

POSITION DUTY STATEMENT

PM-0924 (REV 01/2022)

CLASSIFICATION TITLE Environmental Scientist	OFFICE/BRANCH/SECTION 10/Division of Planning, Local Assistance, & Environmental	
WORKING TITLE Environmental Scientist (Biologist)	POSITION NUMBER 910-168-0762-XXX	REVISION DATE 06/02/2023

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:

Under the general direction of the Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), the incumbent is 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), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), California Endangered Species Act (CESA), Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), and other state and federal environmental resource laws and regulations. In support of District 10 Local Assistance, Maintenance Design, Field Maintenance, Emergency Director's Order, Encroachment Permit, and Planning Programs, the incumbent will review and/or prepare environmental documents for compliance with applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and departmental policies. The incumbent identifies, analyzes, and quantifies impacts of transportation systems, corridors, and projects on environmental resources. The incumbent will provide oversight and review technical studies completed by local partners and/or consultants, identify and articulate project impacts, and recommended environmental mitigation measures. The incumbent will lead and conduct protocol level field surveys for a variety of plant, animal, waters/wetlands, and natural resources and to provide technical data for the biological analysis. The incumbent will plan, organize, and carry out field surveys to ensure timely delivery of biological reports. The incumbent must demonstrate the ability to prepare complete permit application packages and coordinate directly with the appropriate regulatory agencies. The incumbent will work as a liaison with federal, state, and local regulatory entities, including California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) for permit coordination, consultation, and compliance with various environmental and biological regulations. The incumbent may also prepare task orders for biological surveys and associated activities, over-see contracts, and review and approve invoices.

The incumbent shall represent the Department in a professional manner and maintain a professional working relationship with internal and external partners. The incumbent must be solution oriented and effectively 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. A valid driver's license is desired.

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. (Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency - Innovation, 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 - Innovation, Pride)
- **Reliability:** Ability to demonstrate dependability in meeting commitments, and providing a consistent work product. Takes responsibility for individual actions in order to meet deadline demands. (Cultivate Excellence, Enhance and Connect the Multimodal Transportation Network - 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. (Enhance and Connect the Multimodal Transportation Network, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency - Engagement, Innovation)
- **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, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity)

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- **Customer Focus:** Considers, prioritizes, and takes action on the needs of both internal and external customers. (Safety First, Advance Equity and Livability in all Communities - Engagement, Equity, Integrity)
- **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. (Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency - Engagement, Equity)
- **Analytical Skills:** Approaches problems using a logical, systematic, and sequential approach. Weighs priorities and recognizes underlying issues. (Safety First, Enhance and Connect the Multimodal Transportation Network, Lead Climate Action - Innovation, Pride)
- **Technical Expertise:** Depth of knowledge and skill in a technical area. (Cultivate Excellence, Enhance and Connect the Multimodal Transportation Network, Strengthen Stewardship and Drive Efficiency - Innovation, Integrity, Pride)

TYPICAL DUTIES:

Percentage	Job Description
Essential (E)/Marginal (M) ¹	
30% E	In support of the District Local Assistance Federal-Aid Program, provide biological technical oversight, guidance, and analysis for transportation improvement projects on and off the State Highway System. Attend field reviews with local partners and their representatives, consultants, and regulatory agencies. Advise and direct various project stakeholders regarding the environmental process, local, state, and federal laws and regulations, Departmental policies, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) policies. Identify the appropriate level of biological and other natural resource technical documentation, permits, certifications, and/or approvals that will be required for compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Evaluate potential impacts to special-status species, wetlands and waters, and other biological resources within the project area, with respect to relevant state and federal laws and regulations. Review and recommend approval of technical studies, Draft and Final Environmental Documents, and other written material prepared by external partners and consultants. Complete technical studies and carry out FESA Section 7 consultation on behalf of local partners. Provide guidance to local partners on the interpretation and implementation of various permit measures and conditions before, during, and after construction as necessary. Work with cities, counties, local governments, and environmental organizations to secure environmental approvals in a timely manner.
30% E	In support of District Maintenance Design, Field Maintenance, Clean California, and Emergency Director's Order Programs, assess potential impacts of transportation improvement projects on biological and other natural resources on the State Highway System. Determine potential for resources to exist within the project limits and evaluate impacts with respect to relevant local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Perform database and literature research, field surveys, data collection, and utilize GPS tools and GIS software to support resource impact analysis and determinations. Organize, lead, and conduct protocol level field surveys as necessary. Identify the level of technical documentation and the permits, certifications, and/or approvals that will be required for compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. Clearly and concisely document data, analysis, and conclusions in technical reports and other written materials. Prepare clear visual displays, such as maps, graphs, and other illustrations. Make recommendations for alternative project designs and construction methods to reduce or avoid impacts to biological resources. Identify and/or develop project commitments to avoid or reduce impacts to biological resources and ensure those commitments are properly included in project Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E). Consult with internal and external partners, regulatory agencies, the public, and other consulting parties. Responsible for coordinating with various internal and external individuals to ensure the timely delivery of the biological documents, permits, certifications, and other environmental approvals.

