POSITION EVALUATION STATEMENT

Title, Series, Grade: Student Trainee (Wildland Fire Management), GS-0499-05

Organizational Title:

Position Number: DE00800

Background: This Standard Position Description (SPD) was developed by an Advisory Work Group made up of a team of fire subject matter expert and classification specialists and is representative of student trainee work performed. The major duties listed in the SPD were identified through a thorough analysis of the 0456 Wildland Firefighter standard. This position is being established as a Student Trainee in Wildland Fire Management, the position involves periods of formal education and periods of employment as a Wildland Firefighter.

References: OPM Introduction to Position Classification Standards; OPM Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families; OPM Position Classification Standard for Wildland Fire Management, June 2022

Series Determination:
The primary purpose of this position is to serve in a developmental trainee capacity as a wildland fire student trainee. Per OPM's Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families, the student trainee series in each Occupational Group includes all trainee positions that involve periods of pertinent formal education and periods of employment in a Federal agency. The education and employment must be part of a formal student employment program. The level of education and experience completed by the student is a major consideration in establishing the level of on-the-job training and work assignments during periods of employment. Student trainee positions should be classified to the XX99 series for the appropriate Occupational Group (0099, 0199, 1599, etc.). This student trainee position serves as a firefighter on one or more of the following module types: dispatch, engine, handcrew (suppression, fuels or wildland fire module) or helitack. Other developmental wildland fire related duties performed under the guidance and direction of a journey level firefighter, will involve fire prevention, dispatch, planning, and fuels management. The incumbent will also be instructed on the proper maintenance and repair of firefighting tools, equipment, and facilities. As the position is involved in wildland fire activities, work that is covered under the 0456 series, the appropriate series for the Student Trainee is the 0499 series.

Title Determination:
OPM states that all positions classified to a student trainee series should be titled Student Trainee followed by a parenthetical title consistent with the occupational field involved; for example: Student Trainee (Human Resources Management), Student Trainee (Psychology), Student Trainee (Civil Engineering). As this position supports Wildland Fire Management, the basic title assigned to the position is *Student Trainee* (*Wildland Fire Management)*.

Grade Determination:
Given the work of the position in supporting Wildland Fire Management, the position is evaluated using the PCS for Wildland Fire Management, GS-0456. The 0456 PCS is written in a narrative format describing the Nature of Work and Level of Responsibility for each grade covered by the standard. The classification factors include: (1) guidelines; (2) complexity; (3) personal contacts/purpose of contacts; and (4) supervision received. Part I, Fire Management Position Illustrations of the PCS (under Part II, Grading Information) provides illustrative grade level criteria for nonsupervisory positions in grades GS-3/4/5/6/7, 9, and 11. The grade level information provides a summary of the grade level, followed by specific illustrations of duties and responsibilities characteristic of the grade described loosely in terms of the classification factors identified above. Illustrations vary by grade level and may be described in in terms of specialty areas such as Aviation, Fuels, and Planning.

Nature of Work

At the GS-05 wildland firefighters have substantial full-time assignments as operators of fire tankers used to suppress and manage forest and range fires and are responsible for driving, operating, and servicing large tankers equipped with extensive and complicated plumbing systems and pumps capable of drafting large volumes of water, select routes or follow designated routes and drive tank-trucks in heavy traffic rind on narrow, steep, and hazardous mountainous roads, which requires a high degree of driving judgment and skill and a thorough understanding of safety techniques to deliver staff and equipment safely to destinations. Maneuver trucks into position near fire, taking into consideration parking limitations, terrain, wind conditions, and escape routes. Determine pressures required, regulate valves, and operate pumps and auxiliary equipment during suppression operations.

At the GS-06 wildland firefighters may serves as a skilled member of a helitack crew. Respond to incident(s) via helicopter, may be inserted to incident via rappel from a hovering helicopter. Ensure load manifests, aircraft weight and balance calculations are accurate and within helicopter limitations and safety guidelines. Direct suppression operations, make work assignments, solve work problems, review work, and make fire reports. Assume responsibility for directing the operation and use of special tools and equipment such as, but not limited to power saws, portable pumpers, flame throwers, and communication equipment, and make decisions as to when, where, and how equipment can be utilized to the greatest advantage. Determine the strategy to be used in suppressing fires, assume responsibility for the proper care and maintenance of tools, equipment.

Like the GS-05, the position may drive and operate a wildland fire engine, positioning the engine for proper use and operation based on an understanding of engine capabilities and weight limitations. As directed, starts pump engine, primes pump, adjusts engine speed and pump valves, lays hose, and uses appropriate nozzles and makes nozzle adjustments for effective use of water and additives. May have specialized duties such as water handling specialist or maintenance of specialized equipment used to respond to wildland urban interface/intermix situations.

Unlike the GS-06, the position is not yet tasked with ensuring load manifests, aircraft weight and balance calculations are accurate and within helicopter limitations and safety guidelines, instead, they work with higher-graded firefighters and receive on-the-job training, instruction, and orientation in helicopter operations to include accompanying the pilot on flights, providing radio communications to dispatch and/or ground firefighters, navigating with use of maps, and applying aviation safety regulations.

Unlike the GS-06, the position endeavors to recommend and implement tactical directions on attacking, controlling, or mopping up fires, building or patrolling firelines, cleaning up burned areas within firelines, suppressing spot fires, felling snags or trees, and cutting brush, rather than making the final strategy determinations or assuming responsibility for the fire line equipment as reflected in the GS-06.

This position meets, but does not exceed, the GS-05 for Nature of Work.

Level of Responsibility

At the GS-05 wildland firefighters work under the general supervision of Fire Management Officers who periodically check the readiness of equipment, review their work performance on fires, and ensure that fire plans, safety rules, and equipment maintenance procedures are being followed.

At the GS-06 wildland firefighters work under general supervision. Incumbents of positions at this level follow standard procedures and practices und perform their work assignments with limited supervision or guidance. Plans and carries out recurring work without detailed instructions and plans, schedules, and completes inspections and reports. Incumbent often functions independently in the field, relying on

his/her own experience, expertise, and judgment. The supervisor reviews reports, and checks work on the basis of meeting program objectives and on the effectiveness of overall operations. Completed work is reviewed for adherence to guidelines and established policy and safety objectives.

Like the GS-05, the position work under a supervisor who provides general work assignments, instructions, and work schedules. The supervisor periodically checks the readiness of equipment, reviews work performance on fires, and ensures that fire plans, safety rules, and equipment maintenance procedures are being followed. Supervisors furnish advice, assistance, and help in determining action to take on hazardous conditions encountered or unusual work problems that occur.

Unlike the GS-06, the position does not perform independent assignment planning, operates under considerable supervision, and work is periodically reviewed in depth.

This position meets, but does not exceed, the GS-05 for Level of Responsibility.

FINAL CLASSIFICATION: The position is properly classified as ***Student Trainee* (*Wildland Fire Management), GS-0499-05***.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Determination: This position does not meet exemption criteria found in 5 CFR 551 and is determined to be Non-Exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Act.