POSITION DESCRIPTION *(Please Read Instructions on the Back)*

1. Agency Position No. 3000121

2. Reason for Submission
[ ] Redescription [ ] New
[ ] Reestablishment [X] Other
Explanation *(Show any positions replaced)*

Standard PD

This PD is approved for Service-wide use.

T. Cary Welch

3. Service
[ ] Hdqtrs. [X] Field

4. Employing Office Location

5. Duty Station

6. OPM Certification No.

7. Fair Labor Standards Act
[ ] Exempt [X] Nonexempt

8. Financial Statements Required
[ ] Executive Personnel [ ] Employment and Financial Interests
Financial Disclosure

9. Subject to IA Action
[X] Yes [ ] No

10. Position Status
[X] Competitive
[ ] Excepted (Specify in Remarks)
[ ] SES (Gen.) [ ] SES (CR)

11. Position is
[ ] Supervisor/Mgr (2 - GSSG)
[ ] Supervisor(4 - Title V)
[ ] Mgmt Official (5 – Title 5)
[ ] Leader (6)
[ ]Team leader (7)
[X] Other (8)

12. Sensitivity
[ ] 1-Non-Sensitive
[ ] 2-Non-critical Sensitive
[ ] 3-Critical Sensitive
[ ] 4. Special Sensitive [ ]
5. Moderate Risk
[ ] 6. High Risk

13. Competitive Level Code

14. Agency Use

15. Classified/Graded by	Official Title of Position	Pay Plan	Occupational Code	Grade	Initials	Date
a. U.S. Office of Personnel Management	Full Performance Level GS-____					
b. Department, Agency or Establishment						
c. Second Level Review						
d. First Level Review	Park Ranger	GS	0025	4		
e. Recommended by Supervisor or Initiating Office						

16. Organizational Title of Position
Visitor Services Technician

17. Name of Employee *(if vacant, specify)*

18. Department, Agency or Establishment
Department of the Interior

a. First Subdivision
U.S Fish and Wildlife Service

b. Second Subdivision
Region ___

c. Third Subdivision

d. Fourth Subdivision

e. Fifth Subdivision

19. Employee Review--This is an accurate description of the major duties and responsibilities of my position

Signature of Employee *(optional)*

20. **Supervisory Certification.** I certify that this is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of this position and its organizational relationships, and that the position is necessary to carry out Government functions for which I am responsible. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information is to be used for statutory purposes relating to appointment and payment of public funds, and that false or misleading statements may constitute violations of such statutes or their implementing regulations.

a. Typed Name and Title of Immediate Supervisor

Signature | Date

b. Typed Name and Title of Higher-Level Supervisor or Manager *(optional)*

Signature | Date

21. **Classification/Job Grading Certification.** I certify that this position has been classified/graded as required by Title 5, U.S. Code, in conformance with standards published by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management or, if no published standards apply directly, consistently with the most applicable published standards.

Type Name and Title of Official Taking Action

Signature | Date

22. Position Classification Standards Used in Classifying/Grading Position
PCS for GS-0025

Information for Employees. The standards, and information on their application, are available in the personnel office. The classification of the position may be reviewed and corrected by the agency or the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Information on classification/job grading appeals, and complaints on exemption from FLSA, is available from the personnel office or the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

23. Position Review	Initials	Date	Initials	Date	Initials	Date	Initials	Date	Initials	Date
a.. Employee *(optional)*										
b. Supervisor										
c. Classifier										

24. [ ] (If checked.) This is a developmental position. The incumbent will perform the duties at the level described while receiving on-the-job and other appropriate training as identified in an Individual Development Plan to prepare him/her for promotion to the next higher grade level. The employee may be promoted when the supervisor has determined that he/she has completed the necessary training, demonstrated the ability to perform at the higher grade level, and has met time-in-grade, length-of-experience, and all other requirements for promotion. The full-performance level of this position is GS-____ as described in position number _____.

25. Description of Major Duties and Responsibilities *(See Attached)*

Park Ranger, GS-0025-04
(Visitor Services Technician)

Introduction

The incumbent serves as a Visitor Services Technician at a National Wildlife Refuge, Refuge Complex, or Wetland Management District, assisting with the operations of the station's visitor services program. (Although the term "refuge" is used throughout the PD, it encompasses all three types of resource lands.) Work is directed towards providing the public with safe, accessible, and quality wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities (e.g., hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, environmental education and interpretation) as described in the Refuge Improvement Act of 1997. Duties are associated with one or more of the visitor services specialty areas.

