University of Arizona
NRCS Careers Workshop
January 25, 2022
Introductions
Employee Spotlight

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FSA implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster and farm marketing programs through a national network of offices.

FSA has two primary functions: farm programs and farm loan programs. These programs provide a full range of support to producers, from beginning farmers and ranchers who need access to loans to start up their operations to established producers who endured catastrophic weather events and need disaster assistance or a strong financial safety net.

NRCS provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain and improve our natural resources and environment. NRCS helps American farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners make conservation work for them.

The system of practices we promote helps them improve production, reduce input costs, and conserve natural resources for the future. We also provide financial resources to help with the cost of getting conservation on the ground.

RMA serves America’s agricultural producers through effective, market-based risk management tools to strengthen the economic stability of agricultural producers and rural communities.

RMA is committed to increasing the availability and effectiveness of Federal crop insurance as a risk management tool.

The FPAC Business Center handles a variety of functions, from human resources to financial management, enabling FSA, NRCS, and RMA to focus on serving farmers and ranchers.

The FPAC Business Center, ensures all of the administrative and mission support offices collaborate and run smoothly.
About NRCS

Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRCS HISTORY

USDA 1862

Helping People Help the Land for over 85 years

1930s “The Dust Bowl”

1994 Natural Resources Conservation Service

1935 Soil Conservation Service
Our Primary Customers

• Farmers, Ranchers, and Landowners (Ag Producers)
• Tribal Nations and Tribal members
• Members of the private sector who support agriculture and conservation
• Governments and units of government
• Non-profit organizations
Common NRCS Career Opportunities

- **SOIL CONSERVATIONIST** *(MAJORS: AG, NATURAL RESOURCES, RELATED SCIENCES)*
- **SOIL SCIENTIST** *(MAJORS: SOIL SCIENCE; ECOLOGY-GEOLOGY W/KEY COURSE WORK)*
- **RANGE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST** *(MAJOR: RANGE SCIENCE/RANGE ECOLOGY)*
- **AGRONOMIST** *(MAJOR: AGRONOMY)*
- **AG, CIVIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERS** *(MAJORS-SAME AS OCCUPATION)*
- **NATURAL RESOURCE SPECIALIST** *(MAJORS: BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, CHEMISTRY, OR RELATED DISCIPLINES APPROPRIATE TO THE POSITION (I.E. ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, SUSTAINABLE CONSERVATION, ETC.))*
- **BUDGET ANALYST** *(MAJORS: MOST BUSINESS AND/OR DIRECT WORK EXPERIENCE)*
- **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST** *(MAJORS: FINANCE, MOST BUSINESS AND/OR DIRECT WORK EXPERIENCE)*
- **PLUS OTHER OCCUPATIONS....**
Quick Qualification Guide for Typical USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rangeland Management Specialist, GS-454</td>
<td>Range management or a related discipline</td>
<td>Study must have included at least 42 semester hours in a combination of the plant, animal, and soil sciences, and natural resources management, as follows:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Range Management: At least 18 semester hours of course work in range management, including courses in such areas as basic principles of range management, range plants, range ecology, range inventories, range studies, range improvements, and ranch or rangeland planning.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Directly Related Plant, Animal, and Soil Sciences: At least 15 semester hours of directly related courses in the plant, animal, and soil sciences, including at least one course in each of these three scientific areas, i.e., plant, animal, and soil sciences. Courses in areas such as plant taxonomy, plant physiology, plant ecology, animal nutrition, livestock production, and soil morphology or soil classification are acceptable.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Related Resource Management Studies: At least 9 semester hours of course work in related resource management subjects, including courses in areas such as wildlife management, watershed management, natural resource or agricultural economics, forestry, agronomy, forages, and outdoor recreation management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil Conservationist, GS-457</td>
<td>Soil conservation or a related agricultural or natural resource discipline such as agronomy, soil science, forestry, agricultural education, or agricultural engineering</td>
<td>Study must have included 30 semester hours in a natural resource or agricultural field, including at least 12 semester hours in a combination of soils and crops or plant science. Of the 12 semester hours, a minimum of 3 semester hours must have been in soils and 3 semester hours in crops or plant science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil Science, GS-470</td>
<td>Soil science or a closely related discipline</td>
<td>Study must have included 30 semester hours or equivalent in biological, physical, or earth science, with a minimum of 15 semester hours in such subjects as soil genesis, pedology, soil chemistry, soil physics, and soil fertility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agronomist, GS-471</td>
<td>Agronomy or related discipline of science</td>
<td>Study must have included at least 30 semester hours of course work in the basic plant sciences, including at least 15 semester hours in agronomic subjects, such as those dealing with plant breeding, crop production, and soil and crop management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil or Agricultural Engineers, GS-810 or 890</td>
<td>Professional engineering</td>
<td>To be acceptable, the curriculum must: (1) be in a school of engineering with at least one curriculum accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) as a professional engineering curriculum; or (2) include differential and integral calculus and courses (more advanced than first-year physics and chemistry) in five of the following seven areas of engineering science or physics: (a) statics, dynamics; (b) strength of materials (stress-strain relationships); (c) fluid mechanics, hydraulics; (d) thermodynamics; (e) electrical fields and circuits; (f) nature and properties of materials (relating particle and aggregate structure to properties); and (g) any other comparable area of fundamental engineering science or physics, such as optics, heat transfer, soil mechanics, or electronics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resource Specialist</td>
<td>Biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, chemistry, or related disciplines appropriate to the position.</td>
<td>To be acceptable, the curriculum must have: a degree in appropriate to the position.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Must meet criteria at time of graduation, not when applying.
Employee Benefits
Salary
Salaries are competitive with annual compensation increases.

