Interdisciplinary Position Description
Fish and Wildlife Biologist, GS-401-12
Fishery Biologist, GS-482-12
Wildlife Biologist, GS-486-12

This is an interdisciplinary position. The employee serves as a senior Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Fishery Biologist, or Wildlife Biologist and technical advisor in an Ecological Services Field Office in one of the following speciality areas: (circle appropriate specialty) Endangered Species; Federal Activities; Environmental Contaminants; Partners for Fish & Wildlife.

A. Major Duties

1. Endangered Species

a. Coordinates and facilitates activities pursuant to sections 4,6,7,8, and 10 of the Endangered Species Act.

b. Plans and conducts status surveys for both listed and candidate species, in cooperation with other Federal and state agency personnel, private organization representatives, and contractors; negotiates agreements for status surveys with prospective contractors and personnel of cooperating agencies.

c. Provides guidance to, and directs and evaluates the work of, journey level and other lower-graded biologists in matters pertinent to areas of special expertise.

d. Acts as technical advisor to other Field Office staff on the habitat needs of rare, candidate, proposed, and federally listed species for the purpose of Section 7 consultations with other Federal agencies and designated non-Federal representatives; also consults with staff in preparation of reasonable and prudent measures, reasonable and prudent alternatives, and conservation recommendations.

e. Coordinates wide ranging initiatives involving other Federal and state agencies, organizations, and the public in fully implementing Endangered Species Act programs.

f. Prepares draft budget initiatives for review by the supervisor and budget personnel, especially as related to federally listed, proposed, candidate and rare species evaluations and recovery efforts.

g. Inspects projects for compliance with policies, standards, guidelines, agreements, and plans, followed by recommendations for action to assure compliance.

h. Reviews rules, regulations, legislation and statutes pertaining to rare, candidate, proposed, threatened, and endangered fish, wildlife, and plant resources. Recommends appropriate procedures for implementing provisions of these mandates and establishes key contacts with other agencies, organizations, and the public.

I. Prepares written correspondence, reports, and papers for publication, based on the literature, observations made, and investigations conducted. Reports and papers are used to analyze current conditions and assess implications of future actions on rare, candidate, proposed, threatened and endangered species and their habitats.

j. Independently conducts consultations pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Responsible for preparation of Biological Opinions for signature by the Field Office Supervisor or Regional Director.

k. Delivers presentations on the Service's policies and positions to other agencies and the public.

l. Prepares responses to Regional, Washington Office, and Congressional inquiries.

2. Federal Activities

a. Plans, investigates, conducts, and reviews on-site ecological investigations on a wide variety of the most complex and diverse Federal land and water resource development proposals to determine their effects on fish and wildlife resources, with special emphasis on rare, candidate, proposed, federally listed threatened and endangered species habitat, riparian habitat, wetland ecology and management, and other habitats of concern in the affected area.

b. Conducts private lands program habitat restorations, including landowner contacts, mapping, surveying, staking, construction monitoring, seeding, and other related activities, and prepares management plans for restored areas. Responsible for review and development of conservation easements with multi-agency review teams for Farm Services Agency inventory and debt restructure properties. Develops cooperative agreements with Federal, tribal, state, local, and private individuals and organizations for large and complex wetland preservation, enhancement, and restoration projects on private, tribal, and public lands. Assists the Natural Resources Conservation Service in making wetland, minimal effect, and commenced determinations under the Swampbuster provisions of the 1985 and 1990 Farm Bills. Participates in review, evaluation, and development of plans for Wetland Reserve Program.

c. Prepares objective and complete written reports and other documents and delivers oral presentations to Service, other agency and organization professional, and public groups based on investigations conducted, analyzing present and future impacts of various complex project alternatives on fish and wildlife resources and economic/recreational uses thereof.

d. Participates in diverse, complex, and multi-disciplinary planning efforts with public and private groups and state, local, and Federal agencies to achieve Service policies, objectives, and goals.

