

**POSITION DUTY STATEMENT**

PM-0924 (REV 01/2022)

CLASSIFICATION TITLE Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)	OFFICE/BRANCH/SECTION D10/Planning, Local Assistance & Environmental	
WORKING TITLE Senior Environmental Scientist (Biologist)	POSITION NUMBER 910-168-0765-xxx	REVISION DATE 06/20/2024

As a valued member of the Caltrans leadership team, you make it possible for the Department to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment.

**GENERAL STATEMENT:**

The Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) Biologist, under the general direction of the Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), is an advanced journey-level position that serves in a lead role on highly complex and long lead projects of regional significance. In support of District 10 Local Assistance, Maintenance, Emergency, Encroachment Permit, and Planning Programs, the incumbent will prepare and review environmental documents to ensure accordance with scientific principles and compliance with federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The incumbent identifies, quantifies, and analyzes the environmental impacts of transportation systems, corridors, and projects on environmental resources and formulates measures to mitigate biological and land use impacts. The incumbent is responsible for gathering data on natural resources, such as plants, animals, and aquatic resources. The incumbent performs complex environmental analysis, research, surveys, investigations, and studies; prepares reports; prepares routine correspondence with internal and external partners; answers questions from the public; prepares regulatory and compliance documents; and reviews documents prepared by external partners and consultants to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal environmental laws and regulations, as well as Departmental policy and standards.

This position reviews technical studies and permits prepared by consultants, works with confidential and privileged information, and is charged with managing, tracking, and reporting on project schedule and resources within their purview. The incumbent must establish and maintain a professional working relationship with internal project delivery partners, local partners and interested parties involved with Caltrans' projects, and various regulatory agencies. The incumbent must be solution oriented and will need to investigate innovative solutions to meet deliverables.

The incumbent will advise and guide internal and external staff on how to navigate the complexity of biological resource regulations. The incumbent is responsible for risk assessment, project pathway development, communication of predicted/identified biological resource impacts, and delivery timelines. The incumbent may manage consultant contracts for environmental studies and efforts associated with the project development process. The incumbent is expected to work in an independent capacity both within and outside Caltrans, and within programs that may have significant consequences for Caltrans and its constituents. The incumbent shall represent the Department in a professional, courteous manner, and maintain a professional working relationship with internal and external partners. The incumbent will be required to work in both the field and in an office setting. Occasional overtime, travel, and overnight stays will be required. A valid Driver's License is preferable.

**CORE COMPETENCIES:**

As a Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), the incumbent is expected to become proficient in the following competencies as described below in order to successfully perform the essential functions of the job, while adhering to and promoting the Department's Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Imperatives and Goals. Effective development of the identified Core Competencies fosters the advancement of the following Leadership Competencies: Change Commitment, Risk Appetite, Self-Development/Growth, Conflict Management, Relationship Building, Organizational Awareness, Communication, Strategic Perspective, and Results Driven.

- **Flexibility and Managing Uncertainty** : Adjusts thinking and behavior in order to adapt to changes in the job and work environment. (Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action - Integrity, Pride)
- **Dealing with Ambiguity (Risk)**: Can comfortably handle risk and uncertainty, as well as make decisions to act without having the total picture. (Safety First, Lead Climate Action - Engagement, Integrity)
- **Initiative**: Ability to identify what needs to be done and doing it before being asked or required by the situation. Seeks out others involved in a situation to learn their perspectives. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency - Integrity)
- **Problem-solving and Decision-making** : Identifies problems and uses logical analysis to find information, understand causes, and evaluate and select or recommend best possible courses of action. (Cultivate Excellence - Pride)
- **Teamwork/Partnership**: Develops, maintains, and strengthens partnerships with others inside or outside of the organization through effective communication and collaboration. (Cultivate Excellence - Engagement)

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- **Customer Focus:** Considers, prioritizes, and takes action on the needs of both internal and external customers. (Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement)
- **Interpersonal Effectiveness :** Effectively and appropriately interacts and communicates with others to build positive, constructive, professional relationships. Tailors communication style based on the audience. Provides and is receptive to feedback. (Cultivate Excellence - Equity)
- **Forward Thinking:** Anticipates the implications and consequences of situations and takes appropriate actions to be prepared for possible contingencies. Anticipates and prepares for future developments. (Lead Climate Action - Innovation)
- **Technical Expertise:** Depth of knowledge and skill in a technical area. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency - Integrity)

