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**General Schedule  
Position Classification Standards**



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**POSITION CLASSIFICATION  
STANDARD  
FOR  
WILDLIFE REFUGE  
MANAGEMENT  
SERIES, GS-0485**



**Workforce Compensation  
and Performance Service**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| SERIES DEFINITION .....                            | 3  |
| SERIES COVERAGE .....                              | 3  |
| OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION .....                     | 3  |
| EXCLUSIONS .....                                   | 6  |
| SPECIALIZATIONS AND TITLES .....                   | 8  |
| GRADING OF POSITIONS .....                         | 8  |
| GRADE CONVERSION TABLE .....                       | 9  |
| FACTOR LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS .....                    | 10 |
| FACTOR 1, KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION ..... | 10 |
| FACTOR 2, SUPERVISORY CONTROLS .....               | 15 |
| FACTOR 3, GUIDELINES .....                         | 16 |
| FACTOR 4, COMPLEXITY .....                         | 17 |
| FACTOR 5, SCOPE AND EFFECT .....                   | 20 |
| FACTOR 6, PERSONAL CONTACTS .....                  | 21 |
| FACTOR 7, PURPOSE OF CONTACTS .....                | 21 |
| FACTOR 8, PHYSICAL DEMANDS .....                   | 23 |
| FACTOR 9, WORK ENVIRONMENT .....                   | 24 |

## **SERIES DEFINITION**

This series includes positions which require primarily professional knowledge and competence in the management, administration, and scientific operation of public lands and waters designated as national wildlife refuges. The work requires biological analyses, planning, and evaluation, and has as its principal purpose the conservation, protection, and propagation of wildlife species and the manipulation and utilization of their required habitat. The work involves a variety of activities in land, water, and habitat management, land planning, resource identification and allocation, administration, public relations, supervision, and other activities involving wildlife resource utilization, protection, inventory and evaluation, and maintenance of grasslands, marshes, and soils. The work also involves management considerations of land exploration and public, commercial, industrial, and agrarian land use.

## **SERIES COVERAGE**

This series covers positions of professional biologists at the refuge, region, and national office levels of the agency. These biologists are involved in the development, enhancement, protection and maintenance of land and habitat (food, water, shelter, breeding, and resting areas) for a variety of wildlife species within the confines of a National Wildlife Refuge System that is administered under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. Employees in this series plan for and administer wildlife refuge activities designed to protect, preserve, or propagate one or more specific species at each refuge location. Refuge programs involve wildlife management and protection, habitat management, natural resource utilization (including land exploration of oil and minerals), law enforcement, cultural resources, and public and industrial use of wildlife refuge properties. The variety, depth, and difficulty of programs differ among refuges and vary in terms of: species involved; the degree of protection that must be maintained (emphasis on endangered, threatened, or protected species); public use and enjoyment (hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, picnicking, camping, and hiking); environmental education; commercial interests (easements, rights-of-way); requirements for water supply; and interests of other Federal, state, and local governments. Management emphasis may focus on one or a combination of activities, dependent upon geographical location, climate, wildlife behavior, public and political interests, and missions of Federal, state and local governments.

## **OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION**

Objectives of the National Wildlife Refuge System are:

- o preserve, restore, and enhance the populations of all species of animals and plants that are endangered or threatened;
- o perpetuate the migratory bird resource;
- o preserve a natural diversity and abundance of fauna and flora on refuge lands;



- o provide an understanding and appreciation of fish and wildlife ecology and of the public's role in its environment; and
- o provide the public with high quality, safe, and recreational experiences in wildlife to the extent that these activities are compatible with the purpose for which the refuge was established.

Employees in this occupation carry out refuge management objectives by performing work requiring specialized knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories related to protection, propagation, and preservation of wildlife species and their habitats. In addition to this specialized knowledge, employees must have an understanding and apply basic principles of other life and physical sciences; e.g., soil science, hydrology, plant controls and diseases, grasslands management, land planning, and related subject areas as a part of satisfying their work requirements. Administrative aspects of the work require an understanding of the basic principles, concepts, and techniques of budgeting, contracting and procurement, personnel, records management, and property management.

National wildlife refuges vary significantly in size, topography, geographic location, climate, and other physical characteristics, including arctic tundra, desert, bog and marshlands, estuarine, coastline, wetlands, and uplands. They range in size from less than one acre to millions of acres. Some refuges are contained in sharply defined land masses. Others are amorphous in shape such as when extended along the banks of an extensive river system, or when boundaries are interrupted by towns and industrial complexes. Some refuges are entirely pristine while others may contain inhabited communities and historical landmarks.

The challenges associated with wildlife refuge management stem only in part from the size of the refuge or the outline of its boundaries. Refuge managers and biologists are responsible for wildlife programs on the refuges they operate according to the specific purposes for which they were established. Management and biological concerns are more associated with the kinds and characteristics of the species that are present, their behavior, adequacy of the habitat to support wildlife needs, and the methods, practices, and procedures associated with habitat management and enhancement methods, practices, and procedures. Other biological concerns involve considerations such as evaluation of management practices for one species relative to their impact on other species and habitat (e.g., positive enhancement efforts for production of ducks may have a negative impact on swan populations); identification and application of disease control and containment methods; reconciliation of biological program compatibility with other needs and activities on refuge property and in surrounding communities (e.g., public use); or assessment of the impact of agricultural and industrial activities or military operations on or near refuge property.

