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**GUIDE FOR THE  
EVALUATION OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
POSITIONS ENGAGED  
IN INTERPRETIVE WORK**



**Workforce Compensation  
and Performance Service**



# Guide for the Evaluation of Professional Positions Engaged in Interpretive Work

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## COVERAGE

This guide is for use in the grade-level evaluation of professional positions in the social, biological or physical sciences when such positions, as the highest level function and for a substantial portion of the time, involve planning and implementing operating interpretive programs in (1) Department of Interior National Parks, concerning historical, archeological and natural history sites and stories, (2) Department of Agriculture National Forests concerning programs and management areas under the concepts of multiple-use, and sustained yield for protection and development of the timber, water, range, recreation and wildlife resources or in (3) other federally-held land areas or properties of public interest.<sup>1</sup>

This guide supersedes the classification standard for the Park Naturalist Series, GS-452-0, which was published in August 1959. It also supersedes those portions of the classification standard for the Archeology Series, GS-193-0 which relate to interpretive work.

## SERIES AND TITLE DETERMINATION

This guide is not intended to affect current practice regarding series classification. Positions classified as to grade by means of this guide will continue to be classified in the most appropriate professional series in accordance with the definitions published in the Commission's "Handbook of Occupational Groups and Series of Classes" and amplifying material in published classification standards.

Positions identified with series for which classification standards have been issued will be titled in accordance with the published titling structure. All other positions will be titled in accordance with the practices described in the Introduction to Position Classification Standards.

## EXCLUSIONS

This guide is not applicable to positions which provide nonprofessional interpretive or guide services to visitors to National forests, National parks or other sites of public interest. Such positions are to be evaluated by reference to the Guide Series, GS-090-0 or to the appropriate technician series.

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Initially we planned to limit distribution of this guide to the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture since they are the two organizations with "interpretive" programs presently in operation. We now understand that other agencies may also establish programs of this type. Accordingly, we are issuing the guide on a government-wide basis in order that it may be available for the use of any agency undertaking an interpretive program of the type described herein.

## OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

The purpose of an "interpretive" program is to make available to the visiting public the fruits of the knowledges and understandings gained through academic study and research in the several disciplines involved, in such a fashion as to (1) be responsive to the visitor's desire for factual information, (2) heighten his understanding and appreciation of the natural phenomena, natural resources or events which are a part of the national heritage, (3) stimulate his imagination and foster a desire for further knowledge, and (4) promote his understanding of his and the Federal Government's role in the scientific management, protection and use of these values and resources. The processes involved in communicating to the visiting public the fundamental values represented by the features of the site, in order that their appreciation and enjoyment of these values may be enhanced, are known as "interpretation".

"Interpretation" has been variously described as a science and as an art. It has been referred to as an informational, educational or an inspirational function. As the term is used in this guide, "interpretation" is something of all of these things, though precisely synonymous with none of them. The foundation of interpretation rests in research. The first and fundamental requirement for the performance of professional interpretive work is possession of a thorough knowledge of, and professional competence in the subject-matter field to be interpreted. This knowledge and competence is employed in (1) identifying the specific areas in which natural sciences, archeological or historical research are required, (2) seeking out, evaluating and utilizing the results of professional research available through both governmental and nongovernmental sources, or (3) carrying out or directing the natural sciences, archeological or historical research required to fill gaps or round out the store of knowledge about the scene, site, natural resource, event, or objects to be interpreted. This information (based on academic study, observation and research) is basic to the identification, boundary definition and development of sites deemed worthy of preservation as important representations of the historic or natural heritage of the nation, and to the selection and "interpretive" development of the "story" or "stories" to be presented to the visiting public. All professional positions engaged in interpretive program management must possess specific subject-matter knowledges of sufficient breadth and depth to identify research needs, make effective arrangements for its accomplishment, and evaluate the sufficiency and adequacy of completed research work. Some interpretive program management positions also include responsibility for directing or carrying out the research required to support their programs. The research aspects of such positions may be evaluated by reference to the classification standards for the appropriate subject-matter area or to the Guide for Evaluation of Positions in Basic and Applied Research.

Professional "interpreters" synthesize the knowledge and understanding gained through academic study, observation and research into "stories" or "themes" to be interpreted. They select or devise means of imparting these knowledges to the visiting public. In this phase of the work they are concerned with more than imparting information through the presentation of facts. They seek to preserve and present the essential and inherent vitality of the story and to capture the interest and imagination of the visitor. By the use of natural phenomena and original objects they devise means to provide the visitor with firsthand experience which will reveal the meanings, interrelationships and fundamental significance of the facts.

The essence of "interpretation" is communication. Interpretive work involves the use of a variety of methods, techniques and media of which the following is a representative, but not all-inclusive list:

1. Interpretive talks to the general public, school, civic and amateur or professional and scientific or historical groups;
2. Audio-visual presentations;
3. Self-guided or conducted tours, walks or hikes including use of road or trail-side exhibits, signs and markers;
4. Libraries for the distribution or loan of interpretive movies, slides or literature;
5. Museums for the display of collections of artifacts or specimens;
6. "Live" exhibits and demonstrations;
7. Guest speaker programs; and
8. Historic reenactments and pageants.

