



Applicants sought for summer work in Mower County

Conservation Corps, Mower SWCD offer apprentice role for conservation projects

AUSTIN, Minn. – Friday, Feb. 5, 2016 – This summer, one young adult will get the chance to work outdoors in farm fields and local waterways while assisting Mower Soil & Water Conservation District with projects.

Conservation Corps Minnesota is accepting applications through Feb. 28 for the Mower SWCD apprentice position and similar apprenticeships at 29 other Soil & Water Conservation Districts in Minnesota. Applications can be completed online at www.conservationcorps.org/apply.

“Our apprentice will be a huge help this summer, staying busy assisting our staff with the seeding program, spot checks on easement sites, water monitoring and soil health work,” Mower SWCD manager Justin Hanson said.

Austin-based Mower SWCD will have its apprentice apply conservation practices, such as surveying and staking; GPS recording of boundaries; seeding; and delivering and setting up a seed drill. The person will review and record observations at easement sites; input data in a district program; organize Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) folders; provide oversight on construction projects; and assist staff with land surveys.

Mower SWCD has a longstanding partnership with Conservation Corps, including Corps members pulling out hundreds of tires from the Cedar River; clearing river hazards for canoes; and removing the invasive buckthorn plant.

Conservation Corps hires all apprentices. Mower SWCD and other participating SWCDs just need to provide a work station and share their work experience in a learning environment. Other area apprentice communities will include Preston, Caledonia, Lewiston, Fairmont and Faribault. Applicants can designate which locations they are willing to work at this summer; the more sites selected, the better their chances of being hired.

Apprentices, who must be age 18 to 25, will serve from May 16 to Aug. 12 as AmeriCorps members while gaining technical and professional experience through learning hands-on skills in managing soil and water resources alongside SWCD natural resource staffers. Typical schedules run from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday in office and outdoor settings, with some evening and weekend hours possible.

Apprentices receive a monthly living stipend of \$1,255 and, upon successful completion of the summer term, a \$1,515 education award. Funding for these positions is provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources. Participants also receive skills training, job experience, health insurance and student loan forbearance during the service term. Housing is not provided.

Conservation Corps provides meaningful work for young people in managing natural resources, responding to disasters, conserving energy and leading volunteers. It provides training in resource management, safety, job-readiness and technical skills while helping young people develop personal responsibility, a strong work ethic and greater awareness of environmental stewardship.

Applicants should have a positive attitude and strong commitment to service and community work; willingness to work independently and on a team; ability to communicate effectively with staff, community members and landowners; ability to work outdoors in adverse conditions and lift 50 pounds; a valid driver’s license; pass criminal, NSOPR and river history record checks. Training or experience in natural resource management, agriculture, GIS/GPS and MS Office is preferred but not required.

Mower Soil & Water Conservation District

Since 1953, Mower SWCD has provided land and conservation services to Mower County landowners to help manage lands in a way that promotes a sound economy as well as sustains and enhances natural resources that are key to the state’s environmental health. Mower SWCD is one of Minnesota’s 91 SWCDs that each are governed by a board of elected supervisors.

Conservation Corps summer apprentice

Who: Mower SWCD and Conservation Corps Minnesota.

What: Co-sponsoring a summer apprentice (age 18 to 25) for assisting in managing soil and water resources.

Where: Mower County.

When: May 16 through Aug. 12.

Why: Learn hands-on skills and get a monthly living stipend and post-term monetary education award.

How: Apply by Feb. 28 online at:

www.conservationcorps.org/apply

Kellie Lager, recruitment coordinator

Conservation Corps Minnesota

651-209-9900, x31; recruit@conservationcorps.org

Website: conservationcorps.org