DOI Standard PD
PD# DX02100

Classification: Wildland Firefighter (Fuels Management), GS-0456-11

INTRODUCTION

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

The primary purpose of this position is to direct a prescribed fire/fuels management program that includes a full range of fuels management activities and functions at the unit/tribal level. These functions include prescribed fire, mechanical and biological fuels treatments, fire effects monitoring, fuels monitoring, and smoke monitoring. This full performance level (FPL) position serves as the technical expert and advisor to the Fire Management Officer and/or unit/tribal leadership on fuels management and identifies and analyzes multiple variables such as weather, fuels, topography, fire behavior, smoke impacts, employee, and public safety, in strategically developing and implementing fuels management projects.

MAJOR DUTIES

Program Management (50%)
Directs all aspects of the fuels management program including planning, implementation, coordination, and evaluation. Develops mid and long-term programs of work which support the unit's/tribe's land and resource management plan alternatives. Plans and oversees contracting and procurement of goods and services to accomplish fuels management goals and objectives. Evaluates individual fuels treatments as well as the effectiveness of the overall fuels management program and makes program changes based on evaluation findings. Performs fiscal analysis, formulates the annual fuels management budget, and maintains a system of accounts to track program expenditures, including managing the budget from out-year planning to year-end closure.

Oversees the smoke management program to ensure compliance with state air quality standards. Coordinates and collaborates with federal, state, tribal and local government air quality officials in order to comply with operational procedures and reporting requirements.

Develops and implements short-term fire management objectives and strategies based on the effects and behavior of prescribed fire. Analyzes and evaluates prescription treatments, monitoring methods, and new technologies and makes continuous improvements as appropriate to improve the organization's effectiveness relating to fuels management. Adjusts model inputs such as weather and fuels indices to forecast desired fire behavior and fire effects to meet objectives.

Analyzes, evaluates, and makes recommendations on all sections of the Fire Management Plan pertaining to prescribed fire and fuels treatments.

Planning (20%)
Serves as a key member of an interdisciplinary team (forestry, wildlife biology, range management, geology, archeology, etc.) and exercises seasonal knowledge in developing and implementing land management plans, fire management plans, compliance documents, and agreements. Advises and provides technical guidance to fire management staff on strategies for addressing unique fuels and fire management problems.

Analyzes and integrates values at risk data (e.g., infrastructure, property, natural and cultural resources) and evaluates and/or develops zone or unit level plans for fuels management, fire prevention and fire protection programs.

Analyzes and evaluates applicable treatment methods and techniques (e.g., biological, chemical, mechanical, prescribed fire) for gaps, deviations, or differences and resolves issues prior to selecting the treatment option to ensure objectives are met within policy and guidelines. Integrates input from the interdisciplinary team, management direction, and annual objectives to develop schedule of treatment.

Plans, conducts surveys, analyzes, and evaluates data to develop prescriptions for prescribed fire and wildland fire monitoring. Develops fuels management prescriptions and implementation plans which support land management objectives.

Analyzes and assesses project plans and implements appropriate levels of statistical sampling for monitoring to determine whether projects are meeting objectives. Establishes study plots to assess fire and fire suppression impacts on the ecosystem. Develops and refines plot characteristics, frequency of visits, subjects to be measured, and data storage and analysis techniques.

Plans, designs, and conducts project assessments which determine the condition of wildland fuels. Collects, analyzes, and assesses data on fuel conditions and fire behavior through a variety of methods, including field surveys, computer modeling software, prescribed treatment methods, and literature searches of standards and codes, publications, etc. Results are evaluated and applied to determine and prioritize prescribed fire and mechanical treatment projects.

Leads the development and coordination of cooperative agreements to facilitate multi-agency projects. Works closely with contracting officer and cooperators to input task agreements, negotiate resources, share resources, and evaluate proposals.

Selects and applies the most appropriate fire behavior model depending on desired fire potential to address; models and analyzes expected fire behavior within planned treatment areas for development of proper prescriptions. Applies observed fire behavior and fire effects to aid in post treatment reporting. Ensures proper data storage and archival procedures are followed.

Operations and Safety (20%)

Plans and administers the technical and administrative aspects of the prescribed fire/fuels plan, ensuring that preparation, ignition, holding, mop-up, and rehabilitation comply with applicable standards, regulations, policies, and guidelines.

Analyzes and evaluates treatment effectiveness, identifies potential problems for further analysis and resolves existing problems to ensure objectives are met. Applies a risk management process to resolve safety issues when gaps, deviations, or differences exist that must be critically examined prior to implementing full solutions.

Develops and conducts fuels management surveys to document presence, amount, and types of hazardous fuels. Monitors fire behavior, evaluates fire effects, identifies potential problems and utilizes this information to prioritize prescribed fire and fuels management projects.

Participates in contract administration activities as a Contracting Officer’s Technical Representative (COTR) or Contracting Officer's Representative (COR).