Refuge managers typically supervise a staff of professional, technical, and other Federal employees to accomplish their assigned goals and objectives. Staffs are often comprised of subordinate biologists, outdoor recreation planners, biological technicians, trades and labor employees, and employees responsible for administrative support. Some refuges also include a cadre of volunteers who provide various and sundry services in support of refuge activities.

Refuge management work occurs in a wide variety of settings ranging from rural environments covering thousands, or even millions of acres, to small urban refuges of a few hundred acres. The work also occurs at regional office levels throughout the country and in staff functions at the national office level. On many refuges, emphasis is on the protection of migratory waterfowl (ducks, geese, swans); other refuges emphasize the protection of large game species (elk, bighorn sheep, bison). Regardless of the concern for a single species, wildlife refuges include programs requiring the protection, preservation, or enhancement of other species including resident, threatened and endangered species. These may be birds (other than migratory waterfowl), reptiles, fur bearing animals, fish, or other species of wildlife which are endangered or, for other reasons are afforded protection under refuge programs.

Refuge managers and biologists monitor: wildlife populations; reproduction and survival rates; the health of resident and migratory birds, fish, and other wildlife; available food, water, nesting or breeding areas; and wildlife habitat. They conduct wildlife inventories and surveys, and become involved in habitat manipulation through such practices as water level management, farming, controlled burning, soil conservation, and forestry practices. They monitor populations of species for disease and contaminant problems. They plant crops to increase food supply, reforest areas for shelter, and control noxious weeds and other plant growth that detract from wildlife requirements. They may provide supplemental feeding during periods of extreme weather conditions when natural food is inadequately available. In combination with activities designed specifically for the protection and conservation of wildlife species, refuge managers and biologists provide for public use and enjoyment (observation, study, and recreational programs including nature trails, hunting, and fishing). Through law enforcement programs, they control human activities to prevent adverse impact on wildlife species and habitat and unauthorized land uses. They protect unique areas such as wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, and national historic sites. They also enter into agreements for the conduct of business operations on refuge lands, including sales concessions, cooperative farming, forest management including timber sales), mineral exploration and extraction, power production, and manufacturing operations.

Wildlife refuge management programs have their emphases on (1) preservation and scientific management of wildlife species and their habitat; (2) utilization of renewable resources in planned combinations that will best serve the public; (3) assurance that the most judicious use of the land is achieved through periodic adjustment in use to conform to changing needs and conditions, and (4) coordination of the various resources to avoid impairing the productivity of the land or adverse impact to the basic purposes for the refuge. The work on refuges is controlled by a number of laws and public policies that affect the programs in a number of different Federal agencies, sometimes with overlapping and conflicting program objectives. The thread of commonality through all of the laws and policy directives is recognition of the significance of and need for preservation, restoration, or recovery of endangered species; protection of marine mammals; maintenance of a healthy environment; identification and protection of archaeological and historic sites; provisions for wild and scenic rivers; public use; land use for public benefits; and entitlements to Native Americans.

On most refuges, there is a visitors' center for public information and education. Public information programs are planned and provided for a variety of visitors who include students,

academicians, researchers, public officials, and the general public. Refuge managers and biologists are responsible for directing the design and presentation of interpretive information and exhibits on flora, fauna, and other characteristics of the refuge for the public's education or benefits.

There are other buildings on refuges that are constructed for the purpose of housing for refuge staffs, administration, equipment maintenance and storage, and other support activities. Refuge managers and biologists are responsible for the maintenance of buildings and an equipment inventory which may include fleets of motor vehicles, powered water vessels, aircraft, grass cutting equipment, tractors and other heavy equipment (bulldozers, cranes, heavy trucks), hand tools, and protective clothing. The size of staffs, amount of capital inventory, and their utilization vary both with the size of the refuge and its assigned goals and objectives.

Refuge managers and biologists are also responsible for natural resource concerns that extend beyond refuge boundaries. Such concerns include matters pertaining to:

- o wildlife extension efforts;
- o easement administration/management;
- o Farm bill implementation on long-term basis;
- o international management plans; e.g., North American Waterfowl Management Plan;
- o political influences conflicting with natural resource programs;
- o contaminant assessment and management;
- o air quality, and land and water pollution abatement;
- o outside land development on lands adjacent to wildlife refuges, and
- o public relations with private landowners and special interest groups.

## EXCLUSIONS

Many positions in this occupation contain work which, if it were a full time responsibility requiring professional qualifications, would be classified to another series. Series determinations, therefore, must be made in context of the entire occupational situation, such as the organizational configuration, working relationships, career patterns, qualifications of candidates, and management's attitudes, desires, and objectives. This is particularly true of those positions involving staff level work that is not performed on a wildlife refuge and positions having full and final responsibility for wildlife refuge operations, administration, and program implementation.

Excluded from this series are the following kinds of work:

1. Positions which involve some application of the principles and practices of wildlife refuge management, but for which the paramount professional knowledge requirement is characteristic of another specialized field.



