is performed primarily in an office where working conditions are normal; however, outdoor work with occasional exposure to poisonous plants, insects and difficult terrain is also required. Work requires moderate physical exertion such as occasional long periods of standing and bending which may be required when surveying forests and parks.

Responsibilities and Types of work

Natural Resource Management

Surveys natural resources and identifies areas for preservation, protection or restoration; develops natural resource management plans and strategies; prioritizes conservation projects based upon needs, cost-effectiveness and agency goals.

Develops a comprehensive long-range invasive management plan for forested and natural park areas; recommends a plan that balances conservation, restoration, recreation and general aesthetic and functional requirements of parks, City policy and public interest.

Responsible for planning, development, implementation and oversight of invasive vegetation management and reforestation and native plant restoration projects.

Determines removal and treatment methods for invasive plants and restoration of native vegetation and park enhancements.

Determines the type, number and placement of species for restoration plantings, and monitors establishment and growth.

Reviews and evaluates construction designs for environmental impact involving invasive plant management and monitoring; recommends modifications to reduce adverse impact and follows through to ensure compliance; develops and oversees implementation of park restoration projects necessitated by construction impact.

Collaborates with agency personnel in the implementation of projects to enhance the City’s parks; establishes standards and monitors project implementation for compliance.

Researches and remains abreast of ecosystem and natural management practices. Participates in local natural resource management and urban ecology networks such as the Maryland Invasive Species Council (MISC) and the Urban Ecology Collaborative (UEC).

Performs related natural resource management work as required.
**Community Engagement and Education**

Develops educational outreach materials and curriculum related to restoration techniques and natural resource practices for academic internships, volunteer training, workforce development and school programs. Examples include the Baltimore Weed Warriors and Baltimore TreeKeepers volunteer stewardship workshops.

Delivers educational workshops, presentations and activities related to conservation, urban forest restoration and invasive plant management. This includes delivery of Baltimore Weed Warrior and TreeKeeper workshops.

Builds partnerships and collaborates with community groups, volunteers, the environmental professional and academic community on resource restoration and enhancement projects; develops mechanisms for public input on conservation strategies; investigates and resolves questions, inquiries and complaints from citizens, organizations and agencies. This includes partner orientations and trainings on policies and best management practices for park restoration projects.

Promotes and provides environmental education through community outreach efforts including speaking to community groups and providing justifications for environmental conservation projects that directly impact the community.

Works with department volunteer coordinator, forestry crew leaders, park managers and community groups to organize volunteer events for invasive removal projects, citizen science surveys and educational engagement in park conservation.

Responds to citizen inquiries about invasive plant management by phone and in person, and explains corrective measures that the City may take.

Performs related community engagement work as required.

**Procurement, Project Management and Administration**

Provides direction, planning, guidance and oversight of invasive vegetation management and reforestation projects for Forest Restoration Crew Leader.

Coordinates planting schedules and plans with public utility companies, City agencies and the general public.

Estimates costs and resources needed to accomplish project objectives; develops and monitors expenditures.

Works with resource development director to elicit community and grant funding for invasive vegetation management projects for restoration and conservation park projects; assists with the preparation of grant proposals. Works with finance grant administration staff to manage expenditure of grant funds and contributions.

Obtains resources and manages purchasing of project resources such as planting and invasive plant removal equipment, pesticide application, seeds, plants, soil, mulch and other materials.

Recommends procurement and monitors inventory and storage of equipment and supplies needed for environmental restoration projects.

Prepares a variety of narrative and technical reports such as GIS mapping, project data tracking, project status reports and correspondence.

Trains new employees as needed.
Required Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of theories and practices of ecology and ecosystem management.

Training in botany and / or plant identification. Specifically native and invasive plants of the Mid-Atlantic region.

Knowledge of public administration practices and principles including budgeting, purchasing and maintenance of public records.

Knowledge of re-vegetation and habitat restoration, conservation and maintenance methods and practices.

Knowledge of methods for identifying, controlling and mitigating invasive non-native vegetation threats to native flora. Include integrated pest/ vegetation control options and environmentally sound best practices for invasive plant management and forest restoration.

Ability to monitor grants and ensure compliance with grantor requirements.

Ability to evaluate natural resource and habitat conditions and to apply environmental principals to maintain and develop the City’s natural resources. Ability to apply environmentally sound practices to maintain and develop the City’s natural resources.

Ability to evaluate construction plans for adverse environmental impact and to recommend modifications to minimize impact.

Ability to develop, implement and evaluate the success of natural habitat protection, park and forest restoration, mitigation and enhancement programs.

Ability to maintain and establish an effective working relationship with co-workers, professional organizations, volunteers, businesses and community organizations.

Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing.

Ability to develop and present proposals and recommendations clearly, logically and persuasively.

Ability to engage and educate youth and adults in conservation principals.

Administrative ability and supervisory ability.

Minimum Education and Experience Requirements

Requirements – A bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in Ecology, Environmental Science, Urban Forestry, Natural Resource Management or related field and three years of experience in natural resource management, development and implementation of habitat or forest restoration and conservation projects or in performing environmental impact analysis.

Equivalencies – Equivalent combination of education and experience.

Licenses, Registrations and Certificates

A Maryland Class C Noncommercial driver’s license, or an equivalent out-of-state driver’s license acceptable to the Office of Risk Management is required.

Maryland State Pesticide Applicator License or certification within 60 days after start date.

To Apply: Send resume, cover letter and 2 references to Erik Dihle at Erik.Dihle@baltimorecity.gov