

**POSITION DUTY STATEMENT**

PM-0924 (REV 04/2021)

CLASSIFICATION TITLE Environmental Scientist	OFFICE/BRANCH/SECTION D3 / NR Division of Environmental Planning	
WORKING TITLE Environmental Scientist (Biologist)	POSITION NUMBER 927-801-0762-XXX	EFFECTIVE DATE

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:**

Under the general direction of the Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), the incumbent is an interdisciplinary team member who will be responsible for preparing and reviewing complex biological studies, and analytical reports to ensure compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and numerous other state and federal environmental resource laws and regulations. The incumbent identifies and analyzes the environmental impacts of transportation systems, corridors and projects on environmental resources and formulates, calculates and quantifies measures to mitigate biological and land use impacts. The incumbent is responsible for gathering data on plant, animal and natural resources; performing environmental analysis, research, surveys, investigations, and studies; preparing reports; preparing routine correspondence; answering questions from the public; preparing regulatory and compliance documents; and do other related work.

This position may review 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, various local partners and interested parties involved with Caltrans' projects. The incumbent must be solution oriented and will need to investigate innovative solutions to meet deliverables.

**CORE COMPETENCIES:**

As an Environmental Scientist, 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. (Cultivate Excellence - Engagement, Equity, Integrity)
- **Dealing with Ambiguity (Risk)**: Can comfortably handle risk and uncertainty, as well as make decisions to act without having the total picture. (Cultivate Excellence - Pride)
- **Reliability**: Ability to demonstrate dependability in meeting commitments, and providing a consistent work product. Takes responsibility for individual actions in order to meet deadline demands. (Safety First, Cultivate Excellence, Enhance and Connect the Multimodal Transportation Network - Engagement, Pride)
- **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. (Safety First, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action - Engagement)
- **Relationship Building**: The ability to develop and maintain internal and external trust and professional relationships, which includes listening and understanding to build rapport. (Cultivate Excellence - Innovation)
- **Customer Focus**: Considers, prioritizes, and takes action on the needs of both internal and external customers. (Cultivate Excellence, Enhance and Connect the Multimodal Transportation Network - Engagement, Equity)
- **Communication**: Expresses oneself clearly in all forms of communication. Gives feedback and is receptive to feedback received. Knows that listening is essential. Keeps others in the Division and other functional units informed as appropriate. (Cultivate Excellence - Engagement, Innovation, Pride)
- **Analytical Skills**: Approaches problems using a logical, systematic, and sequential approach. Weighs priorities and recognizes underlying issues. (Enhance and Connect the Multimodal Transportation Network - Engagement)
- **Technical Expertise**: Depth of knowledge and skill in a technical area. (Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency - Innovation)

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**TYPICAL DUTIES:**

Percentage	Essential (E)/Marginal (M) <sup>1</sup>	Job Description
30%	E	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. Assists the Division with completing environmental and biological analysis on the most complex projects within the District including but not limited to fish passage, wildlife crossings, sea level rise, climate change and climate resiliency, and non-transportation projects such as wildfire reduction, Clean California and the Broadband initiatives.
30%	E	Environmental Scientists handle complex projects that require permits from multiple regulatory agencies. The incumbent will work as a liaison with Federal, State, and local regulatory entities, including the USFWS, CDFW, NMFS, and USACE for coordination, consultation and compliance with various environmental and biological regulations. The incumbent will prepare and review permit applications (1600, ITP, Consistency Determinations, and 404s), consultations (such as Biological Assessments for Biological Opinions) and compliance documents (such as habitat restoration plans, mitigation monitoring plans etc.) with regulatory agencies. Projects with permits on Contract for Delivery require weekly status updates to Environmental Program/Project Management (EPPM). This position will coordinate with internal and external experts to identify appropriate mitigation, and assist assigned Senior Environmental Planners and Senior Environmental Scientist Specialists in researching and investigating potential mitigation and advanced mitigation opportunities for a variety of species and habitats. Specific to transportation project delivery, this position will support managers in 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 project plans specifications and estimates and ensures biological commitments are included in the packages throughout the project development process. 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 STEVE.
15%	E	Works with the project team as a biological technical expert to provide data to develop design alternatives, including projects that address fish passage, wildlife crossings, climate change, sea-level rise, wildfire reduction, and non-transportation projects such as Clean California and the Broadband initiative, in order to avoid or minimize project effects on biological resources. These interactions require written or verbal communication. Attendance at meetings may be required at least once per week for each project assigned to incumbent and for staff meetings, both formal and informal. The incumbent will participate in these discussions, as needed, via phone, video conference, in the district office, or in the offices of these agencies.
5%	E	Conducts administrative duties necessary for maintaining the environmental administrative record, environmental database (STEVE). Takes the lead in preparing and participating in trainings for other environmental scientists or consultants, on occasion.
5%	M	Participates on special teams and projects on issues of statewide importance. Stays current on scientific trends and knowledge. Attends state- and non-state sponsored conferences and training courses. Stays up to date on current topics by reading subject literature and participating in professional organization

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<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.

