

POSITION DUTY STATEMENT

DOT PM-0924 (REV 01/2025)

CLASSIFICATION TITLE Environmental Scientist	OFFICE/BRANCH/SECTION District 5 Environmental	
WORKING TITLE Aquatic Resources Biologist	POSITION NUMBER 905-156-0762-003	REVISION DATE 12/12/2022

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

GENERAL STATEMENT:

Under the direction of the Environmental Branch Chief, the incumbent is an interdisciplinary team member who will be responsible for preparing and reviewing complex environmental and biological documents, technical studies, and analytical reports to ensure compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and numerous state and federal environmental resource laws and regulations. Incumbent is the Aquatic Resource Biologist on Department projects and is responsible for the preparation and submittal of permit applications to various state and federal agencies, as well as developing mitigation and monitoring plans, and handling all permit related coordination with the representatives of the regulatory agencies. The incumbent provides consultation recommendations; identifies and analyzes the impacts of transportation systems, corridors and projects on biological resources and formulates, calculates and quantifies measures to mitigate impacts to jurisdictional aquatic resources. Incumbent acts as a representative of the Department in negotiations with regulatory agency staff for permits and consultations, and independently manages consultant task orders. This position also works with confidential and privileged information and is the responsible charge with managing cost, scope, schedule and project 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. 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. This position may require site visits, sometimes to remote areas, which may require driving a personal or state vehicle on public roadways or on uneven terrain. Occasional overtime, travel and overnight stays may be required. Possession of a valid driver's license is required when operating a State owned or leased vehicle.

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.

- **Creativity and Innovation:** Thinks beyond the confines of traditional models to recognize opportunities, seek creative solutions and take intelligent risks. (Climate Action - 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 - Collaboration)
- **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 - 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 - Collaboration)
- **Teamwork/Partnership:** Develops, maintains, and strengthens partnerships with others inside or outside of the organization through effective communication and collaboration. (Employee Excellence - Collaboration, 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. (Prosperity, Employee Excellence - Collaboration, Pride)
- **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. (Employee Excellence - Collaboration)
- **Planning and Results Oriented:** Organizes and executes work to meet organizational goals and objectives while meeting quality standards, following organizational processes, and demonstrating continuous commitment. (Safety, Prosperity, Employee Excellence - Collaboration, Integrity, Pride)
- **Technical Expertise:** Depth of knowledge and skill in a technical area. (Climate Action, Employee Excellence - Collaboration, People First, Pride)

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TYPICAL DUTIES:

Percentage Essential (E)/Marginal (M) ¹	Job Description
20% E	<p>Regulatory Permitting: Works with project biologist, project managers, and other PDT members to coordinate all aspects of the permitting process for projects and obtain project permits. In addition to the responsibility of obtaining project permits, the incumbent will assist or lead the development of Programmatic permits to streamline common Department activities. This may include Master Agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Assist or lead in preparation of a District-wide GIS database documenting Compensatory Mitigation sites. Assist or lead in developing a corresponding geodatabase with metadata for each Compensatory Mitigation site, including site specific details such as mitigation acreage, sensitive vegetation communities and habitat types for threatened and endangered species. Research and analyze fish passage data to document compliance with Senate Bill 857. Coordinates with permitting agency representatives including early coordination during the PA&ED phase, as necessary, and ongoing coordination through PS&E and Construction phases. Prepares permit applications, obtains funds for application fees, and obtains permits and amendments (as necessary) for projects. Coordinates draft permit internal review by the PDT and provides comments to the regulatory agencies. Prepares mitigation and monitoring plans and proposals for the permits and coordinates the review and approval of those plans both internally and with the regulatory agencies. During the construction phase, handles all permit required reporting including issues related to non-compliance and permit amendments or extensions. Updates the project Environmental Commitment Record as related to the permits, updates and monitors the Biological Monitoring Calendar, develops and maintains electronic mitigation tools, reviews environmental specifications for projects, and maintains knowledge of mitigation options including mitigation banks and potential conservation easements to assist the project biologist with offsite mitigation development. Works in the field, as necessary, to develop permit applications and will participate in site visits during construction to verify compliance status.</p>
20% E	<p>Biological Analysis: Analyzes and evaluates environmental impacts of transportation improvement projects with respect to relevant biological laws and regulations for determining impacts to wetlands, special-status species, and other biological resources, using database searches, literature searches, and field analysis. Prepares biological reports on all types of projects including those with complex, controversial or large impacts. Perform peer review of biological reports prepared by other staff. Prepares and/or reviews permit applications for Streambed Alteration Agreements, Water Quality Certifications, and Clean Water Act permits. This position must demonstrate the ability to complete and coordinate all necessary information for a complete permit application. Serves as the lead Department representative in coordination with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies, such as USFWS, CDFW, NMFS, USFS and USACE for coordination, consultation and compliance with various environmental and biological regulations. The incumbent will also represent the Department in negotiations for obtaining permits with these agencies. Participate in elevation meetings to resolve conflict with regulatory agencies. Create presentations for elevation meetings and prepare memos to brief executive management on status of elevation meetings. Coordinates with other Caltrans employees contributing to environmental studies. Prepare and/or review of scoping documents for planning purposes. Prepares mitigation monitoring reports to comply with post-construction monitoring requirements.</p>
20% E	<p>Biological Surveys: 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. The incumbent will be able to conduct jurisdictional delineations of wetlands, waters, and riparian areas, including analysis of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and hydrology indicators in accordance with the applicable Regional Supplements to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and the State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State. This position requires GIS skills to prepare maps and conduct impact calculations. Field surveys include, but are not limited to, walking transects, trapping, collecting specimens, digging soil pits, and visually identifying plant and animal species. If in a leadworker capacity, the incumbent must be able to direct individuals or teams conducting field studies.</p>