Job Security
Increased job security is a valuable commodity.

Vacation and Holidays
Over the course of a career federal civilian employees receive nearly 1.5 years more in paid vacation and holidays than the average private employee.

Generous Health & Retirement Benefits
Multiple health care plans to choose from and a competitive retirement system with many investment options.

Location
• NRCS located in every State & US Territory

Other Benefits:
• Educational Development
  • Paid for courses
• Work/Life Balance
• Opportunities to advance and move within the government
• Professional Development
  • Lots of Training (formal & OJT)
  • Temporary Assignments
  • Stretch Assignments
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Earth Team Volunteer</strong> (unpaid)</th>
<th><strong>UA Partnership Internship—LGBTQ Recruitment Initiative</strong></th>
<th><strong>Pathways Program</strong></th>
<th><strong>Regular Job Opportunities</strong> (some examples)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available to anyone 14 and older.</td>
<td>Applications are open for FY22 until January 28, 2022.</td>
<td>Pathways Internship</td>
<td>Open to the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Individuals with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Targeted to the LGBTQ+ student community but is open to all students.</td>
<td>Veterans</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plan to recruit 3 students for this internship, for Summer 2022.</td>
<td>Military spouses</td>
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<td>Recent Graduates Program</td>
<td>Native Americans</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Presidential Management Fellows (PMF)</td>
<td>Special authorities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Internship Program
Pathways provides students with paid opportunities to work and explore federal careers while still in school.

- Must be US Citizen. At least 16 years old
- Full-time or part-time internships
- May be non-competitively converted to a permanent job upon graduation

Opens every October
Opens every October

Recent Graduates Program
Pathways provides recent graduates opportunities to apply academic training and knowledge in a professional job.

- Dynamic, one-year developmental program
- Eligible for a 2-year period from graduation date
- Non-competitive conversion to permanent job after end of program.

