

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

TITLE: Natural Resources Specialist IV

GRADE: 30

DATE: 09/06/2023

SERIES: Natural Science

CODE: 2347

EEO: Professional

FLSA: Exempt

Class Definition:

Under direction, plans and develops a complex and comprehensive countywide natural resources management program of work for a specialized natural resources program (e.g., aquatic ecology, environmental review/concept plan review, forest/vegetation ecology and management, agriculture management, stormwater management and permit compliance, wildlife ecology and management) comprised of scientific research, inventory, planning, and management operations. May manage a natural area or a large nature complex (e.g., park spanning 8000 acres including riverfront). Performs the full range of activities encountered in the field to develop, implement, and manage an assigned specialized natural resources management program as a supervisor or leader for the program. Balances natural resource conservation with public recreation needs; engages public and other stakeholders in environmental programming, such as Maryland Department of Environment, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), County Public School System. Supervises personnel, including at least two full-time employees, performs human resources and fiscal/budget administrative tasks, and participates in recruitment, selection and evaluation of staff. Develops long-range county and department-wide management plans or policies and procedures for assigned program area. Develops, plans, conducts and coordinates intensive and extensive scientific studies comprised of field and laboratory research and testing, predictive modeling and statistical analysis; develops operations and activities programs. Determines methodologies, approaches or alternatives used to achieve program and activity objectives; and leads large natural resources management projects (e.g., major roads, bridges, trails, stream restoration, stormwater management facilities, utility lines and other development projects). Performs scientific research and technical analyses on problems that are unusual, nonstandard, undefined, or in dispute to determine the underlying causes, short and long-term effects, probable affects upon key departmental programs, projects or functions, and support or opposition of citizens prior to initiating research, planning or management for potential solutions. Work has substantial impact department-wide, affecting the acute and long-term quality, function and sustainability of the Commission's natural resources, public health and safety, economic viability, public engagement and education, county-wide planning and development, and the overall policies and procedures of key departmental functions. Some work is highly confidential and highly sensitive. Applies comprehensive knowledge of, and skill in, the principles, practices and techniques of a specialized area of natural resources management, e.g., wildlife management and mitigation, forest and wetland management, environmental science, fisheries management, data analysis and research techniques, and biology; and depending on program area knowledge of Mid-Atlantic macroinvertebrate and fish taxonomy, sampling techniques, deer population management, state hunting regulations, firearm safety, natural resources vegetation management techniques, and County development regulations and environmental guidelines. Independently performs various types of research and analyses to solve difficult, complex and challenging problems. Interacts with people inside and outside the organization to exchange information, coordinate, instruct, guide, advise, persuade, influence, convince and obtain agreement or compliance or achieve other desired actions. Meets the FLSA standard for exemption as a supervisor. Performs other duties, as assigned.

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Work is assigned in terms of functions, priorities, requirements of specific assignments, known or suspected problems. Incumbent independently leads, plans and carries out the work in conformance with these parameters, established policies, procedures and accepted practices of the field of work, and resolves commonly encountered problems by selecting and applying, or implementing and adjusting, the applicable guides. Incumbent keeps the supervisor informed and handles most unusual problems and deviations independently. Work is expected to meet objectives highly effectively – the incumbent is held responsible for results; work is evaluated in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness, teamwork, customer service and such other related factors as use of skill and ingenuity in overcoming technical and non-technical problems.

Examples of Important Duties (Estimated Percentages):

1. Core Functions (±80%) – assigned functions vary by position

- Manages a complex, comprehensive countywide specialized natural resources management program (e.g., aquatic ecology, environmental review/concept plan review, forest/vegetation ecology and management, stormwater management and permit compliance, wildlife ecology and management) applying a wide knowledge of resources management and an assigned specialty. May manage a natural area or large nature complex. Performs a broad range of resources management and planning activities and serves as department subject matter expert for assigned specialty area(s); may include public education. Manages complex, large-scale projects, conducts extensive research, analyzes data, identifies needs and trends by conducting surveys and other methods, and defines program goals and objectives. Sets standards and monitors projects and program activities and expenditures ensuring performance, quality and maintenance. Develops management and operations plans and procedures for the department. Presents plans, programs and projects to the Planning Board for guidance or approval.
- Supervises other natural resources specialists or park naturalists and staff, including at least two full-time employees working within the same discipline, to include evaluating work or counseling staff on ways to improve performance. Plans, directs and coordinates work of staff; oversees the planning and organization of countywide programs and projects and the coordination of activities with other Commission divisions, other agencies and individuals. Reviews and checks work of other team members; and oversees recruitment, retention, recognition and evaluation of volunteers.
- Provides expert technical assistance and natural resources consulting to park planning and development projects, as the subject matter expert for the domain. Reviews and comments on park development projects; leads project teams during planning, development and construction phases. Advises park managers, project coordinators and construction managers on natural resources issues.

