

## EVALUATION STATEMENT

**Position Number:** S000351

**Proposed Title/Series/Grade:** Wildlife Refuge Specialist, GS-0485-09

**Location:** Various locations – see implementing guidelines on specificities

**References:** OPM Job Family Standard (JFS) for Professional Work in the Natural Resources Management and Biological Sciences Group, GS-0400P, dated September 2005.

**Background:** The proposed action is to reclassify multiple GS-0485 Wildlife Refuge Manager/Specialist positions by standardizing the position descriptions for grades GS-05 through GS-14 throughout the National Refuge System. This proposed position reflects the standard PD (SPD) for Wildlife Refuge Specialist, GS-0485-09

**Series/Title Determination:** The incumbent draws upon a professional knowledge and background in wildlife biology and refuge management to manage and coordinate the operating program and other activities on a small Federally-owned National Wildlife Refuge where administrative, operational and related programs are varied and cover the general range of refuge activities. Refuge operations and programs include wildlife biology, ecology, habitat management, natural resource program management (to include environmental laws, regulations, and policies), and visitor services (to include public use programs, outreach and education programs, volunteer programs, and law enforcement).

By virtue of requiring an academic background in the biology and/or natural resources sufficient to enable the incumbent to perform his/her duties and responsibilities in the area of wildlife resource/wetland management, the position is covered under JFS for Professional Work in the Natural Resources Management and Biological Sciences Group, GS-0400P (reference a). Because the responsibility of the position is to plan, manage, and coordinate federal fish and wildlife refuge operations and programs on a National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), Wetland Management District (WMD), or Refuge Complex - the most apparent series that would be appropriate for the described duties and responsibilities is the GS-0485, Wildlife Refuge Management, series. Under series GS-0485, the work involves development, enhancement, protection, and maintenance of land and habitat for a variety of species within the confines of a national wildlife refuge system which fits the proposed position description.

There are two prescribed titles under the GS-0485 series, with the assignment dependent upon the primary focus of the work. For positions whose primary work involves managing, administering, and operating a national wildlife refuge the standard indicates assignment of the prescribed title Wildlife Refuge Manager is in order. For positions performing line or staff work that supports planning, administering, evaluating, managing, and/or operating programs, activities, and projects associated with conserving and managing fish and/or wildlife resources in national wildlife refuges the standard indicates assignment of the prescribed title of Wildlife Refuge Specialist. The duties and responsibilities of this position are support in nature rather than managerial/supervisory; therefore, assignment of the title Wildlife Refuge Specialist is appropriate.

**Grade Level Determination:** The OPM Job Family Standard (JFS) for Professional Work in the Natural Resources Management and Biological Sciences Group, GS-0400P, dated September 2005 provides grade level criteria through the use of nine factors in accordance with the OPM Factor Evaluation System (FES). The GS-0400P JFS also provides benchmark factor level descriptions for individual GS-0400 occupational series (i.e., Wildlife Refuge Specialist, GS-0485) at several Factor Levels. The following is a determination of assigned levels and corresponding points per factor for the proposed SPD.

**Factor 1 – Knowledge Required by the Position:** The incumbent(s) of this position must possess knowledge of, and ability to apply, basic theories, principles, concepts, practices, standards, and methods of the various applicable professional biology, ecology, and/or conservation fields, along with all applicable laws, regulations, policies, and procedures of the Service and other associated agencies sufficient to allow the individual to work independently on recurring assignments, as well as special projects of low to moderate complexity.

At Level 1-5, positions are typically entry-level with the employee performing developmental assignments requiring application of knowledge acquired through the course of attaining a baccalaureate degree that allows him/her to develop the skill in applying the basic concepts, principles, and methodologies of the field. Work is of a conventional nature which has well-established boundaries or expectations. The duties and responsibilities of the position requires more than just the knowledge without the skill in applying; therefore, the SPD exceeds this level.

At Level 1-6, the position requires knowledge of, and skill in applying, the concepts, principles, practices, and methodology of the field; the organization's programs and their governing laws and regulations and reference standards; related mathematical and/or biological disciplines; and Federal, state, local, and/or tribal laws and regulations in order to independently perform recurring, well-precedented projects using standard methods and techniques. Duties performed by the incumbent of the SPD are beyond the developmental stage, and requires the ability of manages and coordinates a variety of refuge management programs and operations with conventional issues and problems many of which require knowledge of environmental laws and rules (i.e., Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act). This level is fully met.

At Level 1-7, the incumbent's knowledge and skill in refuge management programs and operations involves more complicated issues, are often found at refuges that are diverse (diverse habitats, multiplex program services, management services, and operations), and are bound by laws and regulations which may not always have precedent. The duties/responsibilities, as well as typical assignments, of the SPD are not of the level that would require this level of knowledge; therefore, this level is not fully met.

