

**POSITION DUTY STATEMENT**

PM-0924 (REV 01/2022)

CLASSIFICATION TITLE Environmental Scientist	OFFICE/BRANCH/SECTION Office of Vegetation and Wildfire Management/MAINTENANCE	
WORKING TITLE HQ VMP Environmental Compliance Scientist	POSITION NUMBER 913-720-0762-918	REVISION 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:**

This position works under the general direction of the Branch Chief, Environmental Stewardship & Management, a Supervising Environmental Scientist in HQ Maintenance, Office of Vegetation and Wildfire Management. The Environmental Scientist is an interdisciplinary team member who will ensure the Division of Maintenance Vegetation Management Program is in 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, as Maintenance increases the pace, scale and expands maintenance treatment methods for natural resource management within the right-of-way to achieve the Department's strategic and climate adaptation goals. The Environmental Scientist assists with developing best management practices (BMP) to allow for a range of vegetation treatment by Caltrans Maintenance crews, Service Contracts or other local, State or Federal agencies under encroachment permit or other types of agreements. The incumbent identifies and analyzes the environmental impacts of maintenance activities and projects within the Caltrans right-of-way on natural resources. The incumbent formulates, calculates and quantifies measures to mitigate maintenance impacts, and prepares and reviews complex technical studies, analytical reports and environmental documents. The incumbent has a working knowledge of current maintenance practices and treatment methods for managing natural vegetation and is familiar with the 1992 Caltrans Vegetation Control PEIR and the 2019 California Vegetation Treatment Program PEIR (CaVTP). The incumbent is responsible for gathering data and coordinating within maintenance and with other functional units, divisions, and external partners; drafting guidance and policy to support the vegetation management program; performing environmental analysis, research, surveys, field monitoring, investigations, and studies; preparing reports; reviewing toxicology risk assessments; preparing routine correspondence; preparing regulatory and compliance documents; meeting with external partners, attending conferences and other related work in coordination with the Office of Vegetation and Wildfire Management as directed by the Branch Chief.

This position may review environmental compliance documentation, including technical studies and permits prepared by consultants and the districts; 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 partners representing maintenance and with various local, state and federal partners and interested parties involved with Caltrans' vegetation management efforts. 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, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, Pride)
- **Dealing with Ambiguity (Risk)**: Can comfortably handle risk and uncertainty, as well as make decisions to act without having the total picture. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Integrity, Pride)
- **Ethics and Integrity**: Demonstrated concern to be perceived as responsible, reliable, and trustworthy. Respects the confidentiality of information or concern shared by others. Honest and forthright. Conforms to accepted standards of conduct. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, 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. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, Pride)

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- **Teamwork/Partnership:** Develops, maintains, and strengthens partnerships with others inside or outside of the organization through effective communication and collaboration. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, Pride)
- **Organizational Awareness:** Contributes to the organization by understanding and aligning actions with the organization's strategic plan, including the mission, vision, goals, core functions, and values. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, Pride)
- **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, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, Pride)
- **Analytical Skills:** Approaches problems using a logical, systematic, and sequential approach. Weighs priorities and recognizes underlying issues. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, Pride)
- **Thoroughness:** Ensures that work and information is complete and accurate. Ensures that assignment goals, objectives, and completion dates are met. Documents and reports on work progress. (Cultivate Excellence, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency, Lead Climate Action, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, Pride)

**TYPICAL DUTIES:**

Percentage	Job Description
Essential (E)/Marginal (M) <sup>1</sup>	
35% E	Applies scientific principles to make evidence-based decisions and to draft guidance and policy documents to actively manage the natural resources within the Caltrans right-of-way. Assists in the development of Vegetation Management Plans (VMP) and the Wildfire Adaptation Program in coordination with districts. Coordinates and plans surveys for a variety of natural resources to provide technical data for analyses, and field monitoring activities. Uses GIS to prepare maps and conduct impact calculations. Researches, prepares, reviews, and analyzes technical reports on natural resources related to natural resource management and wildfire adaptation. Develops and recommends avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures (AMMs) to ensure successful compliance with Federal and California environmental laws, rules, regulations and requirements. Assists the Division of Maintenance with completing environmental analysis on the most complex projects including but not limited to wildfires, climate change and climate resiliency, for non-transportation projects such as vegetation management and wildfire reduction. Reviews field survey reports and develops measures to mitigate and manage environmental impacts and performs selective duties, including reviewing and preparing large regulatory compliance documents, including the CalVTP PSA/Addendum and NEPA documents. Coordinates with and participates in the Contract & Project / Program Managers meetings and contract / project development activities.
30% E	Works with the interdisciplinary team as a natural resource technical expert to provide data on natural resource management to address wildfires and fuel reduction efforts in alignment with the Governor's Wildfire Task Force. Performs liaison work with Districts, State, Federal, and Local agencies; the academic community on difficult and complex natural resource management issues. Prepares routine and specialized correspondence for the Branch Chief, and receives direction from the Branch Chief to coordinate with these groups to meet, present, confer, and gather data and analyze complex environmental issues to assess project impacts on the environment. Determines necessary procedures to follow under State and Federal law on maintenance projects and must understand and keep current on changes in the legal, regulatory, and policy environment. Uses scientific knowledge and background to develop environmental commitments. Reviews project plans to ensure environmental commitments are included in the contract documents and in all routine maintenance activities. Ensures compliance with environmental laws and regulations. Monitors and oversees consultants to meet conditions set forth in project documents and routine maintenance activities.
15% E	As a natural resource technical expert representing Maintenance, attendance at meetings and written and verbal communication will be required. The incumbent will participate in these discussions, as needed, via phone, video conference, in Caltrans offices, or in the offices of these agencies.

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15%	E	Participates on special teams and projects on issues of statewide importance. Stays current on scientific trends and knowledge related to wildfire adaptation and resiliency. 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. Takes the lead from the Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) in preparing and participating in trainings for other environmental scientists or consultants.
5%	M	Performs special assignments and studies as the need arises.

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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. 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, wildfire, and other natural resources research; principles of ecology; natural resource management, hydrology, toxicology, geology, and life-cycle analysis; 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 natural resource management; geolocation and geo-referencing software applications. 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 natural resources during routine maintenance activities and fuel reduction service contracts. This position requires knowledge of wildfire and natural resource management. The incumbent must also have the knowledge to conduct oversight and review of technical studies for encroachment permits, review of local, state and federal 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 and wildfire 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 vegetation management plans, contracts, and projects could delay the approval of environmental documents, increase costs, and delay implementation of treatments. 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 implementation 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 within the Division of Maintenance, DEA, District functional units, including 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 should also be able to utilize a computer for database management and writing reports. The incumbent may need to conduct and direct fieldwork and monitoring under adverse weather or terrain conditions, or in close proximity to live traffic and/or heavy equipment. 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 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 a Department office and sometimes in 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. The incumbent may also be exposed to uneven terrain and extreme weather conditions during field reviews.

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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