

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Wildland Fire Program Specialist

Class Code: 090817

Pay Grade: GJ

A. Purpose:

Administers a wildland fire program by developing goals, objectives, policies, and procedures for the program; providing technical assistance and direction to staff and program participants; allocating and monitoring expenditure of grants and other funding; establishing and maintaining record-keeping systems; and preparing mandatory reports to ensure program implementation complies with state and federal laws and rules.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Wildland Fire Program Specialists administers wildland fire management programs that provide money, expertise, equipment, and services to qualified stakeholders.

Division Staff Specialists develop and direct administrative activities such as planning, research and development, information and education, and marketing and promotion for a wildlife, parks, or forestry division.

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 program goals and objectives and policies and procedures to provide administrative direction to staff and program participants and ensure effective delivery of services.
 - a. Develops an annual plan of program productivity to define the goals of the program and the methodology for delivery of services.
 - b. Secures program funding and other resources by preparing applications for federal grants and negotiating agreements for resources with other agencies.
 - c. Screens, acquires, and maintains an inventory of property and equipment; and provides direction to program participants on its use and disposal.
 - d. Develops program budgets and allocations of available resources.
 - e. Promotes program services through public presentations and appearances, media opportunities, personal contact, and by serving on committees and advisory boards.
 - f. Develops policy and operating manuals, and informational and educational materials as resources for staff and program participants.
 - g. Develops methods for tracking program statistics, evaluating program effectiveness, and preparing and distributing reports.
 - h. Promotes coordination of program activities among state and federal agencies and other affected stakeholders to facilitate work and enhance program efficiency.
2. Implements and monitors program activities to ensure consistent and equitable application of program guidelines and effective delivery of program services.
 - a. Works with stakeholders to develop projects; secures project approval; and oversees project progress.
 - b. Initiates grant application processes; receives and reviews applications; awards grants; ensures grantees meet cost share requirements; and authorizes payments from grants in appropriate fiscal years.

- c. Reports work progress and budget expenditures to division managers and federal agencies.
 - d. Administers subgrants for local governments for approved projects within their jurisdictions.
 - e. Develops project areas and methods to accomplish work; and schedules and monitors activities of staff.
 - f. Writes and implements contracts, agreements, and memorandums of understanding with other states and federal agencies who use the state's resources.
 - g. Ensures program requirements have been met and issues appropriate recognition and authorization.
 - h. Oversees maintenance of program data and information systems; and prepares program reports.
3. Performs fire management and suppression activities to provide administrative support to managers of Wildland Fire Suppression Division.
 - a. Acts as an incident commander, fire line supervisor, air tactical supervisor, safety officer, or similar technical specialist.
 - b. Staffs a wildland fire engine and supervises a crew.
 - c. Recommends requesting firefighting assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
 4. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Reports to a Division Staff Specialist. Supervises Assistant Wildland Fire Management Officers, Wildland Firefighter Crew/Engine Bosses, and Wildland Firefighters and provides technical expertise and direction to other staff, other agencies, and the general public.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to develop a program that makes the most efficient and effective use of available funds. This is challenging because it requires identifying and prioritizing those who would benefit the most from funding and making program information available and understandable to them; program components must be interpreted and adapted to fit a variety of alternatives and still remain true to the guidelines; federal programs have many deadlines and timeframes that must be monitored and met; and the requests and need for information, support, and involvement are beyond current staff availability. Further challenged to maintain an acceptable flow of records and reports in order to meet time and reporting requirements. This is difficult because record keeping requirements are extensive and they use up time which is already at a premium, requests for grant reimbursements often overlap fiscal years, and there are many program participants who sometimes set their own deadlines and timeframes.

Problems include the need to continually prioritize and manage time, constant coordination with other cooperators, being able to meet with all those who request information and assistance, handling the dynamics of fire, and making sure program participants maintain compliance with program guidelines.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include which recipients should receive grant awards and the amounts, amounts and types of property and equipment to acquire, recommendations for budget requests, standards of quality for delivery of program services, schedules and staffing, expenditures of budgeted

funds, curriculum and training needs that best support the mission of the division, the content of project plans for development and implementation, obligation of funds to projects, and overall strategic and tactical firefighting decisions when responding as the incident commander.

Decisions referred include review of work items that involve major funding obligations, extraordinary use of manpower, approval of program strategies, approval of training and curriculums, maximum grant amounts, increases or changes in budgets, final approval of budget requests, and overall firefighting strategies.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with landowners to discuss and coordinate proposed projects; with staff in the division to coordinate activities within program areas; with training coordinators in the region regarding training needs and course content; and with VFD to administer grants and monitor equipment allocations; weekly contact with homeowners' associations to coordinate hazard mitigation and fire prevention work in their associations; with cities and counties regarding administration of funding for projects and public education; with other state and federal agencies to coordinate hazardous fuels mitigation work and public education programs; with aviation managers regionally and nationally to share information and resources; and monthly contact with federal agency representatives regarding administration of federal funding and projects.

H. Working Conditions:

Works in a typical office environment and in the field in all types of weather and on all types of terrain, and is exposed to hazards and strenuous work activity while fighting fires.

I. Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- public administration related to state and federal fiscal procedures and personnel management;
- forest biometrics, forest fire management and suppression, forest insects and diseases, tree biology, dendrology, soils, horticulture, timber management, fuels management practices, forest planning;
- project design and management;
- national fire suppression training standards;
- wildland urban interface issues and mitigation strategies;
- fire suppression tactics and incident command standards;
- Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

Ability to:

- develop and administer state programs based on effective interpretation of federal program objectives, intent, and requirements; and according to state law;
- provide leadership for the public; local, state, and federal committees; staff; and firefighters;
- build partnerships and facilitate collaboration among agencies and the public;
- interpret and implement national aviation standards as related to fire suppression;
- manage large interagency wildland fires;
- communicate information clearly and concisely.