DOI Standard PD
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Classification: Wildland Firefighter (Fire Management Planning), GS-0456-11

INTRODUCTION

This is an agency Standardized Position Description (SPD) and serves as Wildland Firefighter (Fire Management Planning) in a wildland fire management program within one of four bureaus of the Department of the Interior (Department) in the Field/Local environmental-setting, interagency programs.

The position's primary purpose is to develop wildland fire management program plans which reflect national, regional, state, and field/local management goals, requirements, and strategic objectives of wildland fire and aviation management. This full performance level position (FPL) executes fire management activities in fire preparedness, fuels management and prevention, fire suppression, monitoring, and/or post-fire, and overall wildland fire management planning. The position exercises specialized training, expert experience, and has a wide latitude of independent judgment to plan and carry out a substantial range of complex fire management projects and assignments. The position also serves as a technical advisor to the Fire Management Officer and unit/tribal level leadership officials.

The incumbent operates with wide latitude to independently identify, analyze (evaluate various conditions and elements) and recommends appropriate fire management planning decisions while performing work of considerable difficulty to a substantial range of complex fire management projects and assignments.

MAJOR DUTIES

Wildland Fire Planning (60 %)

The position develops field/local wildland plans and complex fire management alternatives in very complex, moderately complex, and complex environmental settings which reflect national, regional, state, and local management goals and objectives related to fire management and evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of fire management programs through periodic on-the-ground and field unit site visits inspections.

Provides specialized skilled decision-making recommendations on short and long-term strategic fire management planning, assessments, and interagency unit fire management plans.

Applies comprehensive knowledge and judgment on wildland fire planning processes and procedures of a considerable difficult level. Applies technical fire planning knowledge to analyze and resolve complex problems relating to the development, execution, and monitoring of field/local fire management issues by developing and implementing alternatives to meet the fire management social or political objectives and monitoring the effects of long-term droughts and changes in climate to analyze long-term fire related impacts on the environment.

Coordinates with the environmental or natural resource specialists to ensure field/local wildland plans are consistent and in adherence with land and resource management plans (L/RMPs), laws, policies, regulations, and environmental mandates (e.g., National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Clean Air Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Wilderness Act, etc.); addresses considerably difficult work responsibilities and ensures recommended actions initiated and objectives outlined within fire management plans are met and adheres to overall initiatives in land and/or resources management plans; (i.e., a unit has protected habitat under the Endangered Species Act which could be impacted by high intensity fires, the incumbent ensures areas are identified for low intensity fire and related management actions align with resource management plans).

Initiates sound independent judgment and decision making on technical information requirements; develops and accounts for Fire Management Plans (FMPs) at the field/local and state. Collaborates with fire management staff to ensure sound preparedness of short and long-term fire management planning prior to taking initiatives for implementation.

Conducts geospatial and strategic fire planning analyses and implements for use and support of geospatial information technology strategic fire management planning. Advocates the integration of fire management topics into unit land and resource management plans (L/RMPs).

Exercises seasoned knowledge and judgment to develop and implement fire planning agreements between field/local and adjacent programs, (i.e., Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, USFS, and others as well as partnering agencies and organizations, local government, state government and non-governmental entities); and provides technical advisory guidance on coordinating in the establishment of newly created agreements.

As Technical Advisor, renders decisions on wildland fire project goals and objectives and provides technical advice on newly proposed and existing wildland fire management projects. (e.g., fuels treatments, smoke management, preparedness plans, and fire danger planning related requirements); oversees and leads fire management analysis studies, collaborate results with appropriate staff, then determines best approach in initiating and completing major assignments; and coordinates and integrates complex fire management topics, issues, and solutions into detailed non-fire program plans. The position also establishes nexus between L/RMPs, fire plans, and ensures fire policy consistency between firefighter and public safety.

Collaborates and negotiates with partner agencies and/or organizations on process, decisions, documentation, and analysis, maintaining open communication with interagency partners and other agency personnel involved in the fire planning process; (as wildland fires move across jurisdictional boundaries, it is in the best interest of fire programs to collaborate with all the other land management organizations, for response to unplanned wildfires and for planned projects; partners include all federal wildland fire bureaus (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife) along with several other federal agencies that have land ownership, i.e., Department of Defense, Department of Energy, Bureau of Reclamation; partners also include State, local, tribal, private landowners and possibly Non-Governmental Organizations (Nature Conservancy).

