



Van Buren Conservation District Strike Team Crew Job Description and Posting Updated: 2024

Background Information: The Van Buren Conservation District (VBCD) is seeking to hire up to two full-time (30-40 hours per week) CISMA Strike Team Crew Members. The Southwest by Southwest Corner Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) Team protects our shared natural resources from invasive species throughout Southwest Michigan. We support community education and responsible management of invasive species. It is a grant-funded, collaborative group that works with the community to minimize the impact of invasive species. Every Michigan county is part of a CISMA, but our service area covers Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. The CISMA Team helps land owners, municipalities, and businesses to better understand how invasive species impact them and what they can do to address them. The Van Buren Conservation District employs the CISMA Team and houses the CISMA program for the tri-county service area.



Position Description: The SWxSW Corner CISMA Strike Team Crew treats and surveys for invasive species throughout Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. The team will use herbicide to treat invasive plants in wetlands, forests, parks/camps, residential areas, and along roadsides. Plant and insect surveys will be conducted near water bodies and common freight routes, respectively. All training will be provided by the Strike Team Coordinator or CISMA Coordinator. The Crew Member shall be under the direct supervision of the Strike Team Coordinator, who is under the direct supervision of the Executive Director. Any employee in this position may be called upon to do any or all of the following essential functions. These examples do not include all of the duties that the employee may be expected to perform. Field work may involve traversing uneven, boggy, or steep terrain in a range of temperatures and conditions. This may require carrying equipment and materials of up to 50 pounds on strenuous hikes. The Strike Team Crew must be ready and willing to work in a variety of conditions, as well as travel through the CISMA's entire service area. A truck, trailer, and UTV will be provided for navigating to/through sites, as available. Responsibilities and number of open positions are contingent upon awarded project funding.

Responsibilities and Duties:

- Survey and map target sites
- Accurately record data
- Assist with administrative duties
- Study for Pesticide Applicator exams for Core, and categories 2 - Forestry, 5 - Aquatic, and 6 - Right of Way (if applicable; study materials provided by VBCD)
- Assist Strike Team Coordinator surveying sites
- Treat invasive species through chemical or mechanical means using



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backpack sprayers, brush cutters, etc.

- Install and check spotted lanternfly circle traps every other week
- Determine necessary supplies and equipment before visiting a site
- Clean, maintain, and keep track of equipment and supplies
- Conduct invasive species management using best management practices
- Follow protocols for decontamination, herbicide safety, and equipment safety
- Communicate with partners and the public on invasive species in the field and at events
- Use ArcGIS, FieldMaps, and Google Sheets to record data while out in the field or in the office
- Drive UTV with supplies/equipment through large sites
- Submit complete and accurate data to Strike Team Coordinator for grant reporting purposes
- Kayak ponds, lakes, streams, rivers, and other water bodies to conduct surveys and collect invasive aquatic plant specimens
- Other duties as assigned by Strike Team Coordinator and VBCD Management

Details: Wages will be commensurate with education and experience and range from \$18 to \$20 per hour. The Strike Team Crew Member position is seasonal. The season extends from May to September, with potential for extending into as late as November. The standard week for the Crew Member is 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM, Monday - Thursday, with occasional necessary evening meetings and weekend programs. The VBCD is housed out of the Van Buren County USDA Center at 1035 E Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079. Seasonal positions are not eligible for benefits except those required by law.

Seasonal Position Dates:

Start date: May 6, 2024* (to be determined)

End date: November 15, 2024 (to be determined)

*Hired staff may attend an aquatic plant training event on Saturday, April 27, 2024.

Education, Knowledge, & Experience:

- Basic understanding of plant identification
- Must be (or be able to become) a certified or registered Michigan Commercial Pesticide Applicator in Categories 2, 5, and 6 (paid for by employer, if needed)
- Have a strong commitment to an environmental ethic
- Polite, courteous, professional, and tactful. Positive attitude and sense of teamwork is



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essential

- Ability to make decisions in accordance with established policies and procedures
- Ability to conduct customer service at a professional level
- Ability to write, speak, and otherwise communicate with groups of diverse size and demographics
- Ability to travel to overnight conferences and work some nights and weekends, as needed
- Must pass a Federal Background Security Check
- Valid driver's license and reliable, registered, and insured vehicle for use during work hours, if needed (approved mileage shall be reimbursed)
- Preference given to those:
 - with an educational background and/or work experience in natural resource management, biology, or ecology
 - with strong organizational, recordkeeping, and task prioritization skills
 - who can navigate off-trail, execute transect paths while managing invasive plants using a compass & map and/or GPS unit
 - who can identify some native and invasive plant and/or insect species of the Midwest
 - with experience mixing and applying herbicide using a backpack sprayer
 - with experience with data recording, managing, and tracking
 - with experience using ArcGIS or FieldMaps
 - with experience operating and maintaining a brush cutter
 - with experience towing and maneuvering a hitched trailer
 - with experience driving a UTV
 - with at least one season of relevant field experience

Physical Requirements:

- Able to work outdoors in all kinds of weather, often for most of the work-day hours
- Able to walk on trails and uneven ground
- Able to lift and carry up to 50 pounds
- Able to effectively communicate in English
- Able to visually and auditorily identify and respond to environmental and other hazards related to fieldwork
- Able to work at a desk for extended periods
- Able to go between offices to meet customers for assistance
- Able to bend over to access files and tools

Reasonable accommodations will be made for otherwise qualified applicants unable to fulfill one or more of these requirements.



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To Apply: Interested applicants must submit: a cover letter, resume, unofficial transcripts (if applicable), and a list of three (3) references (all documents must be in PDF form) to: info@vanburencd.org or mail to: Van Buren Conservation District, 1035 E Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079. . If submitting these materials via email, use the subject line “[last name] 2024 Crew Application”. Official transcripts may be requested at the time of an interview.

Deadline to Apply: Interviews will be conducted on a rolling basis from February through April. Preference will be given to applications received before 5 PM EST, Monday, March 25th, 2024.

Equal Opportunity Employer: The Van Buren Conservation District is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. VBCD programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. The VBCD collectively acknowledges that its offices and gatherings occupy the ancestral, traditional and contemporary Lands of the Council of the Three Fires – the Ojibwe, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi, ceded in multiple historic treaties. Through this acknowledgement, we recognize, support and advocate for the sovereignty of Michigan’s twelve federally-recognized Indian nations, and for historic Indigenous communities and individuals. The VBCD is committed to our obligations to those communities. The process of knowing and acknowledging the land we stand on is a way of honoring and expressing gratitude for the ancestral people who stewarded this land before us and their descendants who steward this land today.