- a. Positions which primarily involve planning, administering, advising, and coordinating the use of land, water, and related resources to provide opportunities for the creative use of leisure time outdoors with due regard to protecting and enhancing the quality of the outdoor environment for the enjoyment of people are classified in the [Outdoor Recreation Planning Series, GS-0023](#).
- b. Positions primarily concerned with the investigation of the cause, nature, severity of diseases, prevalence, and methods of control of harmful insects or diseases of forest trees, stands, and products are included in the [Entomology Series, GS-0414](#); or the [Plant Pathology Series, GS-0434](#).
- c. Positions primarily concerned with range or grassland management are included in the [Range Conservation Series, GS-0454](#).
- d. Positions which primarily involve professional work in soil and water conservation to obtain sound land use, including water management, pollution abatement, and prevention of soil erosion are classified in the [Soil Conservation Series, GS-0457](#).
- e. Positions which primarily require professional knowledge and competence in forestry when the work performed includes development, production, conservation, and utilization of the natural resources of forests are classified in the [Forestry Series, GS-0460](#).
- f. Positions primarily involved in the interpretation of soil science concepts and investigations to bring about sound soil management for sustaining and increasing multiple resource yields are included in the [Soil Science Series, GS-0470](#).
- g. Positions which primarily involve professional and scientific work in administering, directing, or exercising administrative and technical control over programs, regulatory activities, projects or operations which are concerned with the conservation and management of fishery resources, wildlife resources, or fish and wildlife resources are included in the [General Fish and Wildlife Administration Series, GS-0480](#).
- h. Positions primarily involving professional and scientific biological work in the conservation and management of wildlife, or in the determination, establishment, and application of biological facts, principles, methods, technologies, and procedures necessary for wildlife conservation and management are also excluded when the work is primarily involved in the management of programs on wildlife refuges. Such positions are classified in the [Wildlife Biology Series, GS-0486](#).
- i. Positions primarily requiring the application of engineering concepts and principles to the economic design, location, and construction of such projects as highways, refuge access roads, building facilities, bridges, dams, or other structures are included in the appropriate series of the [Engineering and Architecture Group, GS-0800](#).

- j. Positions primarily involving professional work in adapting the design, layout, arrangement, and general appearance of land areas, including the ground forms, vegetation, structures, and other features that comprise the landscape for the purpose of satisfying esthetic requirements are classified in the [Landscape Architecture Series, GS-0807](#).
  - k. Positions primarily dealing with water phases of wildlife management problems such as hydrology, sedimentation, climatology, ground and surface water, or major drainage and flood control undertakings are classified in other appropriate professional series such as the [Civil Engineering Series, GS-0810](#); [Hydrology Series, GS-1315](#); or [Geology Series, GS-1350](#).
2. Positions which involve performance of inspectional, investigative, or advisory work to assure public understanding of and compliance with Federal statutes and regulations for the conservation of fish and wildlife resources when the primary knowledge requirement is of law enforcement. Such positions are classified in the [Game Law Enforcement Series, GS-1812](#), or the [Compliance Inspection and Support Series, GS-1802](#).

## SPECIALIZATIONS AND TITLES

*Refuge Program Specialist* - This title applies to all positions concerned with scientific, administrative, and management planning affecting a number of wildlife refuges on a regional or national basis.

*Refuge Manager* - This title applies to the position with primary responsibility for the management and operation of a National Wildlife Refuge.

*Refuge Operations Specialist* - This title applies to all other positions in this series involving line responsibility for work associated with wildlife refuge programs and operations.

Note: Positions which meet the criteria in the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) for evaluation as a supervisor are titled *Supervisory Refuge Program Specialist* or *Supervisory Refuge Operations Specialist*.

## GRADING OF POSITIONS

Positions should be evaluated on a factor-by-factor basis, using the Office of Personnel Management Factor Level Descriptions for this series. Only the designated point values may be used. Additional instructions for evaluating positions are contained in "Instructions for the Factor Evaluation System," TS-27, May 1977. The [Primary Standard](#) may be used to evaluate factors that significantly exceed the factor level descriptions contained in this standard.

1. The [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) may be applied in the evaluation of positions that involve supervisory responsibilities when the nature of supervision meets the criteria of that guide. Many positions covered by this standard include supervisory and program management responsibilities. In such cases, it may be necessary to evaluate positions using



both the criteria provided in this standard and the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#) to determine the appropriate grade level. When this approach produces two different results, the proper grade is the higher of the two.

2. The [Policy Analysis Grade-Evaluation Guide](#) is to be used in evaluating positions involving professional work which requires the application of scientific knowledge in the analysis of public policy issues and their impact on social, economic, scientific, environmental, and other issues of national and international significance.

## GRADE CONVERSION TABLE

Total points on all evaluation factors are converted to GS grade as follows:

| GS Grade | Point Range |
|----------|-------------|
| 9        | 1855-2100   |
| 10       | 2105-2350   |
| 11       | 2355-2750   |
| 12       | 2755-3150   |
| 13       | 3155-3600   |
| 14       | 3605-4050   |
| 15       | 4055- up    |

## FACTOR LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

### FACTOR 1, KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

#### *Level 1-6 - 950 Points*

Professional knowledge of conventional methods and techniques utilized in wildlife refuge management which would enable the employee to perform recurring assignments of moderate difficulty; i.e., the methods and techniques are well established, apply to most situations encountered, and do not require significant deviation from established methods. The assignments are limited by such characteristics as:

- Unusual or difficult problems are screened out or discussed with the supervisor before carrying out the assignment;
- Assignments are amenable to a variety of standard treatments and proven techniques; or
- Assignments are relatively noncontroversial in terms of activities that are acceptable, associated with past practices, and are adaptable for future use for purposes of protection, rehabilitation, manipulation, and public use.