Maintains oversight and accountability of wildland fire planning records management system and advise fire management officers, land, resources, and other staff specialists to ensure accuracy and timeliness in support of fire post-suppression requirements.

Thoroughly analyze fire planning data to determine fire hazards and fuels risks, historical fire occurrence statistics, fire causes, effects, climatology, and weather-related data to account for adequacy, accuracy, and appropriateness in management operations.

Consolidates unit planning information/data for inclusion in state, regional, and/or national plans, projects, and conducts analytical studies in fire and aviation management.

Collaborates frequently to advise fire management staff and ensure fuels program operations are sufficiently maintained, i.e., project planning and implementation, readiness, efficiency, and soundness in operations.

Analyzes and recommends technical unit planning information/data for inclusion in state, regional, and/or national plans, projects, and analytical studies in fire and aviation management.

Maintains oversight accountability for fire management plans to ensure adherence to established standards and make decisions on issues not clearly covered within standards; takes the initiative and exercise judgment to analyze and evaluate guidelines, and recommend modifications, alterations, and adjustments to meet fire program planning needs.

Wildland Fire Technical Consultation (30 %)

As Technical Advisor, provide guidance to staff members on new and advanced technological tools in fire management programs and facilitate training courses on systems usage and advanced features (systems include Wildland Fire Decision Support System, WFDSS), Interagency Fuels Treatment Decision Support System (IFTDSS), Enterprise Geospatial Portal (EGP), National Fuels Program Reporting System (NFPORS).

Advises and partners in the development of short-and-long-term strategic fire management planning and assessments of unit and interagency fire management missions; the implementation of fire management plans (e.g., prescribed fire, fire danger or prevention plans) and applications (e.g., decision support tools, wildland fire reporting); technical expertise in the National Fire Danger Rating System; and technical advisory on data collection and evaluation of fire hazard, fire danger, fuels, historic fire occurrence, fire effects, climatology, and weather conditions.

Provides expert advice to regions/parks in local fire planning analysis systems, models, and decision support systems, statistical data based on long range cycles that accurately reflect the overall scope and complexity of the fire management programs; and utilizes specialized software and modeling programs to evaluate the effectiveness of fire management strategies to meet L/RMP goals and objectives.

Provides comprehensive technical advice on Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) operations; advises internal and external staff on long-term strategic plans and strategic risk assessments on variations of fire complexities.

Provides technical guidance on analytical tools available in support of fire and aviation management for field/local interagency fire management planning; and analyzes plans and make decisions on appropriate enhancement options to ensure mission success.

Assesses the applicability of decision support tools to fire management issues and develops procedures for incorporation into unit management plans. Applies the latest technological developments to advise on fire management concerns related to the development, execution, and monitoring of local fire management issues.

As a Technical Advisor, the position exercises seasoned knowledge and skills in mentoring and coaching lower-graded planning specialists.

Accounts for the integration of geospatial data accuracy in order to develop and implement new and revised policies and standard operation procedures and practices in compliance with Bureau and agency policy mandates.

Provides advisory guidance support on geospatial and strategic fire planning analyses; coordinates geospatial information technology into strategic fire management planning; and advocates for the integration of fire management topics into field/unit L/RMPs.

Leadership (10%)

Assigns work to lower graded staff based on priorities. Ensures that timeliness, accuracy, quality, and production standards are met. Evaluates work performance and adjusts assignments as required to accomplish workload in accordance with established priorities to ensure timely accomplishment of assigned tasks.

Monitors and reports on the status and progress of work, checking work in progress and reviewing completed work to ensure supervisor's instructions on work priorities, methods, deadlines, and quality are met. Performs administrative leadership responsibilities to include timekeeping, travel administration, government credit card management, maintaining records such as receipts for supplies; training firefighters; ensuring that work is carried out safely; reporting on work accomplishments of the employees being led; and reporting on employee performance concerns.

Performs other duties as assigned.

FACTORS

Guidelines

General guidance can be found in agency and bureau published directives such as: wildland fire/fuels operations manuals, safety regulations, handbooks, and guides. Specific guidance is also contained in the prescribed fire and fuels treatment plans, risk assessments, natural and cultural resource plans, interagency agreements, and memorandums of understanding.