e. Negotiates mitigation of complex project impacts with project proponents and regulatory agencies, and develops reasonable and prudent alternatives and conservation recommendations or measures.

f. Inspects projects for compliance with policies, standards, guidelines, agreements, and plans; makes recommendations for action to assure compliance.

g. Reviews existing, new, and proposed regulations, legislation, and statutes pertaining to fish and wildlife resources. Recommends appropriate procedures for implementing provisions of these mandates and establishes key contacts with other agencies, organizations, and individuals.

h. Prepares responses to inquiries from Congressional staff, the public, and the news media, obtaining and providing requested information within established office guidelines, and in conformance with agency and departmental policy.

i. Provides guidance to, and directs the work of, lower-graded biologists in matters pertinent to areas of special expertise.

3. Environmental Contaminants

a. Plans, investigates, conducts, and reviews on-site ecological investigations on a wide variety of the most complex and diverse actual or suspected contaminant sites to determine their effects on fish and wildlife resources and their habitats, with special emphasis on rare, candidate, proposed, and federally listed threatened and endangered species, and aquatic systems, including wetlands and other habitats of concern.

b. Prepares objective and complete written reports and other documents and delivers oral presentations to Service, professional, and public groups as to investigations conducted, and results of such investigations with regard to impacts of environmental contaminants on fish and wildlife resources.

c. Serves as field office technical expert on environmental contaminants and pesticides as they relate to effects on fish and wildlife resources for assigned area of duty.

d. Participates in diverse, complex, and multi-disciplinary planning efforts with public and private groups, and state, local, tribal, and Federal agencies to achieve Service goals.

e. Negotiates with project proponents and Federal/state agencies concerning measures, standards, and procedures to protect, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife resources adversely affected by contaminated sites and discharge permits.

f. Provides technical assistance to other Service project leaders relative to environmental contaminant related issues and opportunities, and provides guidance on proper implementation of policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines.

g. Reviews existing, new, and proposed regulations, legislation, and statutes pertaining to environmental contaminants and fish and wildlife resources. Recommends appropriate procedures for implementing provisions of these mandates and establishes key contacts with other agencies.

h. Prepares responses to inquiries from congressional staff, the public, organizations, and the news media, obtaining and providing requested information within established office guidelines and in conformance with agency and departmental policy.

i. Provides guidance to, and directs the work of, lower-graded biologists in matters pertinent to areas of special expertise.

4. Partners for Fish & Wildlife

Thorough knowledge of Service goals and objectives under the Service's Private Lands Program.

a. Provides expertise, interpretation, coordination, and determination of compliance activities under Partners for Fish and Wildlife and the Farm Bill programs. Coordinates Farm Service Agency (FSA) inventory debt-restructure, and loan reviews: coordinates with the Natural Resource Conservation Service on the Conservation Reserve Program, Wetland Reserve Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program and Environmental Quality Incentive Program, as well as the Swampbuster provisions of the Farm Bill and other habitat protection and restoration activities. Serves on Farm Bill State Technical Committee and WRP review team to ensure that the Service's objectives and policies are addressed.

b. Coordinates and facilitates efforts on a state-wide basis to consolidate private, State, Federal and Service programs and projects into a coordinated and comprehensive program that maximizes habitat preservation, restoration, and enhancement benefits for Trust resources, including wetlands and habitats for candidate, threatened, and endangered species.

c. Assures that PFW activities comply with Federal, State and local requirements and are compatible with Service objectives identified through the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Emergency Wetlands Resources Act, Regional Wetlands Concept Plan, National Historic Preservation Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act and other laws, regulations and planning documents.

d. Occasionally supervises and coordinates the work of lower-grade biologists or technicians in accomplishing habitat restoration and/or enhancement on private lands. The work includes data collection, site evaluation, landowner contacts, minor construction, and other tasks necessary to improve habitat.