**TYPICAL DUTIES:**

Percentage	Job Description
Essential (E)/Marginal (M) <sup>1</sup>	
30% E	Perform as Team Lead on complex local projects in the district, including long-lead corridor projects sponsored by Caltrans' local partners. Applies scientific principles to actively manage the biological resource aspects of projects, including contributing to the development of project descriptions, project schedules and risk registers. Leads and conducts protocol level field surveys for a variety of plant, animal and natural resources to provide technical data for biological analyses. Uses GIS to prepare maps and conduct impact calculations. Researches, prepares, reviews, and analyzes technical reports on natural resources within the biological study area of transportation projects. Develops and recommends avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures to ensure successful compliance with Federal and California environmental laws, rules, regulations and requirements. Leads the Division with completing biological analysis on the most complex projects. Review technical documents prepared by others to assess environmental impacts, ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations, and ensure consistency across documentation.
30% E	The incumbent will lead coordination with Federal, State, and local regulatory entities, including the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), U.S Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) for coordination, consultation, and compliance with various environmental and biological regulations. The incumbent will prepare and review permit applications (1600, ITP, Consistency Determinations, 404/401s, and WDRs), consultations (such as Biological Assessments for Biological Opinions) and compliance documents (such as habitat restoration plans, mitigation monitoring plans etc.) with regulatory agencies. Projects that require permits or consultation under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) will require regular status updates to the Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), Project Management, Maintenance Engineering, and/or Local Assistance teams. This position will lead coordination with internal and external experts to identify appropriate mitigation, and lead in researching and investigating potential mitigation and advanced mitigation opportunities for a variety of species and habitats. Specific to local project delivery, this position will lead local agency coordination of mitigation negotiations, develop procedures and standards to mitigate for impacts to threatened and endangered species, and develop local and regional conservation approaches in coordination with Caltrans staff, private landowners, nonprofits and other agencies.
15% E	Uses scientific knowledge and background to develop environmental commitments. Reviews and prepares Standard and non-Standard Special Provisions. Leads review of and ensures environmental commitments are properly included in project Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) package and the construction contract. Enforces environmental laws and regulations in coordination with Caltrans plans and specifications. Monitors and oversees consultant biological monitors to meet conditions set forth in project plans and permits. Writes and reviews monitoring reports and ensures they are submitted to regulatory agencies in compliance with all permits and agreements. Conducts environmental education programs for project contractors. Prepares and updates GIS layers delineating approximate areas held for mitigation and restoration as part of Caltrans natural resource management. Updates the status of permits, reports and mitigation site compliance in the environmental database (STEVE).

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10%	E	Leads the project team as a biological technical expert to provide data to develop design alternatives in order to avoid or minimize project effects on biological resources. These interactions require written or verbal communication. Attendance at virtual, in-person, and field meetings will be required on a regular basis, both formal and informal. The incumbent will lead these discussions, as needed, and will serve as the subject matter expert for the biological resource identification, impact analysis, and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation strategies. Attends pre-construction meetings and monitors construction activities in the field as necessary.
10%	E	Provide biological technical oversight and/or analysis for Encroachment Permit applications and Local Development Reviews. Ensure the work proposed in Caltrans Right of Way is compliant with all applicable federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations, as well as Department policy and standards. Review and recommend approval of externally-prepared biological studies. Review Environmental Documents such as Categorical Exemptions and Exclusions, Initial Studies (Negative Declarations/Mitigated Negative Declarations), Environmental Impact Reports, Routine and Complex Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements to ensure they are compliant with federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations, as well as Department policy and standards. Review and provide comments on General and Specific Plans. Provide responses to applicants and project proponents, citing applicable environmental laws and regulations and Departmental policies, as necessary.
5%	M	Attentive project organization, filing and continually keeping Caltrans databases updated, such as STEVE and LP2000. Maintain and update environmental electronic files using the Uniform Filing System. Provide internal and external training on environmental issues. Carry out policy reviews of existing procedures and seek out/develop new strategies for improving biological resources compliance. Attain and maintain best scientific knowledge, including identifying current and emerging practices and trends. May develop and prepare scopes of work and cost estimates for contracts and task orders to procure biological resource services for construction monitoring, document preparation, consultation efforts, and more. May coordinate with contractors, facilitate any needed changes during the life of the contract or task order, and will ensure goals of task orders are met in a timely manner.

<sup>1</sup>ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS are the core duties of the position that cannot be reassigned.

MARGINAL FUNCTIONS are the minor tasks of the position that can be assigned to others.

**SUPERVISION OR GUIDANCE EXERCISED OVER OTHERS**

This incumbent will act in a lead capacity on a daily basis. The incumbent will have no direct supervisory responsibilities but will be expected to guide and oversee the work of Environmental Planners in the Office on occasion.

**KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES, AND ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Knowledge of: Basic principles of ecology; natural resource management; hydrology; statistical methods; California and federal environmental laws - namely CEQA and NEPA - and policies pertaining to biological surveys; concepts of environmental planning and multi-modal programs, economics, and resource management; and geographical information systems and related software applications. The incumbent must possess an in-depth knowledge of the regulatory processes and procedures that govern Caltrans Local Assistance procedures and Caltrans Project Delivery, including the SER and annotated outlines. The incumbent must possess an in-depth knowledge of current environmental policies and planning trends in California and at the federal level.

Ability to: Apply or modify scientific methods and principles; collect environmental data; analyze and evaluate data and reach sound conclusions; review, check, and interpret scientific and environmental reports; analyze situations and take appropriate actions; establish and maintain cooperative relations with all persons contacted; communicate effectively; prepare clear, complete, and technically accurate reports; apply laws, rules, regulations, policies, and requirements of California and federal environmental protection and regulation; assess the impact of proposed state and federal environmental legislation and regulations on transportation programs; understand principles of risk assessment and risk management; work with professionals from a variety of disciplines within and outside of state government; and review and understand technical research reports on emerging public health and environmental issues.