In addition to the specialized knowledges of their particular subject-matter areas, professional "interpreters" must possess a good knowledge of the advantages and limitations of interpretive methods, techniques and media of the type outlined above. This knowledge is essential to the selection of the method, technique or media most appropriate to the subject matter and location of the story to be told and the kinds of audiences to be reached.

Interpretive program management involves two major functions -- program planning and program administration.

## Program planning

Program planning is of two kinds: long-range developmental planning and day-to-day or seasonal planning.

*Long-range or "master" planning.* -- This involves (1) the evaluation of the area to identify the primary and secondary interpretive values, (2) the appraisal of available research to determine what additional research may be required, (3) the development of long-range estimates of facilities requirements, and (4) the development of detailed plans for facilities development or improvement including (a) proposed sequence for the construction or modification of visitors' centers, museums, roads, trails, exhibit features, etc., (b) recommendations as to the nature and functional design features of the facilities required, and © cost and usage estimates, and similar matters.

*Day-to-day or seasonal planning.* -- This involves planning and publicizing seasonal schedules of recurring events such as guided nature walks or hikes, auto tours, talks, film showings, "live" demonstrations such as Indian dances, handcraft demonstrations, or natural resource management

demonstrations and exhibits, or planning and publicizing special events such as historic reenactments, drama festivals, special "days" commemorating specific events such as "Independence" day, or "Yorktown" day. Also included is planning special programs tailored to the particular interests and needs of special groups such as school groups, Boy Scouts, hobby groups (garden clubs or amateur ornithologists), or particular professional or scientific groups.

## Program administration

Program administration involves the implementation of approved program plans through (1) establishing and maintaining continuing cooperative working relationships with State and local civic, school, and other interested groups to acquaint them with the nature of the interpretive program, tailoring special programs to meet their particular needs and interests, securing their support and active participation in joint interpretive programs, etc.; (2) participating in the organization, management and direction of congressionally authorized associations that promote the interpretive program through the publication and sale of books, slides, magazines, pamphlets, and other material appropriate to the program; (3) establishing and maintaining continuing cooperative working relationships with concessionaires in scheduling interpretive programs on concessioner premises, advising on concessioner facilities, and, in some instances, training concessioner personnel in methods and techniques of interpretive work, etc.; (4) determining and justifying both seasonal and continuing staffing needs and selecting, training, assigning and evaluating the quality of the performance of both professional and nonprofessional personnel assigned to the interpretive program; (5) developing budget estimates compatible with approved long-range and seasonal program plans and insuring that the program operates within quarterly budget allowances; (6) developing and presenting material to publicize interpretive programs through press releases, radio and television appearances, speeches for presentation to civic, school and other groups; (7) scheduling, coordinating or managing the production and insuring both the technical sufficiency and public appeal of such devices and media as signs and markers, trail-side exhibits, popular publications, etc.; and (8) reviewing and evaluating the technical accuracy, effectiveness and public appeal of the interpretive program and devising and applying measures for program improvement.

## FACTORS FOR EVALUATING INTERPRETIVE POSITIONS

While the specifics of the subject matter dealt with vary according to the requirements of the program involved, grade levels of interpretive program planning and management positions depend on the same elements, regardless of the subject-matter field involved. In this guide these common elements have been grouped under two major factors: (1) the nature of the assignment and (2) the degree of responsibility of the position. Discussion of these major factors follows.

### *Nature of the assignment*

This factor incorporates those elements of scope and complexity inherent in the subject matter of the assignment which make it more difficult or less difficult to accomplish, as distinguished from the nature or extent of the individual's responsibilities for resolving the problems presented by the assignment, the supervision he receives, the nature of his decisions or recommendations, or any other performance element. This factor includes consideration of the knowledges and skills and the mental demands involved in the resolution of the problems presented by the assignment.

In the grade-level discussions which follow, the characteristics of the program and the complexity of the knowledges required to support it are outlined first. Following this the nature of the assignment is presented under two functional headings: (1) long-range planning and (2) seasonal planning and program administration. This has been done because both functions may not be of equal significance in the grade-level evaluation of individual positions. To illustrate: one interpretive program manager position, responsible for the initial development of a program, may require the resolution of very difficult and complex long-range planning problems but involve relatively minimal seasonal planning or program administration responsibilities. Another such position may involve substantial seasonal planning and program administration responsibilities in a situation in which the long-range planning is minimal or has been completed.

*Long-range planning.* -- The difficulty and complexity of long-range planning is influenced by such considerations as (1) the variety and complexity of the values to be interpreted, i.e., the story or stories to be told; (2) the geographic location, size and physical characteristics of the terrain of the area; (3) the numbers and kinds of visitors expected, e.g., vacationers, school groups, professional and scientific groups, etc.; (4) the current state of development of interpretive facilities at the site or area; and (5) the need to maintain continuing awareness of and take into account the long-term requirements of other programs such as recreation programs, logging or other resource management activities, etc.

*Seasonal planning and administration.* -- The difficulty and complexity of seasonal planning and administration range from the extremely narrow and limited to the broad and complex. In addition to the kinds of considerations outlined above, it is complicated by the need to (1) work within existing staffing, facilities and funds limitations, (2) coordinate and integrate "special" and regular interpretive requirements, and (3) coordinate these plans and program operations with other park or forest activities.