Major Duties

The employee spends at least 25 percent of the time performing one or a combination of the following duties:

- Assists with environmental education program as activity or small group leader. Maintains equipment and supplies.
- Assists with overseeing the work of volunteers in a visitor center or on small work projects. Assists in planning volunteer recognition awards and events.
- Conducts a radio dispatch operation. Provides communications service for operational activities in areas such as emergency assistance, law enforcement, and firefighting support. Receives routine and emergency telephone and radio calls placed to refuge headquarters and maintains communications records including radio logs.
- Practices preventive enforcement of laws and regulations on the refuge. Explains regulations to visitors and provides information and advice on approved activities and on the refuge's cultural, historical, and/or natural resources history and location. Contacts law enforcement personnel when the circumstances require formal enforcement of laws.
- Develops and conducts interpretive talks and guided tour programs, presenting facts that are usually limited in variety or change little over time such as facts about the life cycle of salmon or the annual migration cycle of migratory birds. Answers questions that are usually recurring and require knowledge of a limited variety of facts, events, circumstances, personalities, and natural characteristics identified with the site.
- Operates and performs minor maintenance on audiovisual equipment.
- Protects refuge natural and cultural resources by observing conditions and reminding visitors to stay out of closed or restricted areas. Reports situations which may harm resources.
- Follows practices appropriate to personal, visitor, and staff safety. Identifies and reports potential safety hazards to appropriate staff.
- Administers basic first aid when necessary.

In addition, the employee may also perform the following duties, which are not grade controlling:

- At a visitor center information desk, answers visitors' questions that are usually routine and repetitive and relate largely to factual situations, such as geographical location of facilities, trails, tour routes, boat ramps, and other recreational areas. Obtains and posts various information to records, such as number of visitors, survey information on length of visitor stay, size of visiting parties, and patterns of visitor use. Maintains supply of informative materials and other stock items; sells books and other items. Operates audio visual equipment for videos and other multi-media programs.
- At an entrance station, answers visitors' questions and explains regulations covering common refuge use situations, such as refuge rules and regulations. Collects fees, sells permits, and safeguards and balances collected funds. Maintains records on accountable permits and stock items; and controls vehicular traffic.
- Presents limited interpretive talks and conducts tours of limited complexity that do not require extensive background knowledge.
- Assists with outreach activities such as working with "friends" groups or other partners.
- May operate passenger vehicles and light trucks, off-road vehicles such as all-terrain vehicles and snow machines, and small watercraft.

Developmental positions (as indicated in block 24 of the OF-8) will include work assignments that are designed to develop knowledge of an organization's functions and operating policies/procedures, skill in the effective use and protection of resources, and knowledge of specific programs and operations.

Factors

1. Knowledge Required by the Position

- The Visitor Services Technician uses some specialized skill and judgment in applying knowledge, gained through training or experience, of the methods and techniques used in functional areas such as interpretation. The employee must also have some subject matter knowledges such as natural or cultural history, fish or wildlife habitat characteristics, techniques of resource protection and use, or recreational use of Federal lands.
- Familiarity with the mission and responsibilities of the Service, region, and refuge.
- Communication skills that enable the employee to meet and deal effectively with persons of different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds in varied work situations.
- May require skill in the operation of small boats or canoes; snow machines; or all-terrain vehicles.
- May require ability to operate passenger vehicles and light trucks, off-road vehicles such as all-terrain vehicles and snow machines, and small watercraft and to maintain appropriate certifications or licenses.
- Skill in operating and maintaining audio visual equipment.

- Knowledge of basic first aid and CPR.

2. Supervisory Controls

The incumbent is supervised by the Visitor Services Manager or designee. Assignments that involve conditions, concepts, and standard methods familiar to the incumbent are made in general terms without explicit instructions on the techniques to be used or the sequencing of operations to be followed. For special assignments or unfamiliar or unusual assignments that may involve nonroutine technical or personal contact problems, the supervisor gives explicit instructions, or the incumbent is given on-the-job training prior to assuming responsibility for carrying out the assignments. The employee consults with the supervisor or higher graded employee on unexpected technical or personal contact problems when this is possible. In some situations, action may have to be taken without such discussion. The work may be spot checked in progress. Completed assignments are reviewed for adherence to special or standing instructions and the use of proper techniques. Nonroutine or new assignments are reviewed in detail.

3. Guidelines

Procedures for doing the work have been established and a number of specific guidelines are available in the form of Fish and Wildlife Service policy, Federal regulations, the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual, the refuge's Comprehensive Conservation Plan, applicable step-down management plans, and refuge policies and procedures. Objectives and guidelines for day-to-day activities are contained in established operating instructions or are provided by the supervisor. Guidelines are usually applicable to the work, but the number and similarity of the guidelines require some judgment in selecting and applying them. Instances where guidelines are not available or where conflicts exist are referred to the supervisor for resolution.