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**SUPERVISION OR GUIDANCE EXERCISED OVER OTHERS**

This position does not have direct supervisory responsibility. However, the Environmental Scientist may act as a lead over certain tasks, as a project lead, and help manage and oversee the work of less experienced Environmental Scientists or Environmental Planners. The incumbent may be asked to act for their supervisor during periods of leave.

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**KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES, AND ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Knowledge of: Basic principles of land, water, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources research; principles of ecology; resource management, hydrology, geology, and waste prevention; statistical methods; land-use practices with reference to their general effect on natural resources and the environment; California and Federal environmental laws, rules, regulations, and requirements; basic principles of risk assessment and risk management; concepts employed in a variety of disciplines including environmental planning, economics, and resource management; geolocation and geo-referencing software applications, resource conservation program impacts and implementation strategies. Must have knowledge of and be able to identify and articulate impacts and recommended environmental mitigation measures. The incumbent must have knowledge of how to manage biological resources during highway construction. This position requires knowledge of transportation funding to ensure that pre and post construction work is resourced and funds are available for acquisition and development. The incumbent must also have the knowledge to conduct oversight and review of technical studies for encroachment permits, review of local agency documents and be able to identify and articulate impacts and evaluate recommended environmental mitigation measures.

Ability to: Apply or modify scientific methods and principles; collect and survey for environmental data; analyze and evaluate data and reach sound conclusions; review, check, and interpret scientific and environmental reports and studies; analyze situations and take appropriate actions; establish and maintain cooperative relations with all persons contacted; communicate effectively both in writing and verbally; prepare clear, complete, and technically accurate regulatory compliance documents and permit applications; apply laws, rules, regulations, policies, and requirements of California and Federal environmental protection and resource management programs; assess the impact of proposed State and Federal environmental legislation and regulations; 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 environmental issues.

Analytical Skill in: Performing increasingly responsible and varied assignments under decreasing degrees of supervision. Understanding and applying those aspects of federal, state and local laws, regulations, policies, procedures and standards pertaining to the planning process. Interpreting maps, site and building plans and specifications, graphs and statistical data. Researching, analyzing, and summarizing planning data both manually and with basic computer programs. Preparing clear visual displays, such as maps, graphs, and illustrations. Making clear and persuasive presentations of ideas; preparing clear, concise and complete technical documents, reports, correspondence and other written materials. Instructing others in work procedures and providing specific project directions.

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**RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR**

Errors in researching and evaluating biological data on the various transportation alternatives for a proposed project could delay the preparation and approval of environmental documents and increase preliminary design costs. Errors in evaluating species of concern and other sensitive resources could adversely affect the long-term viability of those elements. Errors in permitting, environmental compliance, and implementation of biological mitigation could put natural resources at risk and could jeopardize project compliance with permitting and other statutory and regulatory requirements, leading to environmental harm, project penalties and construction delays resulting in an increase in project costs and damage to the credibility of the Department and its relationships with permitting/regulatory agencies.

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**PUBLIC AND INTERNAL CONTACTS**

The incumbent works with various engineering groups, environmental, right of way, and transportation planning staff members; provides a liaison role with various governmental agencies' planning staff; may arrange, attend and participate in meetings with local, State, and Federal agencies, interested groups and individuals.

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**PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

May be required to sit for long periods of time during meetings, or while using a monitor and keyboard. The incumbent must be able to effectively conduct and direct fieldwork and construction monitoring under adverse weather or terrain conditions, or in close proximity to live traffic and/or construction equipment. This work requires good or correctable visual abilities, to identify and assess biological and public access resources and to record them. The incumbent should also be able to utilize a computer for database management and writing reports. The incumbent must analyze situations rapidly and accurately and propose effective courses of action for the work in coordination with Caltrans management and outside agencies. The incumbent also needs to be

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capable of demonstrating flexibility, firmness, and a calm demeanor when appropriate in potentially physically and emotionally stressful situations. The incumbent must be able to work in a fast-paced environment and multi-task.

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### WORK ENVIRONMENT

Duties will require work to be conducted in both a Department office and a field environment. The duties will on occasion require work meetings off-site in the offices of other agencies and consultants and with members of the public. Periodically, attendance at public meeting during the evenings may be required. The incumbent may also be exposed to uneven terrain and extreme weather conditions during field reviews. Incumbent may be eligible for part time telework.

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

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