A general knowledge and understanding of agency and state procedures and appropriate statutes affecting wildlife resources sufficient to execute wildlife refuge management program efforts. Limited knowledge of related disciplines such as range or grassland management, entomology, and hydrology sufficient to utilize such knowledge in activities such as segments of field investigations or surveys of wildlife, waterfowl, and their habitat for enhancement or propagation purposes, species classification, and distribution of populations.

(OR)

Equivalent knowledge and skill.

#### Illustrations:

- Negotiate and prepare cooperative farming agreements; plan and implement prescribed burning; plan and arrange for livestock grazing and hazing operations, and/or plan and implement procedures and activities for control of noxious weeds and other habitat management programs.
- Design and implement, in coordination with other refuge biological and administrative programs, an operational law enforcement program to identify recurrent law enforcement problems on the refuge involving trespass, poaching or other game law violations, growing and using controlled substances, and disturbing or harassing protected wildlife species and habitats.

- Conduct biological studies and maintain records and reports on the progress and completion of studies; apply the data obtained to formulate future programs and effect improvements in refuge management practices; apply census and survey methods and techniques to determine species populations and biotic relationships; and apply pertinent data in the successful completion of various management activities associated with waterfowl production, migration surveys, or wildlife restoration programs.
- Locate land lines and boundaries for areas such as wetlands, moist soils, waterfowl production areas, and easements, and identify resource characteristics of immediately surrounding areas through analysis of aerial photographs and other references related to physical characteristics and resources. Information derived from such efforts is used in planning habitat enhancement projects, conducting population surveys, negotiating land disputes, establishing evidence in cases of wildlife violations, and performing other related biological studies or analyses.
- Develop segments of management and work plans; prepare aspects of budget estimates for future refuge operations; and represent the agency in keeping the local public informed about the objectives, work, and activities of the refuge.

### *Level 1-7 - 1250 Points*

Professional knowledge of wildlife refuge management applicable to a wide range of duties and responsibilities associated with the requirements of a National Wildlife Refuge Management System. At this level, knowledge and skills are sufficient to solve problems covering diverse wildlife refuge management situations and to direct and supervise a refuge staff in the phases of refuge programs and operations. The assignments typically require sound professional knowledge and skill sufficient to modify or adapt standard refuge management techniques and procedures; or to establish departures from established management methods and techniques; and to assess, select, and make use of agency precedents in means and ways to devise strategies and plans that resolve significant management problems.

Knowledge of the characteristics, conditions, and interrelationships of wildlife resources sufficient to evaluate, plan, and execute studies and reports on the complementary or competitive impact on the refuge of different wildlife species, habitat requirements, and forage availability. Knowledge and skill sufficient to assess the impact of development, construction, modification, or change to refuge land use and resource production on established wildlife conservation and preservation programs.

Thorough knowledge of agency and/or tribal policies and procedures, and applicable Federal statutes and legislation governing the use of National Wildlife Refuges and their natural resources.

Familiarity with related disciplines such as forestry, wildlife biology, soil conservation, entomology, hydrology, and range management sufficient to utilize such knowledge in planning or executing wildlife refuge management programs.

Knowledge and skill sufficient to direct or supervise planning and management of refuge programs and operations; to develop a variety of integrated management and operating plans; to design program schedules, including estimates of personnel, equipment, and materials; and to deal with diverse technical and administrative problems and concerns.

(OR)

Equivalent knowledge and skill.

#### Illustrations:

- Operate a wildlife refuge characterized by diversified wildlife populations or a carefully managed population of game animals. Habitat requirements and ecological relationships are not always fully understood and numerous techniques are tried, adapted, and modified to permit effective, intensive management.
- Manage a population of several species including one or more species requiring intensive management practices. This requires the ability to understand complex biotic relationships, analyze ecological requirements, or to devise new techniques or procedures, especially when one or more endangered species are present.
- Manage a refuge when most of the work typically performed is intensive habitat rehabilitation and wildlife management efforts for various species.
- Plan, supervise, and administer all phases of an outdoor recreation program on a refuge where there are complex resources and visitor use patterns.
- Prepare detailed site plans including maps, drawings, specifications, estimates of costs and labor for construction of facilities (e.g., campgrounds, foot trails, visitor contact stations, interpretive signs, displays and programs), and insuring that they are developed in accordance with agency standards. The employee relates these activities to refuge management programs involving habitat and protection of various species of wildlife.
- Develop plans and programs involving complex procedures in management activities (wildlife studies, vegetation studies, fire prevention and suppression, or water quality and levels); prepare action plans based on a thorough familiarity with the area inside and outside refuge boundaries, available data, pertinent problems, and the interrelationships involved; and to take appropriate action.
- Direct program requirements of a National Wildlife Refuge having a high degree of public use where program emphasis is on management of varied populations of wildlife complicated by: public interest in refuge programs and operations; negotiations concerning land conveyance and reconveyance; oil and gas leasing; exploration and mineral assessments; and commercial industry or manufacturing.



- Deal effectively with multiple program concerns such as: waterfowl depredation problems associated with a refuge located in an area of intensive agricultural development; control of disease outbreaks occurring among large concentrations of waterfowl within relatively small areas; management of a large, diverse, and complex cooperative farming program; and operation of a large and/or controversial hunting program.
- Plan and supervise the execution of comprehensive wildlife management and refuge operating plans which may extend 3 to 5 years, including the maintenance of grounds, buildings, and equipment within the parameters of allocated personnel, monetary, and material resources; the planning of physical improvements and construction; the preparation of budget estimates, maintenance of fiscal accounts and records of work accomplishments, and procurement of required supplies, equipment, and services.
- Serve as a troubleshooter, specialist, or coordinator in developing new methods or procedures in wildlife refuge or an associated area of resource management.