4. Complexity

The employee is required to use some specialized skill and judgment in applying knowledge, gained through training or experience, of the methods and techniques used in functional areas such as interpretation. The employee must also have some subject matter knowledges such as natural or cultural history, fish or wildlife habitat characteristics, techniques of resource protection and use, and rules for recreational use of Federal lands. The employee applies some or all of these knowledges in well defined work situations; in addition, the employee communicates effectively with visitors and obtains their cooperation, identifies and reports problems or apparent violations of regulations concerning the use of protected or public land areas, and carries out overall agency policies and procedures on the refuge.

5. Scope and Effect

The purpose of the work is to provide quality wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities to enhance the public's understanding and appreciation of natural resource conservation and management. The incumbent assists with the development of wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities that minimize impacts to the refuge's natural resources while promoting the mission of the Service and of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

6. Personal Contacts

Contacts are with refuge visitors, the public off the refuge, co-workers, volunteers, support groups, members of conservation organizations, and other audiences.

7. Purpose of Contacts

Contacts are for welcoming and orienting visitors, interpreting refuge resources, explaining Service and refuge policies and regulations, coordinating work efforts, and assisting with partnerships.

8. Physical Demands

The work involves on-site visits requiring some physical exertion such as walking over wet, rough, uneven or rocky terrain; bending, crouching, stooping, stretching, reaching, lifting, or similar activities. The work requires average agility and dexterity. The employee must have the ability to work occasionally under pressure and tight deadlines.

9. Work Environment

The job requires both office/visitor center and outdoor work. Offices and visitor centers are adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated. Temperature and weather extremes may be encountered in the performance of the outdoor work. The work may require wearing protective clothing and some employees may be required to carry a firearm for protection from hostile wildlife.

Position Classification Evaluation Statement

References: GS-0025 Park Ranger Series, GS-025, November 1985
Series Definition for GS-0099

Classification Park Ranger, GS-0025-3
Park Ranger, GS-0025-4
Park Ranger, GS-0025-5
Park Ranger, GS-0025-7
Student Trainee (Park Ranger), GS-0099-3
Student Trainee (Park Ranger), GS-0099-4
Student Trainee (Park Ranger), GS-0099-5

Introduction and Background: This evaluation covers standardized "Visitor Services Technician," Visitor Services Specialist," and "Visitor Services Intern" positions at grades GS-3 through GS-7. These position descriptions were prepared to describe a standardized set of duties, typical of employees who serve at the operating level in a visitor services program on a national wildlife refuge, refuge complex, or wetland management district. (When the term "refuge" is used in this evaluation statement, it encompasses all three types of resource lands.) It is expected that only in rare circumstances would an employee performing this work not be covered by one of these PDs. Position descriptions covered by this evaluation were developed to recognize an expansion in refuge recreational programs and to implement a portion of the National Wildlife Refuge System report "Fulfilling the Promise."

The work covered by these PDs implements laws mandating a greater emphasis on the recreational use of refuge lands (primarily in the Refuge Improvement Act of 1997). The employee provides a quality visitor experience through six types of priority refuge recreation activities – hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, environmental education, and interpretation. The work includes both on-refuge activities and outreach activities performed on- and off-refuge. To conduct this work the incumbent works closely with other refuge programs and cooperating individuals and organizations outside of the Service.

Other standardized PDs have been developed to complement these PDs and cover other work in the visitor services program. They include Visitor Services Manager positions at several grade levels for employees who are responsible for a station's visitor services program and professional educator positions who conduct a station's environmental education program.

One of management's goals in preparing a family of student trainee, technician, specialist, and manager positions was to identify refuge level visitor services work from entry- through journey- and management-level in order to describe all levels of work typically performed on a refuge, to allow a clearer career path for improved career opportunities for employees in the visitor services field, and to provide a bridge between positions at the refuge level to higher graded positions at the regional and national levels. The family of position descriptions was developed after an extensive study by HR and visitor services staff and included a review of the work done by the refuge visitor services function, the authorities delegated to a refuge visitor services program, and the role of the regional and national Visitor Services and Communications staffs.

Under Service policy, positions performing law enforcement work on other than a full-time basis are considered as "dual-function" law enforcement positions and must include law enforcement duties performed between 25 to 50 percent of the time. The positions that are the subject of this evaluation are not intended for employees possessing a law enforcement commission. However, at the discretion of the supervisor and regional classification staff, they may be used in conjunction with a position classification amendment to incorporate law enforcement duties. If used this way, a unique position number should be assigned.

Series Determination The GS-0025 series includes positions the duties of which are to supervise, manage, and/or perform work in the conservation and use of Federal park resources. (For the purpose of this classification standard the term "park" is not restricted to national parks, but also includes other resource lands managed by the Department of the Interior, such as wildlife refuges.) Functions typical of the series include the development and operation of interpretive and recreational programs and the duties include dissemination of general, historical, and scientific information to visitors.

The work of the positions is consistent with the GS-0025 series as the employee is responsible for the development and operation of refuge recreational and interpretive programs.