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10%	E	Agency Coordination and contracting: Lead or assist in creating stakeholder groups that include local experts and conservation groups, along with regulatory agencies and local agencies. Participate in technical and coordination meetings, including representing the Department at quarterly agency meetings with Caltrans and state and federal agency partners for coordination, consultation and compliance with various environmental and biological regulations. Represents the Department at public meetings for projects and/or respond to public comments regarding biological resources. Prepares, executes negotiates and reviews consultant services contracts, task orders, scopes of work, cost estimates, inter-agency agreements, and cooperative agreements. Serves as contract manager responsible for contract administration, task order issuance, payment issues, oversight of consultant's work performance, and document review. The incumbent will conduct oversight and review of local agency documents and biological reports. Prepares and/or reviews permit applications for oversight projects. Must be able to independently evaluate impact analysis and recommended biological mitigation measures to ensure local agencies are in compliance with all applicable environmental laws and regulations.
10%	M	Environmental Project Management: Manage the cost, scope and schedule of transportation projects within the position's purview. Articulate the critical path 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 CEQA/NEPA and other environmental regulations, laws, and policies. Create and maintain electronic records and program databases such as STEVE consistent with internal procedures. Monitors hours by task in PRSM and maintains both the hard copy and electronic files for projects assigned. Performs assigned duties with access to necessary equipment. Maintains and uses specialty equipment safely and ensures that it is not lost, damaged, or stolen when it is being used. Perform administrative work as directed, write draft and final reports, prepare technical correspondence, and provide any needed technical guidance as directed by the Environmental Branch Chief. Perform other job-related duties as required.

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. This position reports to the Environmental Branch Chief.

KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES, AND ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS

Must have a high degree of competency in knowledge of transportation planning; natural, physical and social sciences; data organization; synthesis capabilities; and environmental law including the National Environmental Policy Act and the California Environmental Quality Act.

Biological Analysis:

The incumbent must have knowledge of how to manage biological resources during highway 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. This position requires knowledge of biologically related state and federal laws and regulations as they pertain to transportation projects. Specifically, the incumbent must demonstrate knowledge of the Clean Water Act, California Fish and Game Code, Senate Bill 857, Porter-Cologne Act, State Policy for Water Quality Control: State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State, and Regional Supplements to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region and Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region.

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Mitigation Analysis:

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. Specific to transportation project delivery, this position provides technical support to habitat conservation staff on CESA and mitigation land acquisition, support mitigation and conservation banking, conduct mitigation negotiations, develop procedures and standards to mitigate for impacts to jurisdictional aquatic resources and threatened and endangered species, and develop local and regional conservation approaches in coordination with Caltrans staff, private landowners, nonprofits and other agencies.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR

- 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

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.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

You 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

The incumbent will work in a climate-controlled environment in a cubicle-based office setting; in a home office as part of an approved telework agreement between the incumbent and the employer; and in the field in locations ranging from office buildings to locations on/or adjacent to the State Highway System. These situations may expose the incumbent to potentially unsafe situations, and the incumbent will be required to take mandated trainings and adhere to safe work and field practices. Some fieldwork requires the ability to work in a variety of climatic, topographic, and geographical conditions. 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. Working hours will be set sometimes between 6:00am and 6:00pm. Employee must be reachable during work hours while teleworking. Overtime may be required, and vacations may be restricted, during peak times and fiscal year-end closing. Occasional overtime, travel, and overnight stays may be required.

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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.)

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