### *Level of responsibility*

This factor includes consideration of the nature and extent of the supervisory control exercised over the work, the nature and extent of the incumbent's responsibility for personal contact work and for making recommendations or decisions, and similar matters. These elements are treated in some detail in the grade-level discussions which follow.

## **NOTES TO USERS OF STANDARD**

1. In addition to the qualifications required by their basic professional or scientific disciplines, individuals assigned to interpretive work typically are required to possess a high degree of skill in the communicative arts and in public relations as well as imagination and "creative" talent of a high order. The manner in which they employ these knowledges, skills and abilities in the development and administration of their assignments has a very significant effect on the quality and public acceptance of the program. However, the overall dimensions of the position, as measured by the range and complexity of the subject matter involved, are, in effect, pre-established by the values represented by the site, and are taken into account in the initial grade-level evaluation of the position. Thus, the influence of individual capability on the dimensions of the assignment will be directly reflected in the scope and complexity of the program to which employees are assigned, and

in the degree to which their recommendations and decisions are accepted as "authoritative". The classification criteria contained herein are designed to measure these considerations.

2. There are a number of variables which may contribute to the difficulty and complexity of program planning and administration in individual situations. Among these are such considerations as (1) the physical size (in acres or square miles) of the area; (2) the total number of visitors to the area during a given period of time; (3) the number of "off-season" visitors; (4) the difficulty in recruiting or retaining seasonal help because of geographic isolation of the area, and similar matters. These variables, in and of themselves, are secondary indicators of program complexity, and when viewed apart from the context of the scope and complexity inherent in the program or values of the site, are usually not of sufficient significance to be grade-level determining. Accordingly, no attempt has been made to describe the range of these variables in the grade-level criteria which follows.
3. At full performance levels many positions covered by this guide include responsibility for the supervision of a subordinate staff. However, in many situations the presence or absence of supervisory responsibility will not, in and of itself, influence the grade level of interpretive program management positions. In those cases where there is continuing responsibility for coordination and direction of the work of a subordinate professional staff the impact of that responsibility on the grade value of the total position should be considered in the evaluation process, even though (because of their lack of uniformity) representative supervisory patterns are not included in the grade-level criteria.
4. This standard does not include grade-level guides for positions above the GS-13 level because of the small number and highly individualized nature of such positions. The absence of such guides does not preclude the evaluation of positions covered by the guide to a higher level by extension of the criteria contained herein and by application of general classification principles.
5. The grade-level guides do not describe criteria for the evaluation of professional positions at the regional office or headquarters levels that operate in a staff capacity in planning or in providing policy direction, guidance and review of interpretive programs, nor do they describe subordinate individual "specialist" positions at operating levels. Criteria covering these types of positions are not included because of the diversified nature of such positions, and their relatively small numbers. However, the criteria provided in this standard can be used as a general classification guide for the "interpretive" aspects of such positions.

### **GS-5 Level**

#### **Nature of the assignment**

Work assignments are specifically designed to provide the incumbent with experience in direct contact with the visiting public and in working with the various methods, techniques and media which are the "tools" of interpretation. Typical assignments include: (1) developing material in his subject-matter field (archeology, history, natural history, forestry, geology, etc.) relating to a specific feature of the site to be interpreted, and preparing drafts of interpretive talks or information leaflets; (2) presenting talks to the general public or school groups, utilizing previously prepared material, but with responsibility for responding to most audience questions; (3) conducting guided tours through historic buildings or

museums, or over nature trails, or roads; (4) collecting designated plant, animal, or geological specimens for study collections or for exhibits, and similar tasks.

Assignments involving direct participation in either long-range or seasonal planning or program administration are not characteristic of this level.

### *Level of responsibility*

This is the basic trainee level. Work assignments are selected to provide orientation and training in the methods and techniques of interpretive work and in agency policies and procedures. The chief of the interpretive program, or a professional employee of higher grade, provides specific and detailed guidance in, and definitive review of, all aspects of the work. Public contact work is usually carried out under supervisory surveillance and the incumbent receives instruction in the techniques of effective public speaking and similar matters.

## **GS-7 Level**

### *Nature of the assignment*

Individual work assignments typically are narrow in scope but include a variety of tasks of which the following are representative: (1) develop outlines for a series of interpretive talks in a particular subject-matter field, (2) write material to be published as popular information pamphlets, as "guides" for use by visitors on "self-guided" tours, or for "publicity" publication in newspapers, magazines, etc., (3) compose or select captions for interpretive signs and markers, (4) develop scripts and select illustrative material for audio-visual, radio, or television presentations, (5) work out proposals for "special" programs for school or hobby groups designed to meet their particular interests and taking into account the facilities and staff required to carry out such programs, (6) participate in seasonal program planning by developing proposed schedules of recurring events including estimates of funds, facilities and staff required to support scheduled activities, (7) participate in program administration by (a) evaluating and making recommendations for improvements in programs and presentations conducted by nonprofessional staff members (tour leaders or concessionaire employees) and (b) evaluating the public appeal and communications effectiveness of museum or other exhibits, making suggestions for improvements where appropriate.

