

## STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

**Class Title: Naturalist**

**Class Code: 90585**  
**Pay Grade: GH**

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### **A. Purpose:**

Develops, schedules, conducts, and directs others presenting environmental and nature education courses and workshops; designs and produces interpretive exhibits and displays; and recruits, trains, and retains volunteers to make presentations and conduct classes and workshops encouraging Game, Fish and Parks facility use.

### **B. Distinguishing Feature:**

The Naturalist provides interpretive, recreational, and skills programming for a division facility.

The GF&P Program Specialist develops, administers, and oversees implementation of recreational and educational programs for the division.

The Visitor Services Coordinator manages The Outdoor Campus and oversees the recreational and educational programming for the facility.

### **C. Functions:**

*(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions that may be found in positions of this class.)*

1. Develops interpretive courses by planning and writing scripts, preparing lesson outlines, and preparing displays and exhibits to enhance the opportunities offered.
  - a. Researches sources to develop materials supporting course development.
  - b. Plans and directs the production of informational newsletters and brochures.
  - c. Interprets natural features, flora, and fauna.
  - d. Researches and develops plans for reorganization, refitting, and enhancement of interpretive activities and classes.
  - e. Researches and develops plans for execution of new interpretive activities and classes.
  - f. Develops training boxes and crates with contents to support training.
  - g. Prepares interpretive site sign narrative.
  - h. Develops youth training which complies with state curriculum requirements.
  - i. Prepares policies for implementation of programming.
  - j. Trains interns to develop and prepare lesson plans, lesson guides, and narratives and to organize training materials.
  - k. Documents courses through photography and reports, and maintains photo and narrative archives.
2. Develops schedules for workshops, exhibits, and interpretive activities to ensure the availability of classes at effective times.
  - a. Provides newsletters to schools announcing seasonal training opportunities.
  - b. Coordinates with teachers, school staff, department staff, volunteers, interns and organizations.
  - c. Coordinates the work of volunteers, seasonals, Naturalist Interns, and Interpretive Technicians.
  - d. Develops contingency plans to address changes.
3. Conducts workshops, nature walks, and tours to impart nature education, knowledge of the environment, and to educate the public and teachers.
  - a. Lectures, demonstrates, and monitors attendees as they perform skills.
  - b. Conducts tours and cross country and aquatic activities.
  - c. Presents interpretive slides, displays, and activities for varied public groups.
  - d. Operates projectors, recorders, and cameras.
  - e. Answers the public's questions about wildlife, hunting, fishing and nature.
  - f. Organizes Project Wild, Project WET, and Project Learning Tree Workshops for educators.
  - g. Assists in organization of and makes presentations at Becoming an Outdoor Women Workshops and at Outdoor Women of South Dakota events.

4. Coordinates and organizes special events and recreational activities to enhance park services and attendance.
  - a. Selects a theme and the learning objectives for the event, activity, or workshop.
  - b. Determines staffing requirements and acquires staff.
  - c. Trains department staff, interns, and volunteers.
  - d. Analyzes the risk management factors.
  - e. Recruits local businesses, cultural groups, and reenactors to support seasonal projects.
  - f. Organizes necessary materials and equipment.
  - g. Promotes events and activities.
  - h. Plans, leads, and evaluates recreational activities.
  - i. Directs cleanup operations.
  
5. Directs seasonal, intern and volunteer staff activities to ensure the objectives of the work unit are met.
  - a. Recruits and retains volunteers to fill positions supporting programming.
  - b. Reviews applications, selects intern and seasonal applicants to interview, interviews, performs reference checks, and recommends the hire of applicants.
  - c. Oversees the completion of personnel documentation.
  - d. Maintains volunteer personnel files.
  - e. Trains volunteers, interns, and seasonals to impart knowledge and skills.
  - f. Directs the work of volunteers, interns and seasonals.
  - g. Approves intern's and seasonal's time off.
  - h. Conducts formal feedback sessions and documents the performance of volunteers.
  - i. Prepares input for intern evaluations.
  - j. Terminates volunteers from the program.
  - k. Recommends and oversees disciplinary action for interns and seasonal workers.
  - l. Plans, prepares, and hosts volunteer recognition events and writes thank you letters.
  - m. Intervenes in and resolves staff and volunteer conflicts.
  
6. Maintains a visitor's center to ensure interpretive displays, maintenance, and staffing are conducive to the reception and education of the public.
  - a. Oversees brochure stands stocking.
  - b. Oversees facility and displays cleaning.
  - c. Schedules reception area staff.
  - d. Directs the staff in customer service operations and statistics gathering.
  - e. Organizes or oversees the organization of training scheduled for the center.
    - f. Oversees or conducts mammal, fowl, insect, and reptile feeding, medical treatment, grooming, and cage cleaning.
  - g. Negotiates contractual services agreements and writes contracts.
  - h. Prepares and forwards center statistics and reports.
  