Interdisciplinary Agronomist / Soil Conservationist (Pathways Recent Graduate)
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Agriculture
Lockeford, California

Starting at $65,180 (GS 9)
Permanent • Full-time

Open 11/19/2021 to 12/03/2021
Pathways – Program Components

Typically Opens in September

Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program
Pathways establishes the PMF Program as the federal government’s premier leadership initiative for hiring graduate and professional degree candidates.

- If you will meet all advanced degree requirements (even though you have not necessarily graduated), including the completion or successful defense of any required thesis or dissertation, you may be eligible to apply. Eligibility is based on completion of advanced degree requirements by August 31st of the following year of the annual application.
- OR -

- If you have completed an advanced degree from a qualifying college or university during the previous two years from the opening date of the PMF Program’s annual application announcement, you are eligible to apply.

Find out more about the application process on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website: https://www.pmf.gov/become-a-pmf/application-process/
Students may be appointed at the highest grade level they qualify for based on education and experience.

Interns with no previously related education or experience may qualify as described in the chart.

Initial appointment and promotions depend on the Job Opportunity Announcement.

General Schedule (GS) also refers to salary.

*Salary shown is approximate. Changes annually and depends on location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GS-1</td>
<td>Enrollment in a high school diploma or General Education Diploma (GED) program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS-2</td>
<td>Completion of high school or GED diploma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS-3</td>
<td>Completion of one full academic year of post-high school study.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS-4</td>
<td>Completion of two full academic years of post-high school study or an associate's degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS-5</td>
<td>Completion of four academic years of post-high school leading to a bachelor's degree or equivalent degree.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS-7</td>
<td>Completion of one full academic year of graduate level education; or eligibility under the Superior Academic Achievement Provision and completion of a bachelor's degree.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS-9</td>
<td>Completion of two academic years of graduate level education, or a master's degree or equivalent graduate degree.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GS-11</td>
<td>For research positions, completion of all requirements for a master's or equivalent graduate degree. For non-research positions, completion of all requirements for a PhD or equivalent degree.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Schedule (GS) is the federal government's primary pay table. Ranges from GS-1 to GS-15. Available at www.opm.gov
Preparing Your Federal Resume
Important Key Points for Federal Government Resume:

- Multiple pages long is ok 😊
- Objective
- Education
- Work Experience
  - Most relevant jobs listed first, then ordered by most recent.
  - Highlight work tasks, quantify, your role and outcomes (mix of narrative and bullet statements best)
- Keep formatting consistent.
- Include keywords from job announcement.

Other information to include:
- Job Related Trainings
- Certificates and Licenses
- Volunteer and Community Service
- Special Skills
- Affiliations (ex. Clubs, orgs, etc.)

References
- Include a mix of 3 to 4 references with title, email and phone #. Notify references ahead of time.
Add the Job Announcement information

USDA-NRCS
SAMPLE RESUME

JUAN DOE
102 Super Star Street
Alburqueque, NM 11111
Phone number: (555) 444-5555
Email: myresume@gmail.com

Country of Citizenship: United States of America
Veteran’s Preference: N/A or [include preference, if applicable]
Highest Grade: GS-5

JOB INFORMATION
Announcement Number: NR243152015-PW
Job Title: Range Management Specialist Trainee
Series & Grade(s) Applying for: GS-499-4/5

This info is found on the job announcement
OBJECTIVE
Obtain a position in federal civil service where my knowledge of natural resources management techniques in compiling and assessing data will improve the management and protection of rangelands, forests, wildlife habitat and other vital resources. Willing to relocate.

EDUCATION
New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM
Pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Range Science, expected graduation: May 2022
GPA: 3.3 on a 4.0 scale
Rocky Mountain High School, Boulder, CO.

WORK EXPERIENCE
USDA-Forest Service
Gunnison, CO

- Biological Science Student Intern
  Set up bark beetle traps to monitor their reproduction rate and peak of their flight through Southwestern Colorado, an area of approximately 4000 square miles. Set up a total of 20 monitoring plots to track their movement. Placed pheromone and anti-pheromone packets for bark beetles. Assessed lands for insect and disease infestations. Analyze the risk of hazard trees. Results of my work were incorporated into the Forest Revision Plan.
  - Add other bulleted statements highlighting key work duties, tasks, outcomes/accomplishments.