Incumbents of positions at this level must possess a good general understanding of the basic subject-matter field represented by their assignments and must acquire supplemental specific information as needed, either through their own observations and research, or by reference to the recorded observations or research of others. They must exercise both imagination and judgment in the development of the story and the selection of the appropriate techniques for its presentation. In addition, they must possess skill in both expository writing and public speaking.

### *Level of responsibility*

*Supervision and guidance received.* -- This is the advanced trainee level. Work assignments are selected to provide breadth and depth of training in the judgment aspects of interpretive work, and

become progressively more difficult as the employee's knowledge and experience advance. Typically, assignments are accompanied by a full discussion of the purpose and scope of the work and any problems which may be anticipated. GS-7 employees plan the approach and lay out the methods for the accomplishment of the work, but discuss them in detail with their supervisors before proceeding with the assignment. The chief of the interpretive program or other employee of higher grade is available to provide guidance as questions are encountered in the course of the work. He may, depending upon the nature of the assignment, review the judgment aspects of the work through discussions at various stages of completion. Completed work is reviewed in detail for adherence to agency policies and supervisory instructions, completeness, thoroughness of research, soundness of judgment and selectivity in the treatment of the subject matter involved, adequacy and appropriateness of the proposals, evidence of understanding of the requirements, concepts and techniques of interpretation and evidence of ingenuity and creative thinking.

*Personal work relationships.* -- Personal work contacts include contacts with the general public while presenting interpretive programs, and contacts with representatives of special groups in planning and carrying out special programs. Typically, contacts with the general public are subject to periodic observation by the supervisor, but are not closely supervised. Initial contacts with special groups are usually made jointly by the employee and the supervisor in order to insure common understanding of the interests and requirements of such groups, and to afford the GS-7 employee with the opportunity to gain experience through observation.

## GS-9 Level

### *Nature of assignment*

Work assignments at this level typically involve responsibility for the seasonal planning and administration of an interpretive program having the characteristics described below:

*Characteristics of the program.* -- The story of the site or area and the scientific, archeological, or historical knowledge required for its development, is relatively simple and "clear cut". It relates to a single major feature such as (1) small cave, (2) a compact grove of specimen trees, (3) a small group of archeological ruins representing one, or, at most, a few aspects of prehistoric life, (4) an historic house in which a single event of major historic importance occurred, or (5) a Forest Service area representing a limited variety of natural resources and phenomena. Typically, professional subject-matter knowledge required is narrow in scope, but its attainment may present some problems arising from gaps in information or evidence, conflicting information, or questions regarding the reliability of information.

The nature of the site is such that the significant features of the story may be seen by direct observation of physical evidence. The story may be presented in any one of several ways, e.g., guided tours, exhibits, audio-visual presentations, etc. However, the selection from among alternative ways is governed more by availability of funds, facilities and staff than by the subject matter to be interpreted, since any one of the several alternatives can be used with almost equal effectiveness. The interpretive media employed are usually limited to signs and markers, occasional trail-side exhibits and explanatory leaflets or pamphlets for "self-guided" tours. Day-to-day interpretive activities usually consist of informal talks or guided tours through the area. "Special" programs for particular groups typically are confined to school groups and either are not common or, if common, are highly repetitive in nature.

The area or site may be an independent entity such as a National Monument, or may be one of several areas such as a Ranger District, within a larger and more complex National Forest or Park. In either case, the basic long-range planning for the area is essentially complete, or is being carried out in close collaboration with personnel at higher levels. Incumbents of positions at this level make recommendations for the modification or expansion of previously planned or developed facilities in order to accommodate heavier visitor loads, or may recommend the construction of new permanent exhibits, etc., in the interest of long-term program improvements.

*Seasonal program planning and administration.* -- Typically, these functions consist of (1) determining and justifying seasonal staffing needs, taking into account the number and kinds of visitors anticipated, the planned work schedule, tours of duty, hours of work, and the location of work assignments for the nonprofessional or seasonal professional employees engaged in conducting tours or providing other visitor information services; (2) making recommendations regarding the number and kinds of publications required to support the interpretive program, and the sources from which such publications may be obtained; (3) working with cooperating societies in planning and selecting publications and supervising publication sales; and (4) developing budget estimates to support planned programs.

Program administration at this level typically consists of (1) selecting, training, assigning, and evaluating the work of the seasonal staff; (2) conducting required research for and writing or editing proposed publications including the final editing of association-sponsored publications for transmittal to the printers; (3) collaborating with museum, exhibit, or other staff specialists in the design and development or modification of permanent exhibits; (4) continuously evaluating the effectiveness and visitor appeal of interpretive programs and literature and devising means for program improvement; and (5) publicizing the program through newspaper articles, speeches before school, civic and other groups, etc.

In addition to a good general knowledge of the basic subject-matter fields involved, incumbents of positions at this level must possess a substantial knowledge of the somewhat narrow range of specific historical or scientific facts that form the basis for the interpretive program. They are required to exercise imagination, ingenuity and judgment in the selection of those interpretive media and techniques which, within the limitations of available staffing and funds, will most effectively communicate the story to the general public.

*Long-range development planning.* -- Some positions at this level may include responsibility for long-range development planning of the type described at the GS-11 level. However, at this level, such planning is circumscribed by the nature and complexity of the story to be told and the relative completeness and availability of the scientific or historical information required to support such planning.