In addition to the above, the Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) Biologist must have the capacity to develop procedures, guidelines, reference materials, planning and regulatory documents, and other innovative solutions for critical and/or sensitive environmental management problems; independently plan environmental studies; provide input on important projects concerning public health, agricultural productivity, and environmental protection; develop techniques for handling and analyzing a large variety of detailed data; communicate the results and implications of studies to nonspecialists; act as an expert witness in court or at legislative or quasi-judicial hearings; provide leadership in accomplishing basic functions and objectives in assigned programs; and inspire confidence and effective working relationships with employees, managers, and leaders in government and industry.

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**RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR**

This position is responsible for independent action and initiative in carrying out the assigned duties. As a technical expert, the incumbent is expected to routinely make final decisions on questions raised regarding environmental issues and the environmental impacts of transportation projects on environmental resources. Failure to carry out these responsibilities could result in additional effort to provide measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts; delays to projects or activities; litigation that could delay and/or add substantial cost to essential projects or activities; loss of mitigation opportunities; and loss of public confidence in Caltrans as an environmentally sensitive organization. Effective coordination and communication with others will minimize chances of error.

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**PUBLIC AND INTERNAL CONTACTS**

The Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) Biologist will have frequent internal and external contacts, including professionals in the Division of Planning, Local Assistance & Environmental, the Division of Environmental & Right-of-Way and other Caltrans Divisions; elected officials; the general public. The incumbent will be expected to maintain open lines of communication and positive working relationships with all contacts while on the job.

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**PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Must have the ability to develop and maintain cooperative working relationships; respond appropriately to difficult situations; recognize emotionally charged issues or problems and acknowledge the various responses without escalating tensions. Must be capable of translating between engineering, transportation, planning and biological terminology and common language. Must be able to effectively communicate in English and may be required to make presentations, lead workshops, and serve on multi-disciplinary teams.

The incumbent must be able to sit for prolonged periods of time while using a keyboard/mouse and video display monitor, to read, review or prepare documents. Must be capable of sustained mental activity needed for report writing, auditing, problem solving, analysis and reasoning. The workload may be subject to frequent, substantial and unexpected changes that could affect the scheduling or completion of assignments.

The incumbent must have the ability to adapt to changes in priorities, and complete tasks or projects with short notice. Must deal effectively with pressure, maintain focus, and intensity yet remain optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. The incumbent must have the ability to foster diversity in the workplace and uphold equitable values.

The incumbent must be able to traverse uneven terrain and work outside in the field under a variety of conditions. The incumbent must have the ability to recognize unsafe situations and exercise good judgment to avoid such situations. Field conditions may vary depending upon the season, lighting, and time of day/night. This position requires occasional bending, stooping, kneeling, and carrying of field equipment up to 25 pounds. Common safety requirements may include good hearing, good vision, and an ability to focus on safety and fieldwork simultaneously. Common field dangers include but are not limited to traffic, sunlight, people, plants and animals, and weather. Must be capable of recognizing and avoiding dangers in or adjacent to the highway, in both rural and urban settings.

The incumbent behaves in a fair and ethical manner toward others and demonstrates a sense of responsibility and commitment to public service. The incumbent values cultural diversity and other individual differences in the workforce.

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**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The person must have the ability to work independently and effectively at the District 10 office and in a home office setting as part of Caltrans' Telework Program. The work environment is fast-paced, busy and requires considerable flexibility in managing time, priorities, and assignments. It can be demanding and/or stressful. The incumbent may be required to travel to other District offices and Headquarters or other meeting facilities, and/or to the sites of proposed projects. In the field the incumbent may experience all climatic conditions, including rain. While at their base of operation, employees will work in climate-controlled office under artificial light. However, climatic conditions may fluctuate. The incumbent must be able to use a computer keyboard several hours a day. Involves sitting most of the time, but may involve walking or standing for brief periods. Attends lengthy meetings in-person and via conference calls; Occasional travel and field work may be required.

This position may be eligible for telework. The amount of telework is at the discretion of the Department and based on Caltrans's evolving telework policy. Caltrans supports telework, recognizing that in-person attendance may be required based on operational needs. Employees are expected to be able to report to their worksites with minimum notification if an urgent need arises. The selected candidate will be required to commute to the headquartered location as needed to meet operational needs. Business travel may be required, and reimbursement considers an employee's designated headquartered location, primary residence, and may be subject to CalHR regulations or applicable bargaining unit contract provisions. All commute expenses to the headquartered location will be the responsibility of the selected candidate.

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I have read, understand and can perform the duties listed above. (If you believe you may require reasonable accommodation, please discuss this with your hiring supervisor. If you are unsure whether you require reasonable accommodation, inform the hiring supervisor who will discuss your concerns with the Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator.)

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EMPLOYEE (Print)

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EMPLOYEE (Signature)

DATE

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I have discussed the duties with, and provided a copy of this duty statement to the employee named above.

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SUPERVISOR (Print)

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SUPERVISOR (Signature)

DATE

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