### *Level 1-8 - 1550 Points*

Mastery of the wildlife refuge management profession and skill to identify, define, and resolve managerial, administrative, and biological problems associated with novel, unique, undeveloped, or controversial aspects of natural resource management. Such problems are critical and are not resolved by conventional or other accepted methods, and they require an ability to extend or adapt guidelines and precedents to solve critical problems which may impact agency practices and policies. Knowledge required at this level differs from the knowledge required at the next lower level in terms of the need to resolve management and operational problems for which current information is inconclusive or is in the form of theories or suppositions as to their effectiveness in treating specific resource-oriented issues and concerns. Such concerns are characterized by the controversial nature of public use, environmental factors, political sensitivity, or controversial land disputes of long duration. Legislative interpretations may be contradictory, and sensitive negotiations may concern land conveyance and reconveyance, oil and gas leasing, conflicting cultural demands, exploration and mineral assessments, controversial commercial and private land use, water rights, land development, or easement administration and management.

At this level, professional refuge management personnel apply comprehensive knowledge of a highly visible wildlife refuge or refuge complex, or of the refuge management system and the principles of land and natural resource usage. The problems presented may contradict the concepts of conservation, preservation, propagation, and rehabilitation of wildlife, their populations, and their habitat. Therefore, knowledge and skill are applied in developing, or guiding the development of, essentially new or significantly improved management techniques or procedures in order to devise solutions to problems encountered. Refuge management personnel must project or extend developmental trends, future needs, and/or existing techniques or approaches for application by others.



Refuge management personnel also are recognized widely as technical authorities in their resource program areas and apply knowledge of technological advances to evaluate program and operational effectiveness and usefulness.

(OR)

Equivalent knowledge and skill.

### Illustrations:

- Provide expert technical leadership, staff coordination, and consultation for highly unique and controversial, or system wide refuge issues and subjects such as: broad, complex management programs for an endangered species; critical demands for increased use of land, water, and wildlife resources; habitat disturbance or disruption that adversely affects wildlife management, conservation and preservation goals; or usage or depredation problems that may require substantial habitat development or rehabilitative activities. The employee discharges a key role in the overall design and execution of plans that impact region wide and nationwide refuge management concerns; makes general inspections of refuges for evaluation purposes; provides staff and advisory services; and/or develops long-range functional resource plans for integration with the plans that govern activities of the refuge management system and the direction of national policies and programs.
- Provide administrative and managerial leadership in the operation of a wildlife refuge complex (a primary refuge area and geographically separated refuge units) or a very large and controversial wildlife refuge that is characterized by a variety of wildlife species, populations, diversified habitat and, sometimes, measurable populations of endangered or threatened species. The employee resolves complex management problems due to the nature of high public use; private landowner uses which are in dispute and require resolution by court decision; contaminant, pollution, or other environmental problems that reach regional or national concern; American native entitlements to land use; or the number of scientific investigations occurring which require coordination, logistics, and administrative support.
- Serve as a staff specialist recognized as a technical expert with primary responsibility for programs which are regional or national in scope; provide advisory, consulting, and review services to refuge management personnel and private landowners having special use permits; evaluate new developments, especially in a broad specialty area of refuge programs (habitat, wetlands, endangered species, etc.); and, revise methods for applying new developments to refuges.

## FACTOR 2, SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

Note: Technical guidance may be furnished by another higher graded person in the organization as well as by the supervisor.

### *Level 2-3 - 275 Points*

The supervisor specifies the immediate objectives, scope of the project or assignment, and deadlines to be met. The supervisor also identifies limitations, such as budgetary or policy constraints, and assists in unusual situations which do not have clear precedents.

The employee plans and carries out assignments independently in accordance with accepted wildlife refuge management techniques, practices, and previous experience. This includes selecting appropriate techniques, methods, and procedures for accomplishing the assignment. On assignments that may involve controversial matters, such as public use, easements, land use, or habitat modifications, the employee typically discusses issues and possible approaches with the supervisor before carrying out the assignment.

Completed work is reviewed for technical soundness, appropriateness, and accomplishment of specified objectives. Although methods used in completing the assignment are not usually reviewed in detail, controversial findings or recommendations are reviewed for impact on regional and headquarters programs.

### *Level 2-4 - 450 Points*

The supervisor establishes overall goals and resources available. The employee and supervisor, in consultation, develop general objectives, projects, work to be done, and deadlines that accomplish wildlife refuge programs and operations to be executed.

The employee, having acquired expertise in wildlife refuge operations and programs, is responsible for planning and executing assignments, selecting appropriate techniques and methodology, and determining the approach to be taken. The employee is expected to resolve most of the conflicts that arise and to coordinate the work with others as necessary. The employee interprets and applies program policy in terms of established program and/or operating objectives, and keeps the supervisor informed of progress, potentially controversial problems or concerns, or matters having far-reaching implications.

Completed work is reviewed for general adequacy in meeting program or project objectives, expected results, and compatibility with other work.

*Level 2-5 - 650 Points*

The supervisory guidance or control at this level is exercised through broad, general objectives which have been approved for the assigned activities. The employee operates within the context and constraints of national legislation, agency policy, and overall agency objectives as they relate to development, protection, and management of wildlife resources.