### *Level of responsibility*

*Supervision and guidance received.* -- Seasonal program planning or program administration assignments of the type described above are accompanied by a definition of the scope and objectives of the particular program, and the agency policy, budgetary, staffing facilities, or other limitations involved, but are not accompanied by detailed preliminary instructions regarding methods or procedures to be employed. GS-9 employees are expected to develop seasonal plans and administer their programs within this framework. However, the chief of the interpretive program, forest supervisor, district forest

ranger or park superintendent, or staff specialists from higher organizational echelons may be called upon for guidance should problems not previously encountered arise in the course of the work.

Long-range development planning assignments, where given, are accompanied by specific preliminary instructions, and are closely reviewed by staff specialists at higher organizational levels for conformance with instructions, completeness, adequacy of supporting research, soundness of conclusions and recommendations, and conformance with overall agency programs, policies and procedures.

Seasonal program plans are reviewed in detail for completeness, adequacy of planning, soundness of judgment, and conformance with agency requirements, as well as for evidence of understanding of, and responsiveness to the interests and needs of the visiting public.

Program administration work is reviewed primarily in terms of the technical accuracy and popular appeal of the presentations, the imagination and ingenuity displayed in publicizing the program and in making maximum use of available facilities and resources. Manuscripts proposed for publication are reviewed for subject-matter content, format, style of presentation, appropriateness of text and illustrative material and similar matters, as well as for conformance with agency policies relating to such publications.

*Personal work relationships.* -- In addition to the work contacts characteristic of the preceding level, incumbents of GS-9 positions typically are responsible for initiating and carrying out such public relations contacts as may be needed to stimulate interest in or publicize the program. These contacts may include addressing school or other groups, or participating in radio or television programs. Such contacts are primarily for the purpose of explaining the interpretive program and the facilities available for the use of the visiting public. They do not typically include authority for the independent negotiation of such matters as joint participation in "special events", or any other arrangements which would involve the expenditure of the financial or staff resources of the interpretive program.

## GS-11 Level

### *Nature of the assignment*

GS-11 work assignments involve responsibility for long-range development planning or for seasonal planning and administration, or both, for an interpretive program having the characteristics described below:

*Characteristics of the program.* -- Typically, the subject-matter knowledges required to support the program presents significant problems in one or more of their aspects. There may be serious gaps or conflicts in the evidence, or opposing theories regarding the archeological, historical or scientific "facts" involved, thus complicating the judgments which must be made in the development and interpretation of the site. The story of the site or area represents a single major subject-matter theme such as (1) a Civil War battlefield, (2) an area of archeological interest representing a single primitive culture during a relatively short time span, or (3) an area including a single major branch of natural history, e.g., botany, zoology or geology. The nature of the site is such that the "story" is not immediately evident to the visiting public. Interpretation is required to demonstrate the significance of the site. This interpretation usually involves a variety of media and techniques including an "orientation" presentation which may consist of a brief talk, film strip or other audio-visual presentation to introduce the visitor to the value of

the area. Guided or self-guided tours (or both), signs, markers, trail-side and other exhibits play an important part in telling the story and must be skillfully developed and strategically located to maintain the continuity of the story and sustain visitor attention and interest. Typically, the complexity of the story is such that it is desirable to provide supplemental information in the form of literature, lectures or film presentations which treat the subject matter in some depth, for those visitors who possess or develop a more than superficial interest.

In addition to the general public the area is occasionally visited by scientists, archeologists, historians or other subject-matter specialists who have a professional interest in the values represented by the site. Requests for special programs for school, Boy Scout, campfire girl or other groups such as Civil War enthusiasts or nature study groups, are common.

As at the preceding level, the area or site may be an independent entity such as a small national park or national forest, or one of several areas within a large park or forest. In either case, the planned long-range development of the area is only partially completed or, if completed, requires some modification to accommodate increased visitor loads, or provide complete visitor facilities and services.

*Seasonal program planning and administration.* -- In addition to the considerations described at the preceding level, seasonal program planning is complicated by the requirement to coordinate regular and special program schedules with facilities construction, restoration, ruins stabilization, or other scheduled developmental work, and by the necessity to modify seasonal plans to accommodate other activities such as logging operations. Seasonal program planning may include one or more annually recurring "special" events such as special tours or other programs at the height of the "fall color" or wildflower season.

Program administration is complicated by the necessity to adjust planned schedules to accommodate the requirements of special groups. This involves conducting or directing any special research which may be required to serve as the basis for the development of special programs, adjusting work schedules and assignments to meet special staffing requirements, and modifying over-all program plans to accommodate special requirements within the limitations of available staff, facilities and funds.

Administration of the publications program typically includes writing or editing popular and more definitive specialized literature relating to the particular features of the site. In addition to writing or editing such publications, GS-11 chiefs of interpretive programs evaluate both popular and specialized literature for continued factual accuracy in light of current research findings, and make or direct revisions where required. They also work with cooperating societies in planning and selecting publications and in the supervision of publication sales.

Consultation and close collaboration with museum, exhibit, or other staff specialists in the development or modification of major permanent interpretive devices such as dioramas, museum exhibits, or motion pictures is typical of this level.