This position meets Factor Level 1-6 which is assigned 950 points.

**Factor 2. Supervisory Controls:** Within the boundaries set by the supervisor (objectives of the assignments, priorities, and deadlines), the incumbent of the SPD works independently, selecting the approaches, and methods to be used. The supervisor reviews the work for adequacy, technical soundness, and accomplishment of the specified objectives.

At Level 2-2, the supervisor provides specific instruction on assignments covering overall objectives, deadlines, priorities, etc., and follows existing procedures, referring problems outside scope of instruction to the supervisor. The work is reviewed for accuracy and conformation to procedures. The level of supervision of the SPD is of a much broader manner; therefore, this level is exceeded.

At Level 2-3, the supervisor provides general guidance on program goals and objectives – allowing the incumbent to work independently in establishing timelines, developing work schedule, accomplishing required tasks and submitting finished work products for final review and approval. Decisions, recommendations, and commitments are evaluated for conformity to policy. Completed work and recurring reports are reviewed for conformance to requirements and technical soundness. The level of supervision of the SPD meets this level.

At Level 2-4, the supervisor and incumbent develop a mutually acceptable plan, which includes the identification of work to be done, as well as the scope and deadlines for its completion. The incumbent is delegated complete responsibility and authority to plan, schedule and carry out major refuge management programs, operations and projects. The incumbent is subject only to review of meeting overall objectives. Because the supervisor for the SPD establishes boundaries for the incumbent, this factor level is not met.

This position meets Factor Level 2-3 which is assigned 275 points.

**Factor 3 – Guidelines:** The guidelines for this position include a variety of well-defined guidelines refuge and administrative manuals and procedures, precedent, and applicable laws (National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act). The incumbent must choose, analyze and apply guidelines to specific situations. Significant deviations are referred to the supervisor.

At Level 3-2, guidelines are directly applicable to assignments, provide precedent, but may have small differences, and which identify procedures and methods. At this level the employee turns to the supervisor for instruction on assignments where guidelines cannot be used or need major deviation. Because the incumbent must analyze the work situation in determining what guidelines to apply to any situation, this level is exceeded.

At Level 3-3, a wide variety of reference materials and manuals are available but are not always directly applicable or have gaps in specificity. Available precedents outline existing approaches to more general problems or issues. At this level the employee uses judgment in selecting, interpreting, and using available guidelines for adaptation to specific problems or issues. The guidelines available and judgment required of the incumbent of the SPD meets this level.

At Level 3-4, guidelines and precedents are general and/or vague in nature (such as policy statements and/or objectives) and may not be directly applicable to assignments, may be scarce, or not include specifics. At this level, the incumbent utilizes judgment and considerable interpretation of guidelines to complex issues and problems; in deviating from established methods; and modifying/adapting broad guidelines to resolve refuge specific complex issues/problems. The supervisor of the SPD would provide guidance to the incumbent if an assignment is outside the normal boundaries of available guidelines so that the incumbent would not require this level of personal judgment in deciding how to proceed; therefore, this level is not met.

This position fully meets Factor Level 3-3 which is assigned 275 points.

**Factor 4 – Complexity:** Work involves varied duties that cover the general range of functions found on a small Refuge/WMD. The management activities require modification of established methods and the development, recommendation, and implementation of alternative solutions to operational problems that are varied and sometimes complex.

At Level 4-2, work involves the performance of very specific related tasks that provide experience in the steps, processes, methods, or procedures, and in applying basic principles, theories, and practices of the field. This level is typically assigned to positions that are developmental in nature. Because work performed by the incumbent of the SPD are varied and involve different processes, this level is exceeded.

At Level 4-3, work performed involves duties that require unrelated steps, processes, methods, or procedures. Tasks may include analyzing and evaluating diverse environmental conditions and proposed refuge management actions changing habitat conditions; ensuring activities conform to standards and comply with regulatory requirements; and applying well established methods and concepts. The employee identifies, interprets, analyzes, and applies a range of established approaches and solutions to problems or issues. The variety of processes and need to adapt processes and procedures found in the SPD meets this level.

At Level 4-4, performance of assignments requires the employee develop and utilize new methods/techniques to accomplish refuge management work; conducting analysis and evaluation before selecting from multiple courses of actions or developing new/unprecedented alternatives to resolve issues. The level of complexity of the SPD does not support this level of assignment.

This position meets Factor Level 4-3 which is assigned 150 points.

**Factor 5 – Scope and Effect:** The purpose of the work is to manage and coordinate programs and operations at a small federally-owned national wildlife refuge where administrative, operational, and related programs are varied and cover the general range of refuge activities, but the numbers of major activities such as construction of new facilities, pest control, public use, etc., are limited.