Due to the range and complexity of the duties assigned, the available guidelines may not be completely applicable to the work and/or have gaps in specificity. This requires the incumbent to exercise initiative and judgment to independently analyze and evaluate the available guidelines and recommend modifications, alterations, and/or adjustments to meet fire program planning needs. Since guidelines are issued at multiple levels by multiple organizations, interpretation and adaptation issues must be resolved by the incumbent, and the resolution incorporated into the fire management planning process.

Complexity

The incumbent's position involves a wide range of different and unrelated fire management planning processes and methods. Assessment of unusual fire management planning circumstances, variations in fire management planning approach, and incomplete or conflicting fire planning data is required. The incumbent independently provides fire management technical expertise and assistance in planning and implementing wildland fire monitoring, prescribed fire, and fuels activities. The incumbent considers and evaluates interconnected factors such as ecosystem dynamics, fuel loading, fire history, fire causes, fire danger, current and expected fire situation, resource availability, weather, smoke management issues, public safety, resources threatened, safety hazards, and costs. The incumbent must identify, evaluate, and consider these interrelated factors to develop alternative courses of action using appropriate methods and frameworks. The work requires the incumbent to independently identify, analyze, and evaluate various conditions and elements and make decisions on appropriate fire management planning decision. The incumbent with wide latitude independently evaluates objectives for fire management plans and develops and implements fire management strategies.

Complexity is further increased by continually evolving elements that require real time analysis to determine impact on the fire management planning process. Extensive decision making on complex topics such as data interpretation, work planning and refinement of methods and techniques is required to achieve fire management planning objectives. Incumbent must engage in extensive collaboration and coordination to integrate planning efforts with various land management agencies, federal, state, tribal, and local parks.

Personal Contacts

Contacts include those with the national office, regional/state office, and field/local units; other federal, tribal, and state agencies throughout the geographic area, plus adjoining regions and/or states. Daily contacts may include field personnel, regional/state office personnel, research scientists, private landowners, other bureau personnel, and the public. The incumbent maintains regular personal contact with professionals and scientists involved in fire management from Federal, Tribal, State, and local agencies, universities, and professional societies. Contacts may

include vendors used to accomplish specific assignments. Contacts are performed as formal presentations, interviews, informal exchanges, written reports, and correspondence.

Purpose of Contacts
Contacts are for the purpose of coordination, collaboration, and negotiating with various organizations and individuals who may have conflicting viewpoints and require persuasion and negotiation to justify the feasibility of plans and proposals to persuade other experts to adopt new methods and approaches. Contacts are made for determining user needs, explaining proposed actions, gathering data and intelligence, exchanging information and providing advisory guidance, and negotiation on best decisions.

Supervisory Controls
This position works under the supervision of a fire management official. The supervisor assigns work in terms of very broad areas of responsibility, program emphasis, and key management concerns for special projects. The supervisor and employee confer on priorities and deadlines. Recommendations and decisions made are usually accepted as authoritative. Policy questions dealing with controversial issues are reviewed with the supervisor to achieve mutually agreement upon solutions. Completed work is reviewed only from an overall standpoint in terms of feasibility, compatibility with other work, or effectiveness in meeting requirements or expected results.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

This is an administrative position in an organization having a firefighting mission and is in an established career path. Prior firefighting experience, as gained by substantial service in a primary firefighter position or equivalent experience outside the Federal Government is a MANDATORY PREREQUISITE for incumbents of this position.

Physical Demands: The work is primarily sedentary, although a level of physical fitness is required which will allow for work during periods of extended stress and in the field when wildland fire situations arise. During the fire season, extended fire assignments away from the unit may be required under very stressful conditions.

Work Environment: Although work is generally performed in an office setting. Field work involves exposure to temperature extremes, both from weather and fire conditions where falling trees and the presence of smoke and/or dust conditions create hazardous conditions. The nature of fire investigation work requires that protective clothing (boots, hard hats, etc.) be worn. The incumbent must exercise a variety of safety practices and precautions for the well-being of self and of others.

Position requires a valid state driver's license to operate light vehicles and 4x4 vehicles. May require additional specialized training and certification to operate specialized vehicles and equipment.

May participate in all aspects of a fire management program including fuels management, fire suppression, fire planning, monitoring, and post-fire activities.