Within these broad areas of direction, the employee is responsible for independently determining the validity and soundness of management plans, operating procedures, and programs, and independently carrying out refuge activities that include a number of resource projects.

The results of work, including recommendations and decisions, are considered as technically authoritative and are normally accepted without significant change. When the work is reviewed, it is primarily in relation to broad policy requirements and administrative controls.

**FACTOR 3, GUIDELINES***Level 3-3 - 275 Points*

A range of general guidelines are available, and broad objectives have been established, although the guidelines that are available may have gaps in specificity or may not be completely applicable to the work situation.

The employee uses judgment in interpreting and adapting guidelines for application to specific situations or problems. In cases where guidelines lack specificity, the employee makes generalizations from several guidelines and techniques in carrying out work efforts. The employee determines when problems require additional guidance.

*Level 3-4 - 450 Points*

Guides are usually in the form of general agency policy statements, previous files on the subject, regulations, and laws. Instructions received are very broad.

Guidelines at this level are often inadequate to deal with the more complex or unusual problems, or problems concerned with novel, undeveloped, or controversial aspects of refuge management; e.g., the impact of a contaminant on a given resource, or the condition of a habitat for the increasing population of a species of wildlife.

The employee is expected to use initiative in developing operating procedures and instructions which deviate from traditional methods or when developing new methods. The precedents or guides may point toward conflicting decisions; recent court decisions may appear to require actions at variance with existing guides; relatively few precedents or guides are pertinent to the specific problems; or proven methods of treating the problem under varying conditions are

lacking or incomplete. The employee may have to interpret such precedents in terms of compatibility with the needs of wildlife or wildlife resources management requirements when considering, for example, leases for areas with heavy wildlife populations, or granting special use permits for mineral explorations.

### *Level 3-5 - 650 Points*

Broad guidelines are available and some objectives have been established. In many areas the guidelines are very general and require considerable judgment, originality, and creativity to make them apply in such areas as:

- Interpreting and converting general legislative or agency objectives and policies into specific plans and programs or into activities upon which important programs and refuge management decisions will be based;
- Evaluating problems in judging direction, extent, and significance of trends and developments occurring in wildlife refuge management;
- Adjusting broad programs to the latest advancements in refuge management, and to changing needs, and
- Interpreting and applying other Federal and state statutes, legislation, and regulations for the purpose of satisfying cooperative efforts in the management of public lands.

The employee frequently is recognized as an authority or consultant in a subject matter or wildlife refuge management program area with responsibility for influencing, developing, or interpreting policies, plans, standards, procedures, and instructions that guide other personnel in executing wildlife refuge management programs.

## **FACTOR 4, COMPLEXITY**

NOTE: Size, physical characteristics, or acreage of a refuge might contribute to selecting a level under this factor. However, they are not the sole determinants. The management problems, impact on the complexity of decision making, and the ability to implement programs and to take actions on the part of the employee are to be considered in the selection of a level.

### *Level 4-3 - 150 Points*

The work is characterized by duties involving different and unrelated biological processes and methods. Assignments usually consist of a full range of operational problems involving conventional aspects or features such as: (a) the inventory of a given species of migratory birds and its current conditions; (b) the drafting of conventional, short-range plans, or directions for resource management or protection; and (c) onsite inspection of work in progress for conformance to standards and instructions.



The work involves analyses and evaluations of problem areas and program concerns which may involve considerations such as which of several alternatives to select and when to coordinate problems that may cause interferences or conflicts with other refuge management concerns. At this level, the employee must recognize the interrelationships between species and the differences between their biotic needs or requirements.

The employee is required to maintain and provide suitable habitat for each species in a manner that does not conflict with other resource uses or functions. At this level, the exercise of judgment in applying the most suitable, conventional approach to resolving the management problem is more significant than the exercise of originality.

#### *Level 4-4 - 225 Points*

At this level, employees carry out a wide variety of assignments involving diverse and complex technical or administrative problems and considerations. They regularly encounter interdependent resource and socio-economic considerations requiring flexibility and judgment in approaches to the problems and in the practices applied. Problems requiring decisions include considerations such as: (1) environmental and ecological systems and methods, (2) visitor use patterns, (3) socio-economic impacts, (4) the need to protect the refuge resource from internal and external threats such as land development, (5) the need to allow for the use and enjoyment of the areas, (6) visitor protection, and (7) rehabilitation of newly acquired, overused, or depredated areas.

Solutions to problems often require indepth analysis and evaluation of alternatives which may involve extending or modifying existing guides or techniques to accommodate the specific work situation (e.g., to modify the habitat to accommodate wildlife species not anticipated when the refuge was originally designed); maintaining costs at a minimum while achieving established objectives; or modifying standard practices and specifications to meet requirements for new species and/ or suitable habitat.

In some work situations, the employee must analyze the problem presented, identify its boundaries, and choose one of several approaches from the standpoint of economical, administrative, and biological feasibility when each approach contains advantages and disadvantages. For example, cost considerations may dictate a compromise between an ideal biological approach (land acquisition for increased production of a species) and a more economical, but technically less satisfactory, choice.

Problems associated with coordinating a variety of resource management programs and visitor use patterns require personal decisions, flexibility, and judgment. Additionally, the assignment may require an ability to negotiate controversial refuge management concerns to gain acceptance by other private landowners, conservation groups, and Federal and state agencies of the agency's mission and program objectives.

