

CLASSIFICATION TITLE	OFFICE/BRANCH/SECTION	
Senior Environmental Scientist (Sup)	District 8/ Environmental Planning/ Environmental Studies	
WORKING TITLE	POSITION NUMBER	REVISION DATE
Branch Chief	908-199-0764-XXX	03/26/2025

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

GENERAL STATEMENT:

Under the general direction of the Office Chief, Deputy Director or Division Chief the incumbent is responsible for the leadership of a multi-disciplinary team of environmental professionals. This position includes hiring, staff development and performance reviews. As the Branch Chief, the incumbent is responsible for the accuracy and quality of a broad range of technical documents being prepared in their branch. The Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor works to coordinate management level interaction with local and regional agencies, federal and state resource agencies, elected officials, project stakeholders and the general public on matters pertaining to project development and compliance with environmental laws, regulations and policies. Caltrans Senior Environmental Scientists perform a broad range of work concerning environmental issues related to protecting California's resources as related to transportation projects. Incumbents do field analyses; prepare environmental documents and technical studies, environmental permitting packages and regulatory permits; ensure compliance with various environmental laws and regulations; and conduct environmental protection, planning, and mitigation activities. Incumbents apply scientific methods and principles to analyze and evaluate available data on the effects of transportation projects on all aspects of the environment; prepare and review California Environmental Quality Act/National Environmental Policy Act (CEQA/NEPA) and other technical documents to determine the effects; and implement mitigation strategies to lessen the impact of those projects. As the first supervisory level of the series, incumbents supervise and direct the work of professional or technical staff, are responsible for staff development, performance evaluation, program budgeting, and work force planning, and do other related work.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

As a Senior Environmental Scientist (Sup), 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. (Employee Excellence - Innovation, People First)
- **Dealing with Ambiguity (Risk):** Can comfortably handle risk and uncertainty, as well as make decisions to act without having the total picture. (Safety, Prosperity - Collaboration)
- **Continuous Professional Development:** Seeks to obtain knowledge and improve performance while supporting others in doing the same. (Equity, Climate Action - Equity, Stewardship)
- **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 - Integrity)
- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Sets team structure. Organizes, leads, and facilitates team activities. Promotes team cooperation and encourages participation. Capable of cross functionality and working well with others on a team to achieve personal goals, team goals, and organizational goals. Takes responsibility for individual actions in order to achieve consistent results. (Equity, Prosperity - Collaboration)
- **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. (Climate Action - Innovation)
- **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. (Equity, Prosperity - Collaboration, Equity)
- **Analytical Skills:** Approaches problems using a logical, systematic, and sequential approach. Weighs priorities and recognizes underlying issues. (Employee Excellence - Innovation)
- **Technical Expertise:** Depth of knowledge and skill in a technical area. (Employee Excellence - Collaboration, Innovation, Integrity)

TYPICAL DUTIES:

