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2918 Ferguson St SW

Tumwater, WA 98512

www.thurstoncd.com

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**Veterans Conservation Corps Crew Internship**

**with**

**Thurston Conservation District**

**Program Overview**

Thurston Conservation District is a non-regulatory public organization that educates and assists the citizens of Thurston County in the management of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations. By inspiring voluntary, incentive-based conservation activities on private lands, we partner with our community to restore ecosystems, ensure thriving local agriculture and build resiliency in the face of a changing climate.

**Location:** Thurston Conservation District, 2918 Ferguson St SW, Suite A, Tumwater, WA 98512

**Compensation:** $2,400 monthly stipend to assist with living expenses

**Work Hours:** Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm – Can be flexible and some weekend and evening work may be required.

**Duration**: 1 year

**Start Date:** August 1, 2023. Position open until filled.

**Position Summary**

We are seeking a Veterans Conservation Corps (VCC) member to assist with the monitoring and restoration of rare prairie habitat across the Chehalis watershed (Thurston, Lewis, and Grays Harbor Counties) in Southwest Washington. The VCC member will work to promote responsible grazing practices, and educate landowners about conservation programs. This position requires a sound work ethic, strong interpersonal skills, and a positive attitude. This position will require evening and weekend work, on occasion. We are committed to providing a meaningful experience for the VCC member and will support any veteran-specific needs that are appropriate to each Individual’s capabilities and condition during enrollment in program. The majority of the time will be spent in Thurston County while coordinating with other interns working in Lewis and Grays Harbor Counties.

This Thurston County based position will support the enhancement and expansion of the South Sound FarmLink program. This program connects available farmland with land-seeking farmers, ranchers, and growers. This position will specifically work to support veteran landowners and land seekers through program development and refinement, outreach material creation, land listing enrollment campaigns, successional planning and leasing assistance, and participant support and education. Support for other educational or farmland preservation events and initiatives will provide additional training and networking opportunities. This position will coordinate with their counterpart based at Lewis Conservation District to include producers in Lewis County in the South Sound FarmLink program.

**Schedule and Compensation**

Location: Tumwater, WA with travel to sites in rural Thurston County, and occasional travel to sites in Lewis and Grays Harbor Counties

Work Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm – Hours are flexible; some weekend and evening work may be required.

This 12-month internship will begin in August 2023 (position open until filled), and includes a stipend of $2400/month for a full-time internship (~40 hours/week) to assist with living expenses.

**Responsibilities**

VCC member will serve with Thurston Conservation District and partnering agencies to carry out the following duties:

* Restore native prairie habitat through mowing, prescribed burning, invasive species removal (e.g., herbicide application, brushcutting, etc.), and native plant seeding
* Collect field data on plant, pollinator, and bird communities
* Support project implementation through field season preparation, literature reviews, and data entry/management
* Communicate with landowners about conservation grazing techniques and conservation programs
* Conduct outreach and enrollment in the South Sound FarmLink Program
* Work with Thurston Conservation District employees on other projects to gain experience and knowledge of other duties and opportunities conservation districts are involved with

**Training Opportunities**

*All necessary training required to perform the essential functions/duties is provided on the job.*

In addition to on-the-job training, this position may include the following formal trainings and certifications to aid in personal & professional development:

* NWCG Firefighter type II (Crew member) Certification
* Washington State Pesticide Applicators License
* Plant identification
* Habitat restoration and vegetation management techniques
* Chainsaw and brush cutting training
* Environmental conservation conferences/symposiums/workshops
* Growing your veteran-owned small business
* Grazing management
* Whole Farm Planning and Agricultural Entrepreneurship
* First Aid/CPR
* Posttraumatic Growth Training
* PTSD/TBI/Mental Health/ Suicide Awareness & Prevention
* WDVA Veteran Peer Corps Certification
* VCC Annual Training (every August)
* Other trainings/certifications as available and desired by intern

**Requirements**

* Must be a veteran of the United States Uniformed Services to be eligible for this position
* Must currently possess (or have the ability obtain) a valid driver’s license (or have reliable transportation to Tumwater office and field sites in rural areas)
* Fully vaccinated against COVID-19
* Must be able to perform strenuous field work on uneven terrain in adverse weather conditions
* Clear communicator with a willingness to work both as part of a team and individually
* Interest in learning about native plants, grazing techniques, and conservation programs
* Interest in supporting local agriculture
* Must be able to follow oral and written directions

**Preferred Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

* Plant identification skills, including common weeds (or eagerness to learn)
* Basic computer skills (e.g., use of web browsers and commonly used software such as Microsoft Office)
* Attention to detail
* Experience working on a crew to complete time-sensitive projects
* Experience implementing safety practices in the field with and without supervision
* Experience operating hand tools and power tools
* Comfortable working with chemicals such as herbicides and fertilizers
* Able to lift up to 50-lbs
* Able to operate motor vehicles and haul a trailer
* Comfortable speaking to landowners and other members of the public about projects
* Motivated and enthusiastic to work and learn

**Apply**

All applicants must pass a background check.

To apply for this internship, **email a copy of your DD214 or service discharge certificate, a copy of your driver license, a resume, and a cover letter** explaining your interest in this internship to:

Kim Pham

Veterans Conservation Corps Program Manager

kim@dva.wa.gov

**Questions?**

To learn more about the Veterans Conservation Corps, contact:

Kim Pham

Veterans Conservation Corps Program Manager

kim@dva.wa.gov

For more information about Thurston Conservation District, contact:

Nora Carman-White
nwhite@thurstoncd.com
360-999-3727

*Thurston Conservation District is an Equal Opportunity employer. Personnel are chosen on the basis of ability without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, marital status or sexual orientation, in accordance with federal and state law.*