Seasonal program planning and administrative responsibilities require GS-11 employees to possess a thorough knowledge of the basic subject-matter field involved and an intensive current knowledge of the specific historical or scientific facts that form the basis of the interpretive program. In addition, they must possess a good understanding of the typical interests and motivations of the average visitor and the particular interests of "special" groups or visiting subject-matter specialists. They are required to

exercise ingenuity, imagination, selective judgment and substantial communications skills in developing or modifying interpretive programs to meet special needs and in the continual reevaluation and improvement of interpretive presentations.

*Long-range development planning.* -- In some positions at this level long-range development planning emerges as a significant responsibility. Typically, the boundaries of the site are well-defined and the features of significance to the interpretation of the site are included within established boundaries, are clearly identifiable, and are relatively accessible. Development planning problems center around determining the nature and extent of facilities required to accommodate anticipated visitor loads, the size, location and major features of such facilities as visitor centers, roads, walks, trails, parking areas, and special permanent exhibits. Such development planning may include the detailed research and planning for the restoration or reconstruction of all or a portion of the central feature of the site, such as an historic house or a pre-historic ruin, and requires a thorough knowledge of the interpretive values of the site based on personally conducted research or detailed study of the research conducted by others.

### *Level of responsibility*

*Supervision and guidance received.* -- Within the framework of agency policies and procedures and such budgetary, staffing or other limitations as may be pre-established, incumbents of seasonal program planning and administrative positions carry out their assigned functions independently. They are responsible for developing working plans and schedules to accommodate both continuing and special program requirements, and for the day-to-day administration of the interpretive program. Typically, only those decisions which involve questions of agency policy are discussed with the supervisor or staff specialists at higher organizational levels prior to implementation. The effectiveness with which seasonal or special programs are planned and carried out is subject to periodic observation and evaluation by the supervisor and by staff specialists from higher organizational echelons. In those situations where the area is one of several in a large forest or park, seasonal program requirements and plans are reviewed by the chief of the interpretive program for purposes of coordination with other park or forest programs such as recreation or other resource management programs, and for integration into the over-all interpretive program.

Incumbents of positions at this level must become fully familiar with the technical details of the historic, archaeological, or natural phenomena or resources which comprise the interpretive values of their assigned area. Their decisions regarding the factual accuracy of the subject matter included in the interpretive programs are accepted without technical review. Typically, manuscripts proposed for publication by the Government Printing Office are reviewed by staff specialists at higher organizational echelons for conformity with agency publication requirements and similar matters, rather than for technical accuracy of subject-matter content. Manuscripts to be published by cooperating associations may receive no further review prior to printing.

Long-range site development plans proposed by incumbents of positions at this level are reviewed by staff specialists at higher organizational levels for completeness, adequacy of supporting research, soundness of conclusions and recommendations, and conformance with overall agency programs, policies, and procedures.

*Personal work relationships.* -- The personal contact work of employees at this level is important to the public acceptance and effectiveness of the interpretive program. These contacts typically include, but are not limited to the following: (1) contacts with local school or civic officials or other groups to stimulate public interest, cooperation and participation in the development of interpretive programs and facilities, and to plan "cooperative" educational or other programs, (2) contacts with professional subject-matter specialists in their own or related disciplines for purposes of consultation regarding research projects relating to the interpretive values of the area, (3) consultations with museum or exhibit specialists, architects, landscape architects, engineers and others engaged in planning or construction facilities, or in the restoration or reconstruction of historic or archeological sites. These consultations are for the purpose of insuring the adequacy of facility planning and construction to meet long-term program and public needs, and to insure the technical accuracy of details and the suitability and public appeal of exhibits, and similar matters.

## GS-12 Level

### *Nature of the assignment*

GS-12 work assignments involve responsibility for long-range development planning or for seasonal planning and administration, or both, for an interpretive program having the characteristics described below:

*Characteristics of the program.* -- In addition to the complicating features described at preceding levels, the subject-matter knowledges and understanding required to support the development of interpretive programs of this magnitude typically involve the synthesis of apparently unrelated evidence from more than one subject-matter field into an integrated, objective and complete picture of the relative values and importance of the site. The primary story of the area represents one complex major theme, i.e., a site of major significance in the military, political, or economic history of the nation, or major pre-historic or natural values. There is at least one secondary story (usually in an unrelated field) of sufficient importance and public interest to require substantial interpretive treatment. The following are illustrative: (1) a scenic forest or park which serves to illustrate several branches of natural history, i.e., includes important ecological, botanical, zoological, and/or geologic story or features; (2) an archeologic site that includes important historical or natural values; (3) an historic site which centers around two or more major historical themes and represents more than one time period, i.e., the area may have been the scene of important military engagements in both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars; or (4) a large National Forest with an extensive interpretive program covering several Ranger Districts which serve to illustrate several branches of the natural sciences such as forestry, geology, zoology, etc. The "stories" represented by the site are of such complexity as to require considerable interpretation through the use of a wide range of media. Typically, the site is of sufficient scientific, historic, or archeologic importance to attract a number of professional specialists in the subject-matter fields involved, as well as a number of highly informed and intensely interested hobbyists, in addition to a substantial number of individual tourists, tour groups, school groups, etc.