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15%	E	Serve as the Department representative in coordination with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies on species related permitting, consultation, and compliance under FESA and CESA with USFWS, CDFW, RWQCB, USACE, and NMFS. Prepare and review permit applications (Lake & Streambed Alteration Agreements, Incidental Take Permits (ITP), Consistency Determinations, Section 404 Permits, and Section 401 Certifications), consultation documents (such as Biological Assessments for Biological Opinions) and compliance documents (such as habitat restoration plans, mitigation monitoring plans, etc.) with regulatory agencies. Obtain funds for application fees. Coordinate directly with regulatory agency representatives during early coordination efforts and throughout the PS&E and Construction phases as necessary. Coordinate with internal and external experts to identify potential mitigation opportunities for a variety of species and habitats. Negotiate appropriate mitigation and monitoring requirements and obtain all biological permits, certifications, and/or other approvals required for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations. Update the project Environmental Commitment Record with appropriate permit measures/conditions. Ensure the permit measures/conditions are included in project Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) as necessary. Handle permit reporting requirements during the construction phase, including issues related to noncompliance and permit amendments or extensions.
10%	E	Review District Encroachment Permit applications for various projects that will occur on the State Highway System. Determine potential for special-status species, wetlands and waters, and other biological resources within the project area. Evaluate resource impacts the project may have with respect to relevant state and federal laws and regulations. Review and recommend approval of consultant-prepared technical studies and documents for biological and other natural resources. Ensure technical reports and environmental documents comply with applicable state and federal environmental laws and Departmental policies. Ensure the applicant has obtained all biological permits, certifications, and other approvals required for the work on the State Highway System to be compliant with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Respond to applicant questions about biological issues and provide guidance as necessary.
10%	E	Responsible for reviewing project proposals, technical studies, and environmental documents as part of the Local Developmental Review process. Determine potential for special-status species, wetlands and waters, and other biological resources within the project area. Evaluate resource impacts the project may have with respect to relevant state and federal laws and regulations. Identify the appropriate studies, efforts, permits, and/or consultation that will be required for impacts to resources on the State Highway System. Review and comment on General and Specific Plans to ensure impacts to the State Highway System are fully addressed, citing applicable environmental laws and regulations, and Departmental policies as necessary. Prepare a concise response on Comprehensive Multi-modal Corridor Plans (CMCP) and other local Planning projects.
5%	M	Conduct administrative duties necessary for maintaining the environmental administrative record. Update project related databases and tracking tools, including STEVE and LP2000. On occasion, takes the lead in preparing and participating in trainings for internal staff or consultants. Participates on special teams and projects on issues of statewide importance. Stays current on scientific trends and knowledge. Stays up to date on current topics by reading subject literature and participating in professional organizations.

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. However, the Environmental Scientist may act in the lead capacity providing guidance and direction to entry level staff, student assistants, and/or volunteers working on environmental projects.

KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES, AND ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS

The Environmental Scientist is required to have extensive knowledge of environmental laws and regulations, and processes relating to natural resource issues and compliance. The incumbent must understand the similarities and differences of CEQA, NEPA, and other pertinent environmental laws and regulations as they pertain to transportation improvement projects. Must have the ability to compile and analyze biological information; plan and conduct field surveys for natural resources; evaluate the potential for impacts to listed species or their habitat and look for creative solutions to decrease impacts. The incumbent must be able to analyze and interpret data from scientific reports and field surveys to formulate logical conclusions and develop appropriate mitigation measures to offset impacts to resources of concern. Must be able to prepare clear, concise technical reports. 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. The incumbent must stay up to date with current environmental laws, regulations, procedures, departmental policy, and compliance requirements.

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The incumbent must be able to establish and maintain cooperative and amicable relationships with state, federal, local agencies, and the public, as well as other individuals within the department. The incumbent must have the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Good reasoning and negotiation skills are invaluable in this position.

The incumbent must have the ability to drive a motor vehicle safely or be able to coordinate transportation needs with those that do. Ability to use a computer and associated software (Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat, ArcGIS Pro, Google Earth) is critical to the success of this position.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ERROR

The Environmental Scientist will make independent decisions relative to the collection and analysis of data and report content, which includes making recommendations regarding scope of studies, need for permits/consultation with regulatory agencies, and level of effort required to comply with various local, state, and federal environmental laws and regulations. Error made in carrying out this responsibility could result in the delay of projects, increased project costs, and unnecessary impacts to resources of concern. In addition, failure to comply with environmental laws leaves the Department vulnerable to legal action to force compliance, which also leads to project delays, cost effects, and poor working relations with others.

PUBLIC AND INTERNAL CONTACTS

The Environmental Scientist has numerous contacts with individuals within the Department, with other local, state, and federal agencies, consultants, contractors, and with the public. These contacts are a result of consulting with outside experts, providing guidance to internal/external partners, and when acting as a liaison between the county, state and federal environmental regulatory agencies and the Department. Direct internal communication with supervisor is required on a regular basis. The incumbent must act in a courteous and professional manner and represent the Department in a positive light.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The incumbent is expected to dress appropriately for the task being completed and be flexible in dealing with changing work environments. The latter would include working outside in inclement/fair weather, traversing mountainous/uneven terrain, working before or after normal office hours, and sitting in an office for extended periods of time using a keyboard and/or video display terminal. The incumbent may be required to work under stressful situations and be able to respond appropriately to irate individuals both in field and office settings. The incumbent is expected to use good judgment and tact, be professional, logical and use effective negotiating skills. The incumbent is expected to be prompt when reporting to work, and treat others with fairness, honesty, and respect.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The incumbent will be required to work in both the field and office setting. While in the office, the incumbent will work in a climate-controlled setting under artificial light. While in the field, the incumbent can encounter a variety of climatic, topographic, and geographical conditions. Travel may be required to various offices and field locations within and outside of the District.

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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.)

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