7. Complies with the training safety program to prevent accidents and injuries.
  - a. Includes a safety briefing in every class, workshop and activity.
  - b. Develops plans for and monitors safety of participants and staff during special events and other organized activities.
  - c. Obtains signed waivers from participants prior to dangerous training.
  - d. Requires and obtains accurate training attendance rosters.
  - e. Inspects and restocks first aid kits.
  - f. Inspects and repairs or removes from service defective equipment and materials used in training.
  - g. Directs the reduction of dangerous conditions found in and around buildings and along trails and tour routes.
  - h. Monitors interns' and volunteers' certification and license requirements and their currency.
  
8. Manages a small budget to ensure funds allocated for programming and creature care are appropriately spent and accounted for.
  
9. Maintains good relations with the local media to promote the facilities and interpretive program to ensure publicity and increase public awareness.
  - a. Contacts various media organizations and persons to provide information on the facilities, programming, and events of local interest.
  - b. Prepares news releases or public service announcements.
  - c. Presents information to the public through radio and television interviews and newspaper articles.

- d. Coordinates and advertises scheduled activities.
  - e. Writes articles for professional publications.
10. Maintains equipment, training kits, and educational devices and materials in a high state of readiness to ensure safety and their availability for activities.
- a. Licenses boats and kayaks.
  - b. Inspects and repairs equipment after use.
  - c. Recommends equipment and material replacement.
  - d. Purchases equipment and materials approved for replacement.
  - e. Takes items out of service when they are defective.
11. Performs other work as assigned.

**D. Reporting Relationships:**

Reports to a Division Program Specialist or Regional Park Supervisor. Directs the work of Naturalist Interns, Horticulture and Landscaping Interns, Seasonal Interpretive Technicians, and volunteers. Does not supervise.

**E. Challenges and Problems:**

Challenged to implement interpretive programs, concepts, and exhibits with limited resources. This is challenging because of the variety of natural, cultural, and historical resources and concepts that may be involved and the ever increasing population using the services. Further challenged to convey the department environmental, interpretive, and natural resources concepts to seasonal and Executive Intern Naturalists and volunteers in a limited amount of time to provide the necessary training to ensure quality classes are available to the visiting public.

Problems include locating or creating fabrications needed for exhibits, improvising and making do with available resources, creating a variety of safe recreational activities, and recruiting capable volunteers to support programmed activities.

**F. Decision-making Authority:**

Decisions made include intern, seasonal, and volunteer time management, scheduling, and priorities; the content and scheduling of facilities and outreach activities; what courses are best to offer; structuring programming; when programming meets SD curriculum requirements; catalog and brochure content; target audience composition; action on programming based on audience feedback; terminating a volunteer and recommending and overseeing disciplinary action for interns and seasonal workers; changing the duties of seasonal workers, interns and volunteers not able to conduct classes or work with the public; accepting volunteers; resolution of staff and volunteer conflicts; canceling scheduled activities; removing materials and equipment from use and the type of materials and equipment to recommend for replacements; identifying potential problems and preparing contingency plans to address them; and purchasing educational materials, plants and animal feed.

Decisions referred include promulgation of policy, budget input, expenditures for capital improvements, acquisition of new animals, hours of the park and visitors center, and new programs.

**G. Contact with Others:**

Daily contact with park visitors to explain the historical, cultural, natural, and environmental aspects of the park and its exhibits; with department personnel and volunteers to explain and coordinate programming activities and receive updated information; with civic organizations, public schools, historical societies, and clubs to exchange information, obtain historical information, and schedule courses; with support staff to get bills paid and mailings completed. Weekly contact with news media to provide information and press releases; with teachers to organize and schedule school visits and outings; with course participants, group leaders, and the Manager at the HelpLine Center to provide information and materials and contact volunteers; with other natural resource agency staff to share ideas and work on projects; with business staffs to obtain animal feed, cage materials, and knowledge about reptiles, birds, insects, and animals; and with the contract Veterinarian for animal care. Monthly contact with local community service organizations and juvenile group leaders, and sponsors about event planning, scheduling and programming; with course facilitators, College staff, conservation groups, wildlife federations and foundations about the setting up and

scheduling of imported programming; and with professional organizations for training, education resources, and information.

#### **H. Working Conditions:**

Works in a typical office environment and outdoors during all seasons of the year.

#### **I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

Knowledge of:

- principles, methods and techniques of interpretive programming;
- natural, cultural, and environmental resources;
- basic computer operation and software applications;
- basic principles and practices of outdoor skills, recreation and environmental education;
- South Dakota curriculum requirements;
- volunteer programs and volunteering;
- instructional methods and principles.

Ability to:

- organize and develop instructional material and present information and skills in an interesting and challenging manner;
- design and use media materials;
- maintain, use, and show others how to use outdoors recreation equipment and seasonal clothing;
- communicate sufficiently to teach children and adults;
- evaluate individual and group instructional needs;
- create presentations based on natural and cultural history;
- recruit, train, and retain volunteers;
- plan, lead, and evaluate recreational activities for individuals and groups;
- organize, schedule, prioritize, and direct the work of others;
- operate presentation media;
- establish and maintain effective working relationship with others;
- create succinct and informative reports.