*Level 4-5 - 325 Points*

At this level, the work is characterized by varied duties requiring many different and unrelated processes and methods in solving wildlife refuge problems. Problems are complex in nature and are accompanied by very technical, administrative, and/or public relations implications that typically require analysis and decisions. For example: (1) precedents may point in opposite directions; (2) there may be no pertinent or apparent precedents, or (3) the problems have become complex or difficult due to the inability in the past to overcome the problems, or (4) there are serious conflicts between scientific requirements and administrative or program direction. The employee is independently responsible for (1) coordination, liaison, and planning activities covering broad resource or subject matter programs, or (2) intensive analysis and problem solving in wildlife refuge programs where the employee is recognized as an authority in refuge programs and operations. Program and operational situations, such as those related to land use disputes, water rights, impact of land development, extraordinarily heavy public visitations, or impact of military activities/operations on the behavior and survival of wildlife species may be precedent setting or highly controversial.

Assignments require the employee to be especially versatile and innovative in order to identify possible new directions or approaches, to devise new or improved techniques or strategies for obtaining effective results, or to anticipate future trends and requirements in wildlife resource use and demands.

At this level, refuge management personnel develop short- and long- range management/operational plans and incorporate findings from research or scientific investigations into projects or operational procedures on a trial basis which requires the use of guides for operating personnel, evaluation/inspection, and review of results obtained to determine the extent of benefits derived.

*Level 4-6 - 450 Points*

At this level, employees make or influence decisions that are arrived at after careful deliberation on complex interrelationships that involve all aspects of refuge management. Some solutions have been found to be theoretically sound, accepted methods, but such resolutions are in a state of change due to legislative changes and concomitant changes in Administration policy.

The employee's primary responsibility is to (1) assess, advise, and report on the technological and economic feasibility of the identified approach, and (2) assure that individual projects or studies undertaken will further the objectives of the Service's wildlife refuge management programs and policies. Decisions must balance environmental and ecological systems, visitor use patterns, and socio-economic impacts. Unprecedented issues occur frequently for which decisions must be made. The problems encountered are usually undefined or in dispute, and require extensive analysis for definition prior to searching for solutions. Problems may be of such scope and complexity that they require supportive projects or subdivisions of the problems that are examined concurrently or sequentially.

The employee's actions may alter standard refuge management concepts, theories, objectives, or criteria throughout the agency.

## **FACTOR 5, SCOPE AND EFFECT**

### *Level 5-3 - 150 Points*

The purpose of the work is to satisfy or resolve conventional problems, questions, or situations. Refuge managers and specialists plan, administer, and oversee the implementation of standardized management and public use programs on a refuge.

The work affects the management, protection, and use of natural resources; the operations of programs and equipment; the adequacy of such activities as field investigations, management operations, and the economic well-being of nearby residents or lessees or permittees operating on the refuge who are directly affected by such plans, decisions, and actions.

### *Level 5-4 - 225 Points*

Refuge managers and specialists at this level develop essentially new or significantly improved techniques or procedures in order to devise solutions to problems. They furnish supervisory, advisory, planning, or review services on specific problems, programs, or functions.

The work affects the initiation and completion of refuge or regionwide programs or projects. The results of the work directly influence the effectiveness and acceptability of agency goals, programs, and/or activities.

### *Level 5-5 - 325 Points*

Refuge personnel at this level are concerned with resolving critical or unusual problems in habitat management or manipulation, determining the validity and soundness of programs and management plans in refuge management, and developing standards and guides for the improvement of refuge resource use, development, protection, and cooperative agreements with other Federal, state, and local agencies. The employee works with a wide range of Federal and state agencies, as well as with industrial, commercial and university personnel.

Results of the work have a significant impact on the establishment and operations of wildlife refuges, on the accomplishment of national goals for wildlife refuge management, development, and use, and on the social and economic well-being of a large number of dependent communities and industries on a regional basis, or throughout the agency.

*Level 5-6 - 450 Points*

The purpose of the work is to plan and execute or monitor major refuge programs or projects for the agency which are usually of national scope and importance. Refuge personnel, at this level, often serve as consultants in program areas to top level managers and administrators, or to a broad national consortium of experts and special interest groups seeking critical evaluation and advice on persistent and complex problems which require long-range solutions.

Refuge personnel are concerned with such broad issues and problems as wildlife species preservation, conservation, and propagation; fire management, wetlands and moist soils management, water and easement rights, or comparable management problems requiring resolutions that may be precedent setting. The employee's determinations and actions may alter standard refuge management concepts, theories, objectives, or previously held program requirements and plans throughout the agency. Employees at this level make decisions that impact social and economic conditions, and that affect broad agency service programs and legislative recommendations and the programs of other natural resource agencies on a long-term or continuing basis.

## **FACTOR 6, PERSONAL CONTACTS AND FACTOR 7, PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

Match the level of regular and recurring personal contacts with the purpose of those contacts and credit the appropriate point value using the chart below.