Conducts field reconnaissance of prescribed fire/fuels treatment units, analyzes, evaluates, and summarizes field findings and makes recommendations on appropriate prescriptive criteria for meeting program objectives. Manages record keeping associated with burn planning, fire occurrence reporting within fuels treatment areas, and weather.

Identifies, evaluates and provides training needs for other prescribed fire and fuels management programs supporting staff.

Supports wildfire response activities and participates in fuels and fire reviews.

Operates, moves, inspects, and performs preventative maintenance on vehicles and equipment to conduct surveys, field reconnaissance, etc. This includes crew carriers, fire engines, command vehicles, pickups, and other specialized equipment to treat wildland fuels. Exercises judgment to safely operate, maneuver, and set up vehicles and equipment in a variety of environments including urban, grassland, and mountainous terrain. Ensures adherence to vehicle safety procedures when transporting personnel, fuel, and equipment, considering bridge and road limits, equipment weight and length, and weather effects.

Participates in all aspects of a fire management program including fuels management, fire prevention, planning, fire suppression, monitoring, and post-fire activities. Applies expertise in firefighter safety, fire behavior, topography of the area, weather, fuels, and training in fire management work sufficient to: (1) direct suppression operations, and (2) advise on and implement tactical strategy on attacking, controlling, or mopping up fires, monitoring fire activity, building or patrolling firelines, cleaning up burned areas within firelines, suppressing spot fires, felling snags or trees, and cutting brush. Prepares control lines for burnout operations and participates in ignition/firing operations. Coordinates with aircraft for aviation support missions.

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 fire management plan, 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 that the incumbent use initiative and judgment to independently analyze and evaluate the available guidelines and additionally recommend modifications, alterations, and/or adjustments to specific guidance, to meet fuel program management needs. Develops guidance for implementation of new technologies such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Since guidelines are issued at multiple levels by multiple organizations, conflicts must be resolved independently by the incumbent, and the resolution incorporated into the fuels management planning process.

Complexity
The work entails serving as a technical expert, advising leadership, and performing a variety of functions associated with prescribed fire, wildland fire monitoring, and fuels management support functions, each involving numerous and varied procedures and operating requirements. The incumbent is responsible for performing fiscal analysis and annual budget formulation.

Identifies and analyzes multiple variables such as weather, fuels (type and condition), topography, fire behavior, smoke impacts, employee and public safety, in strategically developing and implementing fuels management projects. Makes decisions based on the assessment of unusual circumstances, variations in approach, multiple fire management strategies and tactics, and incomplete or conflicting data such as those relating to management

objectives and resource protection concerns, financial impacts, resource availability and capability, etc.

Makes critical decisions concerning the interpretation of considerable data and the refinement of methods to be used such different types of treatment; higher complexity fuels treatment projects; resource and property values at risk; smoke management requirements; multiple jurisdictions, frequent use of aviation operations or support; and intra- inter- agency coordination requirements.

Due to the nature of fire management work, the incumbent is required to react quickly and perform multiple, unrelated simultaneous assignments along with other competing demands in the work environment. At times, decisions need to be made under time-critical conditions.

Personal Contacts
Primary contacts are with fire and other resource personnel and managers within the organization. Additionally, contacts are with State, Tribal and local governments or other Federal agencies, special interest groups and the general public. Other significant contacts may include contractors, news media, local community leaders, and cooperators.

Purpose of Contacts
Contacts are necessary for planning, implementation and coordination of the fuels management program. Contacts are also made to coordinate activities, ensure compliance with established safe practices, solve operational problems, and conduct training. Contacts may involve various groups or individuals who have conflicting viewpoints and require the incumbent to gain compliance with fuels management methods and approaches through persuasion or negotiation.

Supervisory Controls
This position works under the direction of the supervisor and/or appropriate Fire management staff member who assigns work in terms of broad areas of responsibility, program emphasis, and key management concerns for special projects. The supervisor and employee confer on priorities and deadlines. The incumbent is considered a technical expert on fuels management and independently conducts fuel management projects and assignments, coordinating with others, and determining the approach to take to complete specific assignments. Recommendations are usually accepted as authoritative. Questions dealing with controversial issues such as policy concerns are reviewed with the supervisor to achieve agreement or solution. 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: Work in the office is primarily sedentary. Field work does require frequent physical exertion, involving walking over rough terrain, sometimes for extended periods, and working under occasionally inclement (hot, cold, snow, wind, etc.) weather conditions.

The incumbent must be in good physical condition in order to safety perform field activities. The incumbent must be able to perform duties in areas of uncontrolled wildfire where hazardous conditions exist. The incumbent must be able to fly as a passenger in helicopters and single engine fixed wing aircraft.

Work Environment: Work is performed in both an office and field setting with field work. 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 management 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.

Qualifications and additional required training specified in the Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Qualifications Standards and Guide may apply.

This is a testing designated position (TDP) under the Department of the Interior Drug-Free Workplace Program.

This position requires a valid state driver's license to operate a variety of motor vehicles to transport equipment, supplies, crewmembers, and others (as required).

May require additional specialized training and certification to operate specialized vehicles and equipment.