

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Wildlife Biologist

Class Code: 090212

Pay Grade: GJ

A. Purpose:

Plans research studies and implements management practices and programs pertaining to habitat, production, distribution, and natural balance to ensure sound management and conservation of fish and wildlife species.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Wildlife Biologists plan, implement, and coordinate research activities or implement habitat management programs.

Senior Wildlife Biologists direct program, research, and management activities for a designated primary resource area such as the Missouri River system, big game, upland game, waterfowl, land access management, wildlife diversity/endangered species, or grassland, wetland, or forest habitats.

Resource Biologists support established research projects and programs by gathering and summarizing data and monitoring project activities.

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 which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Develops and conducts research studies to measure current and future demands on fish and wildlife species and their habitats.
 - a. Researches biological literature to acquire existing data.
 - b. Develops study outlines and proposals.
 - c. Prepares project budgets.
 - d. Prepares applications for federal funding.
 - e. Develops systems to collect and compile data.
 - f. Conducts field work.
 - g. Writes progress and final reports.
2. Analyzes and interprets data to measure validity and ensure study intent has been met.
 - a. Applies statistical analyses and tests such as analysis of variance and linear regression.
 - b. Writes and edits scientific reports, papers, and position statements.
 - c. Writes reports of study results and submits them to managers and science communities.
3. Recommends management programs based on study results to enhance species.
 - a. Defines problems.
 - b. Recommends goals, objectives, strategies, and priorities.
 - c. Recommends techniques, personnel, and tools needed to address short- and long-term needs.
 - d. Prepares budgets and solicits funding.

4. Provides administrative support to managers as department spokesperson and technical representative to share information and expertise.
 - a. Writes news releases.
 - b. Speaks at civic and professional meetings.
 - c. Recommends harvest regulations.
5. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Reports to a Wildlife Program Administrator, Hatchery Manager, Senior Wildlife Biologist, or Regional Terrestrial Supervisor. Does not supervise but may direct the work of others.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to implement and maintain management programs and practices. This is difficult because funding is limited, and support and cooperation from landowners and the public is crucial and often erratic.

Problems include training temporary employees, conducting scientific research studies that produce valid information, coordinating manpower and equipment, dealing with variable biological parameters, biological sampling in unfavorable environmental conditions, and equipment malfunctions at remote sites.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include parameters of surveys, appropriate data-collecting tools, appropriate statistical analyses, content of reports, budget items, manpower and equipment needs, recommendations for harvest regulations, and recommendations for species management programs.

Decisions referred include when to initiate or discontinue research projects; final approval of research projects, budgets, management programs, and harvest regulations; and solutions to controversial issues.

G. Contact with Others:

Weekly contact with individuals and civic groups to answer questions and provide information about project activities, and other agencies to coordinate projects and exchange information; and monthly contact with other state and federal biologists to coordinate projects and share data.

H. Working Conditions:

Typical office environment a portion of the time, works outdoors in a variety of environments and weather conditions and in low-flying aircraft, and is exposed to diseases and hazardous materials.

I. Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- principles used in the management of wildlife and fish populations,
- ecology of game and non-game species, and ecological and socio-economic factors affecting habitat and populations;
- wildlife law and enforcement;
- interaction among the public, resource management agencies, and wildlife and fisheries resources;
- physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of lakes, ponds, and streams;
- state and federal programs affecting wetland drainage and preservation;
- research, laboratory, and statistical methods as they relate to wildlife and fisheries management;
- basic principles and terminology of data processing;
- principles of effective human relations and dealing with the public.

Ability to:

- organize and analyze available information and draw sound conclusions;
- write clearly and concisely and in logical sequence;
- favorably present and promote departmental priorities, services, and actions;
- effectively plan and organize work activities and prioritize task completion to meet schedules and deadlines;
- budget monetary, material, and equipment resources;
- communicate effectively.