At Level 5-2, assignments are developmental in nature; involve common issues and/or problems; and usually involve only a segment of a project. The duties and responsibilities of the SPD exceeds this level.

At Level 5-3, responsibilities involve performing the full range of refuge management activities that involve a variety of conventional resource/refuge and environmental conditions; that are accordance with established criteria; that identify common problems from recreational, commercial, and industrial operations; and that ensure the effective development and use of multiple-use resources areas at the local level. Work results affect agency credibility; adequacy, accuracy, and effectiveness of activities; and/or efficient utilization, development, protection, and management of natural resources and socioeconomic well-being of lease and permit holders and other users of natural resources. The incumbent of this SPD is responsible for identifying, analyzing and resolving a variety of conventional refuge problems and environmental conditions involving the established criteria; therefore, the criteria for this level is fully met.

At Level 5-4, responsibilities involve handling problems and situations involving a wide variety of circumstances or unusual conditions; developing new or improved techniques, criteria, or alternatives to meet requirements involving specific problems, and issues, or agency clinical activities. This incumbent of this SPD is responsible for a variety of conventional refuge problems and environmental conditions involving the use of established criteria; therefore, this level is not met.

This position meets Factor Level 5-3 which is assigned 150 points.

**Factor 6 – Personal Contacts:** Contacts are with management officials/employees of the Service/Department; Federal, state, and local agencies, university and school officials; professional and technical subject matter specialists in the same or related disciplines; local and national level conservation and recreational use organizations and groups; Tribal representatives; contractors; volunteers; and the general public. External interactions are typically planned, are in moderately structured settings, and are general not with high ranking officials/representatives.

Contacts at Level 6-2 are primarily within the employing agency but may extend out in moderate structured settings. The level of contacts for the proposed SPD exceeds this level.

Contacts at Level 6-3 are with individuals or groups representing high levels of organizations -internal and external to the Federal Government. Typical contacts are with contractors, legal professionals, management officials or senior technical staff of corporations, other Federal agencies, academia, or professional organizations. Although there is diversity in types of contacts, the level of these contacts does not full meet the intent of this Level's criteria.

Level 6-2 is assigned. Factor 6 will be combined with Factor 7 for point assignment.

**Factor 7 – Purpose of Contacts:** The primary purpose of making contacts for this SPD is to obtain/exchange information to promote the Service and programs pertinent to the Refuge/WMD; complete assignments; provide direction; resolve problems and conflicts; and coordinate activities.

Contacts at Level 7-A are simply to obtain, clarify, or exchange information or facts needed to complete an assignment. The purpose of contacts described within the proposed SPD exceeds this level.

Contacts at Level 7-B involves exchanging basic information in the planning, coordinating, or advising on work efforts, or to resolve issues or operating problems. If any influencing or persuading needs to occur, it is with cooperative individuals who are working toward mutual goals and have cooperative attitudes. The purpose of contacts described in the proposed SPD meets this level.

Contacts at Level 7-C begin to see interactions involved with influencing and persuading persons or groups who may be skeptical or uncooperative. Many interactions will involve the use of stronger communications skills/tactics such as persuasion or negotiation, or establishing rapport to gain information. What the incumbent seeks is arriving at a desired effect, such as gaining compliance with established policies or acceptance of established methods. The interactions described in the proposed SPD does not describe needing to influence/persuade other who may be skeptical and/or uncooperative; therefore, the proposed PD does not fully meet the criteria for assignment of Level C.

Level 7-B is assigned.

Overall, this position meets Factor 6/7 Levels 2-B which is assigned <sup>75ck</sup>~~110~~ points.

**Factor 8 – Physical Demands:** This position requires a good amount of time spent outdoors when engaged in field work which involves walking for long periods, crouching, stooping and possibly climbing/crawling. The incumbent may be exposed to inclement weather, wild animals, poisonous plants and insects/snakes. The incumbent may be required to lift and carry objects weighing up to 50 pounds, and carry a firearm.

Under Level 8-1, work is sedentary and requires the physical exertion that is considered routine. With a requirement to work outdoors, the physical demands of the proposed SPD exceed this level's criteria.

Under Level 8-2, the work requires long periods of standing; walking or riding horses over rough terrain; recurring bending, crouching, stooping, reaching, or similar activities. Work may also include frequent lifting of moderately heavy items, such as equipment and samples that weigh less than 23 kilograms or approximately 50 pounds. The physical demands of the proposed SPD meets this level's criteria.

Under Level 8-3, performance of work requires considerable and strenuous physical exertion and exposure to extreme conditions, such as: frequent crouching or crawling over rough, uneven, or rocky terrain; lifting heavy objects that weigh over 23 kilograms or approximately 50 pounds; and hostile wildlife, or chemical, biological, or physical hazards for which protective precautions are required or mandated by law. Although exertion is expected in the performance of his/her duties, there is no anticipation that this level of exertion will be expected in the performance of duties/responsibilities; therefore, this level is not met.