e. Participates in conferences and briefings pertaining to PFW responsibilities with members of tribal, state, county, and local agency representatives, concerned citizens, representatives of private enterprise, and various public interest groups. Assists with the promotion of an active education and outreach program.

f. Keeps the PFW Coordinator and field supervisor informed of planning of habitat improvement on private lands, and develops strategies to implement planned projects; obtains authority from landowners. Maintains a working knowledge of state-of-art habitat restoration, enhancement, creation and protection techniques with an emphasis on wetland and riparian habitat restoration and enhancement. Exchanges information about new techniques with affected personnel. Maintains adequate records to support functional responsibilities and to track program accomplishments and help with program marketing.

g. Monitors habitat improvement projects; determines necessary funding; purchases required supplies and services; insures completion of work within appropriate time and funding limits. Monitors projects in accomplishing habitat restoration and/or enhancement on private lands. The work includes data collection, site evaluation and design recommendations, landowner contacts, minor construction, interagency coordination with professional and senior level management officials, writing private lands agreements, track projects and funds, environmental compliance, and other tasks necessary to improve habitat and benefit our natural resources.

B. Factors

1. Knowledge Required for the Position

a. Endangered Species

Professional knowledge of the latest theories, principles, and methods of fish and wildlife biology, their application, and general knowledge of a wide range of related disciplines.

Thorough professional knowledge of the biology of rare, candidate, proposed, and listed species occurring within the area of responsibility, including habitats, distribution, life history, food habits, habitat use, behavior, taxonomy, and population ecology.

Thorough knowledge of the Endangered Species Act and the regulations, policies, case law, and Solicitor's opinions relating to its administration. Knowledge of current administrative and fiscal policies and procedures of the Service.

Thorough knowledge of the roles of state and other Federal agencies, including policies and applicable statutes related to protection, consultation, and recovery efforts.

A working knowledge of programs of other Service divisions, other land managing agencies, and other state and Federal agencies in order to communicate effectively and evaluate the effects of their programs on threatened and endangered species.

Knowledge of the Federal budget process, personnel management practices, and service planning procedures sufficient to allow efficient input to annual work activity guidance, performance evaluations, station work plans, budget initiatives, and reimbursable funding negotiations.

Ability to assess, select, and make optimum use of data, methods, and precedents bearing on stated duties and responsibilities. The employee is highly skilled in interpreting field observations and other information, and in drawing sound conclusions which result in effective recommended action plans.

Ability to evaluate and explain biological information and recommendations in terms that are understandable by fish and wildlife resource professionals, professionals in other disciplines, and laypersons.

Skill in communicating effectively both orally and in writing to prepare and present completed staff work, correspondence, reports and recommendations, and to communicate effectively in interagency and public forums.

Skill in communicating verbally to varied audiences, often under pressure of public controversy in meetings and public gatherings, to present biological information and the position of the agency.

Skill in the use of diplomacy and sound judgment when working with people of state and Federal agencies, tribes, private individuals and organizations, and the news media.

Experience in operating small motorized watercraft. Operation of government-owned or leased motor vehicles is regularly required.

Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively with immediate staff, as well as with personnel of other agencies and the public; specialized skill in resolving disputes among competing groups and resource uses, especially within areas of special expertise.

b. Federal Activities

Professional knowledge of the latest theories, principles, and methodologies of fish and wildlife biology and ecology, their application, and general knowledge of a wide range of related disciplines.

Working knowledge of statutes, regulations, and policies related to water and land resources development proposals, especially those pertinent to the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act.

Knowledge and skill required to formulate and implement innovative solutions to complex resource management problems, to formulate and guide implementation of programs related to areas of special expertise, to select and implement appropriate sampling techniques, to interpret biological and hydrological interactions and observations, and to formulate sound conclusions regarding actions to be taken or recommended.

Experience and demonstrated high degree of skill in analysis of complex and voluminous information sources in evaluating the effects of development proposals on federally listed, threatened, and endangered species, migratory birds, wetlands, and other important fish and wildlife resources, and developing mitigation/compensation features, reasonable and prudent alternatives, and/or conservation recommendations or measures.

