

POSITION DUTY STATEMENT

DOT PM-0924 (REV 01/2025)

CLASSIFICATION TITLE Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)	OFFICE/BRANCH/SECTION D5 Local Assistance	
WORKING TITLE Biologist	POSITION NUMBER 905-800-0765-912	REVISION DATE 02/18/2025

As a valued member of the Caltrans team, you make it possible to improve lives and communities through transportation.

GENERAL STATEMENT:

Under general direction of the Office Chief, a Supervising Transportation Engineer, is an interdisciplinary team member performing the most complex tasks to facilitate timely delivery of local agency transportation projects and is responsible for preparing and reviewing complex environmental and biological documents, technical studies, and analytical reports and having an in-depth knowledge of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Incumbent will work daily with Local Assistance staff, Federal environmental regulatory agencies, and local agency staff, including agency consultants. Incumbent will work to advance local assistance projects through NEPA studies and on to construction through project completion, resolve problems, and act on environmental issues pertaining to local projects. Incumbent will analyze and interpret Federal and State statutes, policies and programs that involve federal-aid environmental clearance, including, but not limited to, Chapter 6 of the Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM), and the Standard Environmental Reference (SER). Incumbent will be responsible for reviewing and approving biological studies and reports and engaging in Section 7 consultation with Federal regulatory agencies under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Incumbent will consider the impacts of the transportation projects and make recommendations to the project development team, including the Local Agency, regarding the appropriate courses of action in compliance with the NEPA and a multitude of other state and federal laws, regulations, policies and procedures. Incumbent will work in a team environment to deliver the Local Assistance Program and provide quality service to local agencies as well as District staff. The incumbent must be solution oriented and will need to investigate innovative solutions to meet deliverables.

The incumbent shall prepare and assist local agencies with technical studies as needed. The incumbent must stay informed of changes related to state and federal environmental laws and policies and may lead or organize trainings on such matters for local agencies.

The incumbent must be able to demonstrate knowledge of the transportation project development process through construction, be able to complete job-related and job-required training as needed, and respond to customer service inquiries. This work requires strong oral and written skills with the specific ability to prepare technical reports as well as written and verbal correspondence.

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.

- **Creativity and Innovation:** Thinks beyond the confines of traditional models to recognize opportunities, seek creative solutions and take intelligent risks. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **Dealing with Ambiguity (Risk):** Can comfortably handle risk and uncertainty, as well as make decisions to act without having the total picture. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **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. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **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. (Employee Excellence - Pride)
- **Teamwork/Partnership:** Develops, maintains, and strengthens partnerships with others inside or outside of the organization through effective communication and collaboration. (Prosperity - Collaboration)
- **Customer Focus:** Considers, prioritizes, and takes action on the needs of both internal and external customers. (Equity - Stewardship)
- **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. (Employee Excellence - Collaboration)
- **Analytical Skills:** Approaches problems using a logical, systematic, and sequential approach. Weighs priorities and recognizes underlying issues. (Employee Excellence - Innovation, Integrity)

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- **Technical Expertise:** Depth of knowledge and skill in a technical area. (Employee Excellence - Pride)

TYPICAL DUTIES:

Percentage	Essential (E)/Marginal (M) ¹	Job Description
25%	E	Researches, prepares, reviews, and analyzes technical reports on natural resources within the biological study area of transportation projects for NEPA compliance for local agency projects. Technical reports include but are not limited to: Biological Assessment (BA) for endangered species consultation, Wetland Delineations and Alternatives Analysis for wetlands, Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) evaluation, Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plans (HMMP) and other technical memoranda. Prepare Biological No-Effect Documentation as necessary. Uses Geographic Information System (GIS) to prepare maps and conduct impact calculations. Develops and recommends avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures to ensure successful compliance with Federal and California environmental laws, rules, regulations and requirements.
25%	E	Attend field reviews to quantify the impacts of transportation projects on biological resources, including wetlands and other aquatic resources, fisheries, threatened and endangered flora and fauna, and their habitats. Provide guidance to Local Agencies on required technical studies and proper consultant contract scoping. Provide oversight to consultants working on Local Agency projects to ensure compliance with State, Federal and local laws and regulations and assist with consultation and permit negotiations as needed. Maintain a professional working relationship with external partners. Assist in the analysis of project impacts on natural resources and in the design, development and recommendation of mitigation measures to protect and reduce impacts to natural resources. In conjunction with/on behalf of the Local Agency, negotiate project impact issues and permit requirements with State and Federal agencies including, but not limited to: US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Coastal Commission, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW).
20%	E	The incumbent will work as a liaison with Federal, State, and local regulatory entities, including the USFWS, CDFW, NMFS, and ACOE for coordination, consultation and compliance with various environmental and biological regulations. The incumbent will assist agencies with biological technical reports and permit applications and compliance documents (such as habitat restoration plans, mitigation monitoring plans etc.)
10%	E	Uses scientific knowledge and background to assist in the coordination 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 project plans and specifications. Reviews monitoring reports and ensures they are submitted to regulatory agencies in compliance with all permits and agreements.
10%	E	Conducts administrative duties necessary for maintaining the environmental administrative record. Tracks and monitors local agency progress in meeting project delivery milestones as related to biological resources. Works with District staff to identify alternative actions to avoid/minimize project schedule delays; provides management with information and recommendations on potential project delays. Manage the cost, scope and schedule of transportation projects within the position's purview. Articulate the critical path for environmental deliverables. Implement program performance measures and report on progress by summarizing relevant data. Analyze, manage, and report program information including records required to substantiate compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)/NEPA and other environmental regulations, laws, and policies. Create and maintain electronic records and program databases such as the State and Territorial Exchange of Vital Events (STEVE) consistent with internal procedures. Maintains files for the administrative record for projects assigned.
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. Develop and present training on natural resources issues to local agencies and District staff.