This position meets Factor Level 8-2, which is assigned 20 points.

**Factor 9 - Work Environment:** The work is performed both in an office and outdoors. The incumbent may be subject to large numbers of biting insects, poisonous plants, and may be required to work in close proximity to large animals. He/she may need to carry a firearm for personal protection from wildlife. Frequent travel by various means of surface and air transportation is required to attend meetings and to conduct field work. The incumbent is expected to conduct duties in a safe and orderly manner so as not to endanger self, fellow workers, or property.

Under Level 9-1, work is performed in a typical office setting that is well ventilated, temperature controlled, with adequate lighting. Because the incumbent of the proposed SPD is required to work outdoors at a Refuge/WMD, this level's criteria is exceeded.

Under Level 9-2, work involves exposure to moderate risks and discomforts, such as those due to adverse weather conditions, travel in safety approved small air and water craft and off-road vehicles; irritating chemicals; noxious fumes; flammable liquids; hostile wildlife; and poisonous insects, plants, or snakes; Work requires special safety precautions and/or protective clothing and equipment. The work environment described in the proposed SPD meets this level's criteria.

Under Level 9-3, work involves high risk of exposure or damage due to: extreme weather conditions; working at great heights in remote locations; hazardous chemicals; wildland fires; serious confrontations with armed hunters; or working with lethal viruses. Although there is risk involved in the performance of this position, with the possibility of carrying a firearm for protection, there is no anticipation that this level of exertion will be expected in the performance of duties/responsibilities; therefore, this level is not met.

This position meets Factor Level 9-2 which is assigned 20 points.

**Point Summary:** The following is a break down by Factor Levels assigned and corresponding points.

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Points</u>
1. Knowledge Required by the Position	1-6	950
2. Supervisory Controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-3	275
4. Complexity	4-3	150
5. Scope and Effect	5-3	150
6/7. Personal Contacts/ Purpose of Contacts	2-B	<del>110</del>
8. Physical Demands	8-2	20
9. Work Environment	9-2	<u>20</u>
TOTAL POINTS		<del>1950</del> <b>1915</b>

A total of 1950 points is assigned and falls within the GS-09 range (1855 – 2100) in accordance with the point to grade conversion chart in the GS-0400P standard. Based on the assigned factor levels and points, this position meets assessment at the GS-09 level.

**Final Classification (Title/Series/Grade):** Refuge Wildlife Specialist, GS-0485-09

FLSA Determination: ~~Exempt~~ **Non Exempt** (learned professional/exercises discretion and independent judgment)

Financial Disclosure: Not Required

Risk Designation: Moderate \*

Drug Testing: No

BUS: 7777 \*\*

*↓ does not meet with regards to matters of significance. King 2/21/09*

\* Determination made by AD-NWRS to set at Moderate based on GS-0485 staff routinely carrying firearms in the performance of their work for either law enforcement, invasive/nuisance animal control, or for bear safety.

\*\* although decisions and/or recommendations made by the incumbent are used by the Wildlife Refuge Manager in developing/modifying Refuge/WMD-specific policies/procedures the incumbent's responsibilities do not involve actively formulating/influencing or participating in the formulation of agency policies)

Cecilia E. King  
 HR Specialist (Class/Comp)  
 DHC, Branch of Human Resources  
 March 31, 2009

# Position Designation of National Security and Public Trust Positions

*Position Designation Record*

Agency **Fish and Wildlife Service**  
 Position Title **Wildlife Refuge Specialist**  
 Series and Grade/Pay Band **GS-0485 - 09**  
 Position Description Number **S000 351**

Duties	Degree of Potential for Compromise or Damage
<i>Public safety and health regulation, enforcement, and protection</i>	<b>Limited impact</b> Threat to American public is controlled by effective oversight or other controls or potential impact is limited in scope

Adjustment for program designation and level of supervision	
<i>Adjustment for Scope of Program and Correlation to Extent of Impact (see definitions)</i>	Agency impact
<i>Adjustment for level of supervision or other controls</i>	Limited or no supervision - ability to act independently in almost all areas almost all of the time

Designation Level	Suitability	
	Investigation Required	Form Required
<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>MBI</b>	<b>SF 85P</b>

Total Points Designation	
<i>Total Initial Position Designation Points from Step 2</i>	1
<i>Adjusted Position Designation Points from Step 3</i>	21

Designator Notes/Justification/Comments
Incumbent(s) routinely carry firearms in the performance of their work for either law enforcement, invasive/nuisance animal control, or for bear safety.

Signature: *Cecilia King* Date: 7/17/2009  
 Name: Cecilia King, HR Specialist  
 (Class/Comp)