Skill in applying state-of-the-art analytical techniques, including the Cowardin wetlands classification system, the Habitat Evaluation Procedures, the Instream Flow Incremental Methodology, and the three parameter wetland delineation methodology.

Skill in negotiating, and diplomacy in coordinating activities with other agencies and organizations so that significant fish and wildlife resources are protected and unavoidable losses are compensated for.

Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively with immediate staff, as well as with personnel of other agencies and the public; specialized skill in resolving disputes among competing groups and resource uses, especially within areas of special expertise.

Skill of a highly developed nature in verbal and written communication, including skill in presenting data and its analysis, and writing objective reports requiring a minimum of review and editing.

Knowledge and skill required to safely operate motorized vehicles and watercraft.

c. Environmental Contaminants

Professional knowledge of the latest theories, principles, and methodologies of fish and wildlife biology and ecology, their application, and general knowledge of a wide range of related disciplines.

Working knowledge of statutes, regulations, and policies related to water and land resources development proposals, especially those pertinent to the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act.

Thorough knowledge of fish and wildlife biology and ecology, together with an understanding of the nature and effects of xenobiotic substances on biological systems, and the socio-economic perspectives accompanying their introductions.

Advanced professional knowledge of aquatic biology.

Thorough knowledge of the Federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to pesticides, natural resource damage assessment, and water quality.

Thorough knowledge in evaluation and prevention of hazards to fish and wildlife resources and their habitats resulting from use of pest control chemicals.

Thorough knowledge of techniques for measuring effects upon fish and wildlife resources of contaminants introductions in specific environments, including secondary effects resulting from basic environmental alterations.

Skill in working cooperatively and effectively with personnel of other agencies and private organizations as well as within the Service.

Thorough knowledge of Service goals and objectives under the Service's Environmental Contaminants Program.

Knowledge and skill required to formulate and implement innovative solutions to complex resource management problems, to formulate and guide implementation of programs related to areas of special expertise, to select and implement appropriate sampling techniques, to interpret biological and hydrological interactions and observations, and to formulate sound conclusions regarding actions to be taken or recommended.

Experience and demonstrated high degree of skill in analysis of complex and voluminous information sources in evaluating the effects of development proposals on rare, candidate, proposed and federally listed threatened and endangered species, migratory birds, wetlands, and other important fish and wildlife resources, and developing mitigation/compensation features, reasonable and prudent alternatives, and/or conservation recommendations or measures.

Skill in negotiating and diplomacy in coordinating activities with other agencies and organizations so that significant fish and wildlife resources are protected and unavoidable losses are compensated for.

Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively with immediate staff, as well as with personnel of other agencies and the public; specialized skill in resolving disputes among competing groups and resource uses, especially within areas of special expertise.

Skill of a highly developed nature in verbal and written communication, including skill in presenting data and its analysis, and to write objective reports requiring a minimum of review and editing.

Knowledge and skill required to safely operate motorized vehicles and watercraft.

d. Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Knowledge of the principles, theories, methodologies and practices of fish and wildlife biology and associated ecological requirements in order to devise and apply a wide range of techniques to solve unyielding resource problems, and to provide expert technical advice and direction for the Private Lands Program.

Thorough knowledge of the Service's organization functions, and policy and management philosophy particularly as related to resource priorities, goals, objectives, and relationships between Service programs. Working knowledge of Service management documents and their application to actual management responsibilities. Familiarity with the national, regional, and field office budget process, with emphasis on PFW Program funding.

Understanding of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, Endangered Species Act, Emergency Wetlands Resources Act, Water Resources Development Act, North American Waterfowl Management Plan, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Administrative Procedures Act, Clean Water Act, Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection and Restoration Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and National Environmental Policy Act, as well as the Service's mitigation policy and other appropriate Federal regulations, executive orders and statutory responsibilities.

