Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
Position Classifications and Description

TITLE: Irrigation Systems Operator (ISO) / Irrigation Systems Operator II (ISO II)
FLSA: Exempt
GRADE: ISO-65 / ISO II-75
SUPERVISOR: Irrigation Systems Supervisor
DEPARTMENT: Water Distribution
ESTABLISHED: July 2007
REVISION: February 2023

Position Summary:
Ensures the prompt and adequate delivery of irrigation water to constituents within the District by scheduling water delivery, maintaining records of water usage, and ensuring all irrigation canals, drains, and wasteways are in operable condition. Maintains water levels and flows by opening and closing water control structures.

This list of duties and responsibilities is illustrative only of the tasks performed by this position and is not all-inclusive.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities:
- Manages the delivery of irrigation water by communicating with users, scheduling requested deliveries, and operating required diversions, headings, check gates, wasteways, and other water control structures.
- Prevents the unauthorized and illegal use of water according to the District's Water Distribution Policy.
- Observes cutting and planting of fields, acreage, types of soils, season of crops, double cropping, and condition of private ditches in order to assist in determining irrigation requirements.
- Prepares canal operations for all scheduled irrigations within the zone; maintains a daily log of names of water users, acres irrigated, types of crops and any problem or violation encountered during water delivery.
- Monitors and maintains canals in specified geographic areas through visual inspection, cleaning debris from canals, repairing and/or reporting damages done by rodents, users, or the public.
- Checks for leaks, clogs or any issues which would affect the efficiency of water supply for irrigation.
- Communicates issues and necessary information to supervisor or other personnel.
- Immediately reports any canal overflow or spillage of water from irrigated lands to supervisor.
- Maintains secure (locked) conditions at all headings, check structures, and wasteways to prevent unauthorized operation and tampering or irrigation works.
- Resolves issues and concerns regarding water delivery or canal operations by mediating complaints between users and the District.
- Responds to emergencies in a timely manner to prevent destruction or damage to private, public and District property. Assists other agency personnel in preventing injury by lowering water levels, opening turnouts and wasteways, closing headings, and redirecting the water.
- Obtains all required information in order to maintain water usage and crop records throughout the irrigation season.
- Trims vegetation when necessary.
- Repairs damages to ditch banks using potato hooks, chains, shovels, cables, bar hooks, machetes, chain saws and manure forks.
- Observes safety rules and ensures and maintains a safe work environment.
- Contributes to a team effort and accomplishes related results as required.
- Performs other duties as required.

Irrigation Systems Operator (ISO) Minimum Qualifications:
High School Diploma or GED plus one year experience in farming, irrigation, recordkeeping and customer service; or equivalent combination of education and experience. Must possess and maintain a valid New Mexico Driver's License with no major traffic violations; and successfully complete a drug and alcohol screening and criminal background check. Employment will be contingent upon the successful completion of a physical examination and meeting the physical standards required to perform job tasks.

Irrigation Systems Operator II (ISO II) Minimum Qualifications:
High School Diploma or GED plus three (3) consecutive years of experience as an ISO and demonstration of advanced skill in farming, irrigation, recordkeeping, and customer service. Must consistently meet or exceed performance expectations and not have a history of disciplinary actions. Must serve as a mentor to ISOs, provide temporary coverage of multiple ISO zones, and operate any ISO zone as directed by the Irrigation System Supervisor and Water Distribution Manager. Must possess and maintain a valid New Mexico Driver's License with no major traffic violations; and successfully complete a drug and alcohol screening and criminal background check. Employment will be contingent upon the successful completion of a physical examination and meeting the physical standards required to perform job tasks.

Knowledge, Abilities, Skills, and Certifications:

Knowledge of:

- the geographical location of ditches, canals, waste ways and laterals
- basic math to include addition, subtraction, division and multiplication
- irrigation techniques and farming practices
- District policies and procedures relating to the use of water, prohibitions and penalties

Ability to:

- communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing
- carry out instructions furnished in verbal or written format
- analyze situations and adopt appropriate courses of action
- handle multiple tasks and meet deadlines
- develop and maintain positive working relationships with district employees and the public
- demonstrate excellence in everything, and continually seek improvement in results

Skill in:

- using various hand tools and equipment used in repairing and maintaining ditches and canals
- driving vehicles over unimproved, dusty, muddy, and slippery ditch banks
- using safety and equipment devices; and utilizing safe and proper lifting techniques
- operating various mobile and computer applications, word-processing, spreadsheets, and database software programs

Physical Demands: While performing the duties of this job, the employee frequently is required to stand; walk; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; and stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl. The employee regularly is required to sit; climb or balance; and talk or hear. The employee occasionally is required to use their sense of smell. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 100 pounds.

Work Environment: Work is generally performed outdoors. Exposure to natural weather conditions and various dusts and mists may occur while performing outdoor duties. Prolonged sitting is a common occurrence. Standing and walking may be on uneven surfaces or unstable ground. Situations where safety-toe shoes, safety goggles, gloves, or protective face shields are needed may occur. Travel within the District area is required for completing work orders and working in sensitive and/or hazardous areas is common. Required to be on call after normal work hours and remain accessible in order to respond to emergencies.