### *Contacts*

1. Contacts are typically with employees, peers at other refuges, or with members of the public in structured or controlled situations; i.e., usually in the presence of a higher grade biologist or refuge manager.
2. Contacts are generally in variable and unstructured settings with other professional employees outside the refuge setting in which assigned and in different functions, missions, and kinds of work. Contacts with the public and interest groups are conducted in a moderately structured setting. Many contacts are established on a routine basis which may occur outside the refuge with the public or special users. In such cases, the employee's role and authority may not be initially clear.
3. Personal contacts are with professional biologists in the same or related discipline of life sciences, with the head of the agency, or senior program officials who have impact on agency programs. Contacts are conducted in a moderately unstructured setting with members of universities, private foundations, professional societies, community leaders, state officials, members of the various news media and public action groups, and prospective and current permittees. In many cases, the contacts may be on an ad-hoc basis which requires that the role of each party must be established and developed during the course of each contact.

4. Personal contacts are with high-ranking representatives from outside the agency at national or international levels, including such persons as key officials, top level biologists, and other scientific personnel of other agencies; members of Congress, or their staffs; state governors, mayors of large cities; top executives of industry; or nationally recognized spokespersons for nationwide resource conservation groups, newspaper, radio and television corporations, or similar entities.

At this level, contacts occur in highly unstructured settings in which each contact may be conducted under different circumstances and ground rules.

### *Purpose*

- a. Contacts are largely to obtain information concerning assigned activities or to provide factual information (e.g., to provide interpretative services or to promote refuge management objectives such as wildlife and habitat protection); to provide information to acquaint visitors to the physical and wildlife features of the refuge; to acquaint livestock owners with rules governing grazing of refuge lands, and to resolve routine problems.
- b. Contacts are for purposes of inspecting work and monitoring activities of special users; to discuss technical requirements of contracts in order to resolve problems concerning differences as to appropriate or allowable practices, and to coordinate work with other managers, technical resource specialists, engineers, or others who are working toward mutual goals and who have basically cooperative attitudes. Contacts are also for the purpose of planning, coordinating, or advising on the work efforts; and to promote utilization and conservation principles among individuals and groups having common wildlife interests and goals.
- c. Contacts are to influence, motivate, and negotiate controversial issues with various parties in a manner that will obtain agency objectives. At this level, persons contacted may be skeptical or uncooperative. Characteristic of the purpose of contacts at this level are position demands that require the employee to meet and deal persuasively with local landowners on matters pertaining to water control, easements, and other land uses when controversial issues develop, or heated issues occur and pertain to the needs for compliance with Federal regulations, policies, and practices. The employee is required to persuade, influence or negotiate with various organizations or individuals who have conflicting views and interests in the use (non-use) of public lands and various resources so as to reach agreement that is consistent with established policy and regulations. The employee is expected to justify the feasibility and desirability of significant plans and proposals.

Also typical at this level are those contacts that involve the enforcement of laws and regulations. Such contacts are for the purpose of interrogations and apprehension which may result in hostile confrontations since the persons contacted may be fearful or dangerous.

- d. The contacts are generally of a sensitive nature where the refuge personnel must function independently in justifying, defending, negotiating, overcoming resistance, or settling highly significant or controversial refuge management issues and concerns. The work may include

participation at professional conferences, legislative hearings, wildlife and land-use presentations, or similar meetings where the resolution of the issue involves a long-range impact beyond the specific issue or geographic area involved. Contacts with members of Congress, or their staffs, and state and community officials are for the purpose of devising and coordinating policy, and coordinating methods for resolution of controversial matters.

P U R P O S E

|                                      |   |      |     |      |      |
|--------------------------------------|---|------|-----|------|------|
| C<br>O<br>N<br>T<br>A<br>C<br>T<br>S |   | a    | b   | c    | d    |
|                                      | 1 | 30   | 60  | 130* | 230* |
|                                      | 2 | 45   | 75  | 145  | 245  |
|                                      | 3 | 80   | 110 | 180  | 280  |
|                                      | 4 | 130* | 160 | 230  | 330  |

\*These combinations are probably unrealistic.

### FACTOR 8, PHYSICAL DEMANDS

#### *Level 8-1 - 5 Points*

The work is usually performed in an office setting. The employee may infrequently do some walking, bending, or climbing while working outdoors at refuges.

#### *Level 8-2 - 20 Points*

The work requires some physical exertion such as periods of standing, walking over rough, uneven, or mountainous terrain, or carrying of equipment weighing 50 pounds or less in the performance of recurring work on refuge areas. Some refuge areas are characteristic of swamps and marshes which present uneven footing and the need for physical exertion requiring agility in walking.

#### *Level 8-3 - 50 Points*

The work requires considerable and strenuous physical exertion such as lifting heavy objects over 50 pounds; or crouching or crawling over rough, uneven, or rocky terrain. The work may often be performed in an area of hostile violators of refuge programs, or wildlife which may require the employee to be defensive or protective of self and/or others.



## **FACTOR 9, WORK ENVIRONMENT**

### *Level 9-1 - 5 Points*

The work is usually performed in an office setting, although there may be occasional exposure to the risks described at the next higher level when the employee is required to visit refuge areas. The work area is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated.

### *Level 9-2 - 20 Points*

There is regular and recurring exposure to moderate risks and discomforts such as low temperatures, adverse weather conditions, falling limbs or trees, and similar situations. Employees may need to wear protective equipment while working in the refuge area.

### *Level 9-3 - 50 Points*

The work environment involves regular exposure to extreme outdoor weather conditions of all kinds and high risks of exposure to potentially dangerous situations such as working at remote locations under extreme outdoor weather conditions, or firefighting, surveying wildlife, confronting armed hunters, or conducting game enforcement foot patrols over rough terrain. The employee must apply a wide range of safety precautions under uncontrolled conditions.