Working knowledge of the complex planning and regulatory process of the U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies, such as the NRCS and FSA and other Federal or State agencies to permit timely Service input, effective technical assistance by Service personnel, and to promote a multi-agency approach in helping private landowners . benefit fish and wildlife resources.

Working knowledge of the complex permitting requirements of Federal, State, and local agencies including dredge and fill, water rights, cultural resources, contaminants, water quality and others.

Ability to work cooperatively and diplomatically with private landowners, personnel of other agencies, other Service personnel, and private organizations, sufficient to encourage implementation of planned projects.

Knowledge and ability in designing a valid biological monitoring program, analyzing data and initiating program changes to ensure restoration activities meet Service objectives.

Skill and ability in recognizing new direction/approaches to accomplish resource goals and devising methods and techniques for overcoming and solving unusual problems.

Ability to supervise lower grade biologists or technicians which may be assigned to assist in collection of field data, developing plans, and implementing projects.

Skill in oral and written communication to originate investigations and studies to carry them out, analyze data and present analyses together with recommendations in a form requiring a minimum of review and editing.

Knowledge of engineering and agricultural principles, methodologies, terminology, data, structures, facilities, and practices sufficient to recognize probably effects on fishery of wildlife resources.

e. All

Comprehensive knowledge of related biological and natural resource sciences to qualify as a technical expert in the fields of plant and animal management, land use, endangered species, habitat conservation, environmental contaminants, and related disciplines.

2. Supervisory Controls

Assignments of primarily general nature are made by the supervisor, who is informed concerning controversial issues and provides guidance regarding program direction and office policy. The employee independently plans and carries out work assignments with or without assistance of staff, as warranted by nature of the individual assignment. Completed work is expected to be suitable for approval without review unless of a controversial or policy nature.

The supervisor assigns work at this level in the most general terms. Supervisory guidance is considered necessary only on projects with unusually complex issues involving the programs. Work assignments are performed independently as well as the development of the approach and methodology to complete these assignments. Supervisory review is to determine compliance with Service policy and adequacy in meeting program objectives.

3. Guidelines

Guidelines are general in nature, giving the employee basic information to undertake and resolve complex and interrelated situations that have a considerable number of variables and solutions. Sound professional judgment is required to interpret, assess, select, and make optimum use of available guides and data in the accomplishment of the Service's objectives. The employee is frequently faced with the need to modify existing, or develop new guidelines, and to devise solutions that depart from standardized practices to assess and solve problem situations. Guidelines are available in the form of water resource development project manuals, the Service's Administrative Manual, the regulatory and statutory provisions of applicable legislation and policies, and procedures specified in various handbooks and instructional correspondence.

4. Complexity

The work requires the employee to be self-reliant, imaginative, and to demonstrate sound professional judgment in the selection and initiation of investigations of federally sanctioned activities that could affect important fish and wildlife resources of Federal interest. Similarly, the employee also must apply these same skills in delivery of the Service's Endangered Species, Federal Activities, Partners for Fish & Wildlife, and Environmental Contaminants initiatives. Assignments involve the consideration and selection of alternative approaches to problem solving, adaptation and synthesis of existing standards, and selection of the most appropriate techniques required to accomplish Service objectives.

The employee must be cognizant of a wide range of pertinent scientific and technical literature and research, and of statutes, regulations and procedures, and must be able, through in-depth analysis, to synthesize this knowledge into day-to-day field operations. The diversity of fish and wildlife resources present in the work area contributes to the complexity factor. New approaches to the solution of resource problems often are required because of changing public attitudes and perceptions related to fish and wildlife and related environmental resources. The position requires frequent interaction with water management interests, engineers, hydrologists, attorneys, public utility representatives, other agency personnel, and representatives of private organizations. The employee is responsible for intensive analysis, information development, and fact-finding in a particular program area.