*Seasonal program planning and administration.* -- Seasonal program planning is complicated by the necessity to provide both special and recurring programs to meet a wide range of visitor backgrounds and to provide a sufficient variety of interpretive activities to stimulate and sustain visitor interest over a fairly long period of time. Supplemental information in the form of literature, lectures, film strips, "live" demonstrations, campfire programs, etc., which treat the varied subject-matter values of the area in some

depth, is essential to the interpretive program. Seasonal program planning typically includes one or more annually recurring "special" events of substantial public interest, which requires the planning of special programs, pageants, dramatic presentations, etc. Such programs typically are not repeated but are varied from year to year. Problems arise in the selection of the most appropriate interpretive media because of the need to reconcile the demands presented by the broad and varied subject matter to be interpreted with the limitations imposed by the availability of facilities, staff or funds.

In addition to the considerations described at the preceding level, program administration is complicated by sharp fluctuations in the visitor load. This results in periods of severe over-use of available facilities and requires rapid adjustments in established plans to provide attractive alternative interpretive programs on short notice. This is to achieve some distribution of visitors into groups of manageable size for the ultimate protection of those historic, archaeological or natural values of the site which may be placed in jeopardy through severe over-use.

The administration of the publications program is complicated by the requirement to provide a wider variety (both in range of subject matter and in depth of treatment) of interpretive literature. Employees at this level author, or critically review popular articles, pamphlets and tour guide literature, and more scholarly publications relating to the values of the site. They analyze publications needs and devise means of meeting them through the evaluation of available literature relating to their subject-matter fields. They authorize the inclusion of selected non-Government publications in the publications offered for sale through cooperating societies. They may also be called upon to provide critical review of privately authored popular or scholarly works prior to publication, or to provide extensive authoritative information regarding the technical details of the subject matter represented by the area to authors, scholars, or students.

As at the preceding level, consultation with museum, exhibit or other staff specialists in the development or modification of major permanent interpretive devices is typical of this level. However, it assumes additional importance because of the increased complexity of the communications problems arising from the greater variety and complexity of the subject matters to be communicated and the varied backgrounds of the audiences to be reached.

Employees responsible for the seasonal planning and administration of an interpretive program of the complexity described above must possess a comprehensive and current knowledge of the subject matter represented by the primary values of the site and, in addition, a good understanding of the subject matter represented by the secondary values. They are required to exercise ingenuity, imagination, selective judgment and communications skills of a high order in devising means and selecting media for the presentation of a story which represents complex politico-military, cultural or scientific considerations, in such a fashion as to present the significant, and frequently abstract, interrelationships simply, but without loss of continuity or factual accuracy. This is further complicated by the need to preserve and present the essential and inherent "vitality" of the story to capture the imagination and maintain the interest of the visitor.

*Long-range development planning.* -- In addition to the considerations discussed at the preceding level, long-range development planning at this level involves devising proposed solutions to such problems as (1) geographic dispersion of sites of particular interpretive value and interest, (2) providing access to and connecting roadways, trails, etc., between such sites, (3) devising means of providing protection of the fragile values of the site from such natural or man-made hazards as erosion, fire, vandalism, or

damage or destruction through visitor over-use. Other elements complicating long-range development planning may arise from the need to acquire private lands adjoining or within the boundaries of the area, thus requiring the formulation of "interim" facilities development plans (compatible with the proposed long-range master plan) pending completion of the land acquisition program.

Typically, the basic subject-matter research required for the evaluation and subsequent long-term development of the values of the area has not been completed. GS-12 employees must exercise professional subject-matter competence of a high order in evaluating research needs, establishing priorities for the accomplishment of the research, and either personally carrying out the studies or critically evaluating the results of research conducted by subordinate subject-matter specialists or others. They are required to exercise a thorough knowledge of the long-range objectives and needs of the interpretive program and their relationships to other forest or park activities, as well as an intensive knowledge of their subject-matter field, in evaluating the results of research and integrating research findings into positive recommendations regarding the restoration, reconstruction, and protection of the values of the site and the nature and physical location of interpretive or visitor service facilities.

### *Level of responsibility*

*Supervision and guidance received.* -- The nature of the responsibility of GS-12 employees for the seasonal planning and administration of their assigned interpretive program is essentially the same as that described at the preceding level. The level of their responsibility, however, is enhanced by the greater range and diversity of the program for which they are responsible, the broader scope and greater complexity of the subject matter involved, and the greater breadth and depth of knowledge which they must employ in resolving the problems presented by their assignments.

Seasonal program planning and administrative assignments are carried out with a maximum degree of independence. Typically, the long-range site development plans proposed by employees at this level are accepted as being sound in light of the available scientific, archeological, or historical evidence developed through research. These plans are reviewed by staff specialists at higher organizational echelons primarily for conformance with overall agency programs, policies and procedures, and for feasibility in relation to available resources when viewed in the context of regional or nationwide program considerations.

*Personal work relationships.* -- The personal contact work of employees at this level is broad and varied and of substantial importance to the public acceptance and effectiveness of the interpretive program. In addition to contacts of the type described at preceding levels, employees at this level may serve as spokesmen for their program in contacts with influential community leaders, State officials, private landholders and others in meetings regarding such matters of mutual interest as land acquisition or road construction needed to foster area development, etc. They are expected to secure community acceptance and support of the agency's policies, programs and objectives.