Take STAR approach when writing work experience narratives. S-Situation; T-Task; A-Action; R-Results. Quantify as much as

Date Employed: August 2019-Present
Grade Level/Pay/Salary: $11.00/hour
Hours per Week: 32
Supervisor: Cameron Diaz, 555-555-555
Permission to contact Supervisor--Yes
Federal Format—Resume Building

- Detailed dates, pay, time, and supervisor for each job listing

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**Quivera Coalition Training Workshop**
Mora, NM

*Field Assistant*
Transplanted willows and cottonwoods and planted native grass seed to restore the vegetation along the Mora River. Built fences around the cottonwoods to increase their chances of survival. Performed cross sections to monitor the geomorphology of the stream.

- Add other bulleted statements highlighting key work duties, tasks, outcomes/accomplishments

**Future Farmers of America**
Various Locations

*Event Judge*
Judged parliamentary procedure and public speaking contest at both the district and state levels. Provided participants with valuable feedback to improve their public speaking skills and to increase their knowledge of parliamentary protocol. *Note:* my work is conducted during the organization’s annual events.

- Add other bulleted statements highlighting key work duties, tasks, outcomes/accomplishments

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Date Employed: May 7th-8th, 2018
Grade Level/Pay/Salary: $250 Stipend
Hours per Week: N/A
Supervisor: Jessica Alba, 555-555-555
Permission to contact Supervisor--No

Date Employed: 2018- Present
Grade Level/Pay/Salary: $11.00/hour
Hours per Week: 20
Supervisor: Tim McGraw, 555-555-555
Permission to contact Supervisor--Yes
Courses Related to the position you are applying to.

Add mini description of what you learned/accomplished in those courses.

**JOB RELATED TRAINING COURSES**

**NATIONAL HISPANIC ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL MINORITY YOUTH TRAINING INSTITUTE**

August 2017


**QUIVIRA COALITION CONFERENCE**

November 8-10, 2017

Attended the 10th annual conference for new agrarians. Learned how the next generation of leaders must tackle 21st century challenges such as: degraded landscapes, loss of resources, and pollution. Gained knowledge on how to create sustainable agriculture and farming practices. Acquired proper restoration techniques for both small and large scale ranches. Learned about effects of global warming, and what to expect from it in the future.

**FOREST HEALTH MANAGEMENT**

June 14-15, 2017

Completed Forest Insect and Disease Training Workshop on tree diseases and insects, their relationships with one another, and what signs to look for if they are present. Determined what trees were hazards or at risk of injuring someone, and what caused them to be hazardous.
Volunteer experience is relevant! Provide a sentence or two on what you learned/accomplished in those volunteer efforts.

Add a section on other skills.

**VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

- Carwash fundraiser for local high school as part of a scholarship program for low income students transitioning to college
- Arbor Day Event—Planted native trees in designated locations within our community, including wetland areas
- Habitat for Humanity—Participated two Saturdays per month during Spring 2014 constructing two homes in our community. I worked as a Laborer, assisting the professional Carpenters by hauling materials, prepping and cleaning work sites, and making runs to the hardware store as needed.

**SKILLS**

- Bilingual: Fluent in Spanish, spoken and written
- Welding, fence building, hiking, fishing, camping, ATV, and animal husbandry.
- Computer skills: Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power Point, GIS, AutoCad, Internet Research & Navigation
- Strong Communication and Analytical Skills
Quantify your work experience narratives and bullet statements as much as possible. Show results/outcomes to jobs/projects.

2–4-page resumes are okay for federal internships/entry level jobs.

Notify your References ahead of time.