The GS-0023 Outdoor Recreation Planning Series has traditionally been used for some Service refuge visitor services positions. On the surface, this series seems to be appropriates for some positions performing visitor services functions on a refuge as it applies to positions whose primary concerns are planning, advising on, and coordinating the use of land, water, and related resources to provide opportunities for the creative use of leisure time outdoors. However, exclusion 5 in the GS-0025 classification standard states that work covered by the GS-0023 series is typically concerned with broad area, regional, state, or national plans and programs, and that positions in the GS-0023 series are typically not concerned with day-to-day work in parks or similar areas, or with the direction of park operations, or with the provision of immediate staff assistance to those who are dealing with operational problems. A major component of these positions involves day-to-day visitor services operations on a single refuge or refuge complex. For this reason, exclusion 5 applies and the position is not assigned to the GS-0023 series.

For positions classified to the GS-0025 series, the work performed, purpose of the organization, potential career paths, and desires of management are all consistent with the GS-025 series and the positions are classified to this series.

Also included are positions to be used for appointments under the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). The Office of Personnel Management advises that these positions involving periods of pertinent formal education as well as periods of employment are classified to the XX99 series for the appropriate occupational group. For SCEP positions related to the GS-0025 series the appropriate series is GS-0099.

Title Determination: OPM advises that the basic title for positions in the GS-0025 series is "Park Ranger," which is assigned to all subject positions in the GS-0025 series. OPM advises that the title for positions in the GS-0099, General Student Trainee Series, is "Student Trainee" followed by a parenthetical title consistent with the occupational field involved. Subject positions in the GS-0099 series are titled "Student Trainee (Park Ranger)." The refuges program has requested the assignment of organizational titles to lessen confusion between Service employees performing visitor services functions and rangers in the National Park Service. "Visitor Services Technician" (GS-0025-3 and 4), "Visitor Services Specialist" (GS-0025-5 and above), and "Visitor Services Intern" (GS-0099) were selected for organizational titles as they communicate the intent for establishing the positions and the scopes of their authority. As these titles do not conflict with OPM's titling instructions for other series, they are assigned as the organizational titles.

Grade Determination:

In order for a grade to be supportable at a given level, grade controlling duties and responsibilities must be regular and recurring and comprise a significant and substantial part of the overall positions (i.e., occupy at least 25 percent of the employee's time). As is typical for many positions, work covered by this set of position descriptions involves mixed-grade work.

Most of the position descriptions covered by this evaluation include two sets of duties for each grade. The first set is at the grade level of the position and most of these duties were adapted from and closely match benchmark example duties from the GS-0025 classification standard. A second set of lower graded duties is also included. Many of the duties in the second set have been adapted from lower graded benchmark examples, and therefore, do not support the grade of the position. Others, such as operation of a motor vehicle, are not performed a substantial part of the time. In order for the position to be properly classified at a given grade, duties from the first set must be performed at least 25 percent of the time over a representative duty cycle. To document the types and amount of grade controlling duties performed in the GS-5 and 7 positions, the supervisor will annotate the PD with the time spent in each of the grade controlling major duties.

The grading criteria for the GS-0025 series are in a narrative format with benchmark examples of duties appropriate at each grade level. The position descriptions were developed by reformatting the narrative remarks into the nine factor FES format. In a few cases where the narrative did not contain descriptive information for a factor, the factor level relationships in "Introduction to the Classification Standards" and the appropriate factor level description from the Primary Standard were referenced and language was adapted. Many of the benchmark duties from the classification standard were adopted as major, grade controlling duties in the position descriptions. When necessary, these were supplemented with other duties at an equivalent level of difficulty and responsibility. By using this method of developing the position descriptions, each PD is classified at the appropriate grade and includes major duties and responsibilities equivalent to that described in the appropriate grade of the GS-0025 classification standard.

The PDs are written so that they may be used at a full-performance level or for a developmental level when the employee's appointment allows career level promotions. This should be decided at the time of recruitment, and if the position is at a developmental level as part of a career ladder, the statement in block 24 of the OF-8 should be checked.

Summary and Classification Findings

The positions are classified to the GS-0025 and GS-0099 series, with grades from GS-3 through GS-7, as identified on the individual OF-8s. The official title is Park Ranger for all positions in the GS-0025 series and Student Trainee (Park Ranger) for positions in the GS-0099 series. All positions are FLSA non-exempt as none of exemptions to the FLSA apply. The position sensitivity will typically be non-sensitive/low risk. However, as some positions may include duties such as those requiring access to Service standard IT systems, the position sensitivity should be decided on a case-by-case basis.

In selecting the appropriately graded PD for a specific position, the position description language should accurate describe the level of work appropriate to the assigned organization and position.

Richard T. Morris
Human Resources Specialist
Region 7
March 29, 2005