## **GS-13 Level**

### *Nature of the assignment*

GS-13 level assignments are characterized by responsibility for planning and administering an interpretive program for an area in which the story or stories to be told is very complex.

*Characteristics of the program.* -- Typically, interpretive programs of this level require substantial definitive knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the subject-matter fields represented by the values of the area. The achievement of this knowledge and understanding is complicated by such problems as major gaps in evidence, disagreement among subject-matter specialists regarding the reliability, interpretation, or relative values of evidence and similar matters which must be resolved in the development of the interpretive program. The values of the area may consist of (1) a variety of unusual and important botanical, geological, or zoological features each of which is in itself diversified, i.e., the geologic story of the area includes canyons, caves, fossils and ancient rock structures, etc., and the ecological, zoological or botanical stories are similarly diversified, (2) an area containing sites of outstanding historical importance representing a series of events in the military, political, economic, or industrial evolution of the national heritage, or (3) an archeological site of major interest containing a number of unique diversified and important prehistoric ruins representing a major segment of the pre-history of the nation.

Typically, the physical features to be interpreted represent irreplaceable values. Their protection and preservation play an important part in all aspects of interpretive program planning and administration. The diversity and complexity of the stories is such as to require the use of a broad range of interpretive media, some of which (museums, extensive dioramas, original paintings for trail side displays) represent major monetary investments. The development of the interpretive program is complicated by gaps in the available knowledge regarding some aspect of the story, thus requiring substantial additional research before development and interpretation of some features of the site can be undertaken. The values of the area are of such importance as to be of major interest to professional specialists in the subject-matter fields involved as well as to the general public. Scientists, archeologists, or historians request permission to make use of the resources of the area, and to conduct documentary or other studies at the site. GS-13 level employees evaluate such requests and develop the details of cooperative agreements with individual scientists, archeologists, historians, etc., or with universities, to foster research projects of mutual interest.

*Seasonal program planning and administration.* -- The diversity and complexity of the story to be told make the development and presentation of a broad and varied interpretive program mandatory. In this situation seasonal program planning involves providing a variety of interpretive programs (employing a wide range of media) which treat the subject matters of the area both thematically and topically. In addition to one or more annually recurring "special" events, seasonal program planning usually includes a series of "lesser" special features such as guest speakers, special exhibits, film presentations, etc., for the purpose of stimulating and sustaining visitor interest.

In addition to the considerations outlined at preceding levels, program administration at this level is complicated by the requirement to make last-minute adjustments in complicated schedules to accommodate special and unexpected demands arising from other park or forest programs or unforeseen developments in scheduled construction, restoration or preservation work being carried out in the area.

*Long-range development planning.* -- Long-range development planning is complicated either by a dearth of information regarding some important features of the site, thus requiring extensive further research, or by conflicting evaluations of the scientific, historic, or archaeological evidence developed through research.

In addition to a comprehensive knowledge of the concepts and methodology of interpretation, GS-13 employees are required to possess a broad knowledge of their subject-matter fields and an authoritative knowledge of these fields as they relate to the values of the area. They are required to exercise critical judgment, ingenuity, and creativity of a high order in the evaluation and synthesis of research findings and the integration of these findings into existing or planned interpretive programs.

### *Level of responsibility*

*Supervision and guidance received.* -- The nature and extent of responsibility for both seasonal planning and administration and long-range development planning is essentially the same as that described at the GS-12 level. Recommendations regarding matters of acquisition, preservation, restoration or reconstruction of the physical values of the site, and regarding site development and facilities construction programs, are given substantial weight by subject-matter specialists at higher organizational echelons in planning and making recommendations concerning regional or nationwide programs.

*Personal work relationships.* -- At this level personal contact work is of vital importance to the development and effectiveness of the interpretive program and assumes particular importance because of the recognized standing of the GS-13 employee as a specialist in his subject-matter field. GS-13 employees establish and maintain continuing consultative relationships with their professional fellows, both within and outside Government, for the purpose of exchanging information of mutual interest. They develop and foster mutually advantageous working relationships with colleges and universities having an academic or research interest in the subject-matter values represented by their areas, to encourage and facilitate university-sponsored research in subject-matter areas needed in the development of the interpretive program. They are responsible for negotiating cooperative research agreements and for recommending approval of such agreements by their administrative superiors. Similarly, they collaborate with their counterparts in interpretive programs being carried out under State or private auspices for the purpose of exchanging information regarding new developments and techniques in the interpretive field and cooperating in interpretive programs of mutual interest.

GS-13 employees serve as spokesmen for the policies, programs, and objectives of their agencies in contacts with State and local officials regarding matters of interest to, or potentially affecting the interpretive program. Meetings with State and local officials regarding planned housing, commercial, or industrial construction programs on lands contiguous to park or forest lands, or highway construction and maintenance matters are illustrative of such relationships.

Employees at this level also represent their agency in dealings with private organizations and associations having an interest in interpretive program activities. These contacts involve discussions of the needs and objectives of the program and are intended to elicit understanding, acceptance, and active support for the work. Such support may take the form of privately-sponsored program publicity, or movements to secure authentic furnishings for historic houses, etc., or to raise funds or other support for needed area developments.