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- May manage capital improvement projects or large natural resources management projects (e.g., major roads, bridges, trails, stream restoration, stormwater management facilities, utility lines, trail development) and other development projects.
- May develop engagement, interpretation and education programs and activities that increase the public's understanding and appreciation for the environment and the outdoors; that involves, protecting complex ecosystems including forestland, aquatics, meadows while balancing recreational and agricultural use (e.g., work on in depth education collaboration where student's grow wild rice in the classroom and transplant into the park river shoreline).
- Serves as project manager leading the effort to investigate, mitigate, monitor and report on natural resources issues and impacts on parkland from development. Conducts notifications and responses to natural resources related public complaints, inquiries and special interest groups or stakeholders through phone and email communications and tracks public complaints and inquiries by way of database.
- Prepares ecological restoration plans including stream restoration, wetland creation, meadow management, vegetation plans, stormwater management. Reviews, compiles, prioritizes and maps the location of potential restoration work within their field of expertise (i.e., forestry, wildlife, stormwater management, stream ecology).
- Reviews, plans, coordinates and conducts field inspections, and provides expert technical recommendations relating to mandatory referral projects that have potential to impact parkland resources including road or other construction projects, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission work, utility work, reforestation, stream and other restoration work, wetland mitigation, trails and other similar projects.
- Develops and conducts scientific research and analysis of natural resources, usually in a specified field, including species of concern or interest, assessment of cause of impacts to environment and infrastructure and in contribution to natural resources management plans in parks.
- Reviews recommendations and prepares specifications for work to be performed by contractors. Evaluates proposals and recommends selection, ensures work is monitored and invoices are processed for payment.

2. Other (±20%)

- As a subject matter expert, may participate in interagency committees to coordinate and develop programs, resolve problems of mutual interest, or exchange information; represents the department as designated by supervisor.

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- Ensures collection, analysis and maintenance of data for wildlife management and other programs.
- May secure additional funding from external sources through partnerships, grants, fees and other fundraising strategies.
- Oversees creation, development and maintenance of public education and outreach materials including website content, presentations to staff, communities, organizations and other agencies, media releases, social media content, signage and print, radio and television interviews. May incorporate historical and cultural resources into programming and interpretation, as appropriate.
- Reviews technical literature; meets with vendors, and exchanges information with other government agencies. Attends conferences and workshops to identify new technology, programs and methods.
- Performs administrative work relating to program; ensures maintenance of records, files and inventory pertinent to areas of responsibility. Confirms preparation of technical reports and correspondence; performs advanced technical work through GIS-based projects. Initiates purchase requisitions and tracks expenditures for select projects.

Important Worker Characteristics:

- A. Comprehensive knowledge of, and skill in (1) the principles, practices and techniques of a specialized area of natural resources management, e.g., wildlife management and mitigation, forest management, environmental science, fisheries management, data analysis and research techniques, biology; (2) depending on program area knowledge of Mid-Atlantic macroinvertebrate and fish taxonomy, sampling techniques, deer population management, state hunting regulations, firearm safety and natural resources vegetation management techniques; (3) County development regulations and environmental guidelines; (4) species specific management plans and protocols*; (5) parks system*; and (6) Commission organization, policies, and procedures.*

**Typically acquired or fully developed primarily after employment in this job class.*

- B. Knowledge of, and skill in, (1) planning, assigning, and reviewing work, (2) budgeting, using capital and managing resources to accomplish work, and (3) managing work and supervising employees at the first level of supervision, or ability to rapidly acquire this knowledge and skill set; this includes knowledge of, and skill in applying, HR management and EEO principles and practices.

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- C. Expert skill and ability to (1) provide technical expertise and program leadership to community groups and government entities; (2) analyze and interpret scientific research and data; (3) perform environmental investigations and assessments; (4) monitor budgets; (5) and performs cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid.
- D. Extensive skill in problem solving to select, organize and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical or abstract) to solve a problem. This includes skill in identifying subtle aspects of problems and developing solutions. Examples include developing and applying principles to solve complex, often nonstandard problems involving many variables.
- E. Extensive skill in communication to understand verbal and written information (including assertions and arguments), draw inferences, form hypotheses and develop logical arguments, and to express such information so that others will understand and, in some situations, agree, comply or take other desired action. This includes skill in actively listening to ascertain key information, including perspective, concerns, wants and needs of others, and in coordinating to obtain desired results including agreement or compliance. Examples include reading and writing technical reports and correspondence; presenting information to large groups; and planning, directing and coordinating countywide programs and projects.
- F. Interpersonal skills to interact effectively with contacts in a businesslike, customer service-oriented manner; this includes skill in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships and working as a member or a leader of a team.
- G. Skill in operation of (1) a computer and applicable software (such as MS Office); (2) software specific to project area (e.g., ArcGIS, ArcMap, Collector, EAM, ERP); (3) environmental sampling equipment; (4) hand and power tools; (5) passenger and all-terrain vehicles; and (6) cameras.

Minimum Qualifications (MQs):

1. Bachelor's Degree in Natural Resources Management, Environmental Science, Forestry, Ecology, Wildlife Management, Fisheries Management, or any related field.
2. Four (4) years of progressively responsible natural resources or wildlife management experience or related experience, including at least two years as a leader for a natural resources program.
3. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted, which together total eight (8) years.

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4. Valid driver's license in accordance with both State and Commission rules and regulations. Driver's license must be unencumbered by restrictions, revocations, suspensions, or points that could limit the employee's ability to drive Commission vehicles or perform driving duties required by the position of assignment.
5. Pass Commission medical examination.
6. Depending on area of assignment, the ability to acquire related program certification (e.g., Maryland Deer Cooperator License, Maryland Wildlife Damage Control Operators Permit, Maryland Biological Stream Survey Fish and Macroinvertebrate Certification).

Work Conditions:

Works in office and the field. Occasionally exposed to weather and outdoor hazards requiring special safety precautions or protective clothing and equipment. Incumbents in this class must frequently: remain in a stationary position, move from place to place, stoop, reach, push and pull while performing duties to operate vehicles, tools and equipment, be able to view objects from a distance, distinguish between colors, and may occasionally handle live and dead wildlife, equipment, tools and supplies weighing up to 100 pounds. May be subject to close proximity of frequent weapons discharge. Occasionally required to work on nights, weekends, extended hours and during severe weather.