CERTIFICATES AND LICENSES

- Red Carded- Certified for wildfire assignments
- Accredited parliamentarian
- Certified in Adult CPR, Adult Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and Standard First Aid.

AFFILIATIONS, HONORS, AWARDS

- NMSU Career Services, Outstanding Freshmen Award, 2011
- Current Vice President of the Wildlife Society, NMSU Chapter
- Current Treasure of the Range Club
- Student member Society of American Foresters (SAF)

REFERENCES

1) Dr. Julia Roberts, Agronomy Professor/Advisor, NMSU
   Phone (505) 444-8787
   juberts@taos.edu

2) Scarlet Johansson, Supervisor, Apple Store Manager
   Phone (888) 222-3333
   scarjo@gmail.com

3) Pete Rose, Baseball Hall of Fame Inductee, Family Friend
   Phone (303) 746-4256
   cincireds@rose.mlb
Submitting Your Resume
Preferences

Travel & Relocation
Are you willing to travel?
- Yes
- No

What percentage of duty time will you travel?
- 50% or less

Are you willing to relocate?
- Yes
- No

Desired work locations
- Location

Appointment type & work schedule
What type of work are you willing to accept?
- All
- Permanent
- Temporary
- Term
- Detail
- Seasonal
- Summer
- Presidential Management Fellows
- Recent Graduates
- Multiple Appointment Types
- Internships
- Intermittent
- Telework

What's the definition of each appointment type?

What type of work schedule are you willing to accept?
- All
- Full-Time
- Part-Time
- Shift Work
- Intermittent
- Job Sharing
- Multiple Schedules

What's the definition of each work schedule?
Search USAJOBS-Pathways

Student Trainee (Soil Conservation)
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Agriculture
Multiple Locations

Open 10/12/2021 to 10/26/2021

Starting at $28,078 (GS 3)
Internships • Full-time

Student Trainee (Soil Conservation)
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Agriculture
Multiple Locations

Open 10/12/2021 to 10/26/2021

Starting at $25,734 (GS 2-3)
Internships • Full-time

Student Trainee (Soil Conservation)
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Agriculture
Multiple Locations

Open 10/12/2021 to 10/26/2021

Starting at $25,734 (GS 2-3)
Internships • Full-time
Overview

Accepting applications

Open & closing dates
10/12/2021 to 10/26/2021

Pay scale & grade
GS 3

Appointment type
Internships

Service
Excepted

Salary
$28,078 to $41,681 per year

Work schedule
Full-time

Locations

5 vacancies in the following locations:

- Colusa, CA
  1 vacancy

- Susanville, CA
  1 vacancy

- Yreka, CA
  1 vacancy

Relocation expenses reimbursed
No

Telework eligible
Yes as determined by agency policy

This job is open to

Students
Current students enrolled in accredited educational institutions from high school to graduate level. Includes internships, pathways and other student programs.

Clarification from the agency
Students who are currently enrolled or accepted for enrollment on at least a half-time basis at a qualifying educational institution in a certificate, degree, or diploma program with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

Apply

Print
Share
Save

Announcement number
NRCS-22-11256779-PW-CA-FL

Control number
617009100
If you have not yet conferred your degree or certificate, but will within 120 days of the closing date of this announcement, a letter from the school documenting current standing, degree being obtained and expected graduation date must be submitted with your application.
USAJobs.gov Video

Applying for Federal Jobs:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAGtfAdoxif6an9xM6YUIAQ
Additional Resources

Resource List:

- NRCS Careers Website

- Pathways Program Website

- How to build a Resume on USAJobs.gov
  https://www.usajobs.gov/help/how-to/account/documents/resume/build/

YouTube Videos:

- NRCS Video Library
  https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDZND69Db-WE0d1ITEiuSjQ

- USAJobs.gov Video Library
  https://www.youtube.com/user/usajobsapp
Thank You!

TO APPLY: WWW.USAJOBS.GOV