Percentage Essential (E)/Marginal (M) ¹	Job Description
35% E	Oversight of Field Analysis and Documentation: Each branch chief will supervise a multi-disciplinary staff delivering a large workload of diverse projects. These projects may include but are not limited to, major infrastructure, safety, paving, culvert replacement, mitigation, fuel reduction, fish passage, wildlife connectivity, Clean CA, local oversight, etc. Each of these projects may be in a different phase of project delivery and in an environment with unique environmental resources. In order to ensure successful delivery this position is responsible for providing supervision and technical guidance on a multitude of scientific and research based analytical reports that are summarized into the CEQA/NEPA documents and technical studies, and as such is responsible for understanding the various protocols used for appropriate and defensible field studies. While the environmental products may vary in each branch, all products must demonstrate that transportation projects are being analyzed in accordance with state and federal laws, regulations, policies and guidelines. The Senior Environmental Scientist supervisor is responsible for ensuring that staff work is completed with a high degree of professionalism and utilizing the best available guidance and information.
35% E	Staff Management: The Senior Environmental Scientist supervisor, also referred to as a branch chief, manages a multi-functional team of various environmental professionals and is responsible for staff development, performance evaluation, program budgeting and work force planning and other related work. The incumbent oversees performance management and conducts annual staff reviews, evaluates staff's skill sets and works with staff to create an individual professional development plan. This position ensures that staff are conducting their work following all field review methodologies, documentation guidance and safety protocols and that staff are current on training towards their ongoing professional development. This position is responsible to ensure that staff are following best practices for securing field data and appropriately documenting scientific findings.
20% E	Coordination and contracting: The incumbent coordinates with various functional units to help the team obtain information necessary to complete their environmental work products. This position is responsible for maintaining communication with the Office Chief, Project Management and others on the environmental risks to project delivery. Assists with contract management and oversight of consultant prepared technical studies and reports. This position ensures that task management is being implemented. The incumbent will often act as a liaison between the Department, local and regional environmental agencies, boards and commissions and represents the Department at meetings, hearings and other related public forums.
10% M	As Environmental regulations and policies change frequently, the Senior Environmental Scientist supervisor is responsible for staying current on changes and communicating those changes effectively to staff.

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

Directly supervises a branch made up of various environmental professionals that may include but is not limited to Environmental Scientists, Environmental Planners and Transportation Engineers.

KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES, AND ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge of: Complex principles of environmental resources research; principles of ecology; statistical methods; California and Federal environmental laws, rules, regulations, and requirements; 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 be able to identify and resolve difficult environmental and transportation problems; to appraise the relative priority of on-going projects; to develop technically sound alternatives and solutions which includes developing new approaches, policy and procedural changes and revisions; to provide thorough and complete staff work to meet the needs of the Department.

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 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.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR

Responsible to plan, organize and direct timely completion of all environmental clearances for transportation projects which often includes making difficult, complex and technical environmental planning and administrative decisions; errors in judgment regarding the application of federal and state laws, rules and regulations could cause a loss of funding and project failure; detailed supervision which includes making decisions and providing advice as an interdisciplinary team member in planning and developing transportation planning systems. Failure to manage allocated budget resources could adversely affect management performance and program delivery.

Consequences of poor performance and/or judgment errors can result in the following:

- Delay of project – This results when coordination with State and Federal regulatory agencies or the private sector breaks down and controversies develop over impact assessment and appropriate mitigation measures.
- Increased costs – Delays to projects have the effect of increasing project costs due to inflation and/or inappropriate planning. Further, should delays occur after the contract is let, the cost of possible contractor claims could incur.
- Litigation – Failure to comply with environmental laws leaves Caltrans vulnerable to legal action to force compliance. Litigation leads to delay and cost effects described above.
- Loss of credibility – Failure to produce adequate studies, follow procedures correctly, or ensure that commitments are kept in a timely manner could lead to damaging relationships and credibility with external agencies having review and approval functions.
- High cost solutions – Poor judgment in the selection of mitigation measures could result in excessive project costs.

PUBLIC AND INTERNAL CONTACTS

Responsible for providing technical advice on all matters relating to environmental planning to both Headquarters and Region Managers, as well as staff from local, regional, state and federal agencies. May be asked to represent the Department with external partners, elected officials and the public.

May attend high level 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.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The incumbent may be required to sit for long periods of time using a keyboard and video display terminal. Also must have the ability to conduct field analysis and surveys.

Must have the ability to deal with 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 value cultural diversity and other individual differences in the workforce. Behave in a fair and ethical manner towards others and demonstrates a sense of responsibility and commitment to public service.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

While at the base of operation, the incumbent will work in a climate-controlled office under artificial lighting in an office. Frequent travel and field work are required within the Region. Some fieldwork requires the ability to work in a variety of climatic and geographical conditions. The incumbent may be required to travel to offices and field locations, as well as occasional travel outside of the area.

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
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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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