Interagency coordination is crucial to successfully accomplishing the Service's mission. The employee, therefore, will be involved frequently in negotiations and cooperative resource activities with developmental and environmental interests, state resource agencies, other Federal agencies, researchers, and Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research units. In resolution of problems, the employee will be required to make decisions on matters that may have no pertinent precedent or where only conflicting data are available upon which to base a firm conclusion. Circumstances under which decisions must be made often are unique or controversial or sometimes require resolution of conflict between project direction and potential impacts to important fish and wildlife resources.

5. Scope and Effect

The purpose of the work is to deliver the Service's Endangered Species, Federal Activities, Partners for Fish & Wildlife, or Environmental Contaminants programs to the public, and to conduct a broad range of investigations and studies as authorized by relevant statutes, regulations, and guidelines pertaining to fish and wildlife resources. The position requires a broad understanding of fish and wildlife biology, ecology, and management in addition to an in-depth knowledge of the needs of rare, candidate, proposed, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats. A good understanding of administrative procedures is also required.

Recommendations made by the employee may result in management decisions to oppose or modify project plans. Resources of outstanding public value frequently are at stake. The work has significant impact on long term management of environmental resources, and recommended decisions may affect Federal, state, local, or private programs. The results of the assignments affect the ability of the Fish and Wildlife Service to meet legal and regulatory requirements, as well as protect threatened, and endangered species and their habitats. The ability to work cooperatively and effectively with personnel of other agencies, Congressional staff, private organizations, and the public, as well as other Service personnel, is essential. The employee recognizes and stresses safety considerations in conducting or directing responsibilities outlined for this position.

6. Personal Contacts

Personal contacts and positive working relationships with professional or technical specialists in fish and wildlife resource and related disciplines are essential to the effective discharge of the Service's mission. Frequent contact with professionals in other Service programs, state resource agencies, other Federal, state, and local agencies, academic institutions, and private organizations and individuals should be maintained. In addition, frequent contacts may be established with Congressional staff members, landowners, and the general public.

7. Purpose of Contacts

The employee is the delegated authority to coordinate rare, candidate, proposed, threatened, and endangered species related activities, and to discuss complex project plans and development proposals, resolve conflicts, and to negotiate for the adoption of approved suggestions and recommendations which are in compliance with Service objectives, policies, and regulations. Contacts are also initiated to inspect work, monitor activities, establish cooperative working relationships, and provide technical advice and guidance. Employee also arranges and conducts meetings to discuss delivery of Service programs, as well as technical fish or wildlife resource matters, hydrologic and engineering issues, the economic aspects of development planning, or the operation of existing systems. The employee will have active participation in conferences, negotiations, and meetings concerning subject matter for which there are conflicting interests and opinions.

8. Physical Demands

The work requires some physical exertion such as walking over wet, rough, uneven, or rocky surfaces, as well as bending, crouching, stooping, stretching, reaching, or similar activities. The work requires average agility and dexterity.

9. Work Environment

The position requires both office and outdoor work. The office is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated. Temperature and weather extremes may be encountered in the performance of outdoor work. The employee is expected to conduct duties in a safe, professional, and orderly manner so as not to endanger self, fellow employees, or property with which entrusted.

A condition of employment is obtaining and wearing the official U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service uniform.

Factor Evaluation System

Position S000062

Title: Interdisciplinary GS-401/482/486-12 **Number:** FC:51

Classification Standard Used: GS-482/486, 1/91. Primary Standard, TS-27, 5/77

Evaluation Factors	Points Assigned	Standard Used	Comments
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	1,250	1- 7	
2. Supervisory Controls	450	2 4	
3. Guidelines	450	3- 4	
4. Complexity	325	4- 5	
5. Scope and Effect	225	5- 4	
6. Personnel Contacts		6- 3	
7. Purpose of Contacts	180	7- c	
8. Physical Demands	5	8- 1	
9. Work Environment	5	9- 1	
Total Points	2,890		
Grade Conversion	12		

Sandra Kemper
Position Classification Specialist

APPROVED Pearl Ing Date 4-28-03