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5%	M	The incumbent must be able to lead and conduct protocol level field surveys for a variety of plant, animal and natural resources and to provide technical data for the biological analysis. This position requires GIS skills to prepare maps and conduct analysis to report both temporary and permanent impacts to varying resources of concern.
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¹ESSENTIAL 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

None

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; Federal and California 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 construction. The incumbent must also have the knowledge to conduct oversight and review of biological technical studies, 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; 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. Must be able to evaluate alternatives; present ideas effectively orally and in writing. Ability to work effectively with others as an interdisciplinary team member; establish and maintain effective and cooperative working relationships with Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as other units within the department.

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; providing clear, concise guidance for complete technical documents, reports, correspondence and other written materials. Instructing others in work procedures and providing specific project directions.

Biological Analysis:

The incumbent must have knowledge of how to manage biological resources during highway construction; knowledge of construction methods and standard measures to reduce harm to biological resources during construction. The incumbent must have knowledge of conducting protocol level field surveys for a variety of plant, animal and natural resources and to provide technical data for the biological analysis. The incumbent must have knowledge of how to perform biological impact analysis and how to develop appropriate mitigation measures to offset impacts to resources of concern. This position requires detailed knowledge of biologically related state and federal laws and regulations as they pertain to transportation projects. The incumbent must demonstrate knowledge of the Federal Endangered Species Act, California Endangered Species Act, Native Plant Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and California Fish and Game Code and the appropriate procedures and requirements for compliance with each.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR

The incumbent uses considerable judgment in researching and evaluating biological data errors could delay project delivery and increase project 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 and transportation partners.

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PUBLIC AND INTERNAL CONTACTS

Arranges for, attends and participates in meetings with State, Federal and local agencies, Department staff, and consultants in regard to environmental impacts and mitigation. Direct internal communication with supervisor is required on a regular basis, but in particular on an immediate basis when there is a need to elevate issues. Maintaining open, cooperative relationships with others is critical for the success of this position.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

You may be required to sit for long periods of time during meetings and/or while using a keyboard and video display terminal. Also must have the ability to conduct field analysis and surveys and 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. 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. Must have the ability to simultaneously manage multiple tasks, adapt to changes in priorities, and complete tasks with short notice; be open to change and new information; adapt behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles. Must be able to adhere to established deadlines. Must be able to develop and maintain cooperative working relationships; be tactful and treat others with respect. Must behave in a fair and ethical manner towards others and demonstrate a sense of responsibility and commitment to public service. The incumbent also needs to be capable of demonstrating flexibility, firmness, and a calm demeanor when appropriate in potentially physically and emotionally stressful situations.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

While at your base of operation, you will work in a climate-controlled office under artificial lighting in an office. Travel and field work may be required. Some fieldwork requires the ability to work in a variety of climatic, topographic, and geographical conditions. You may be required to travel to offices and field locations, as well as occasional travel outside of the District.

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.

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.)

I agree that by providing my electronic signature for this form, I agree to conduct business transactions by electronic means and that my electronic signature is the legal binding equivalent to my handwritten signature. I hereby agree that my electronic signature represents my execution or authentication of this form, and my intent to be bound by it.

EMPLOYEE (Print)

EMPLOYEE (Signature)

DATE

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

SUPERVISOR (Print)

SUPERVISOR (Signature)

DATE

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