Forestry Aid, GS-0462-03

Wildland Firefighter Apprentice

Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Program

SPD# FDIA003

I. Introduction

This is a standard wildland fire management position description intended for use in the Department of Interior (DOI). The position description is only to be used for positions enrolled as a Department of Labor registered apprentice in the Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Program (WFAP). The position is located on a wildland fire module or crew within the fire management organization. The purpose of the position is to serve in a developmental trainee capacity as a wildland fire apprentice. The position serves as a firefighter on one or more of the following module types: engine, handcrew (suppression, fuels or wildland fire module) or helitack.

Other developmental wildland fire related duties performed under the guidance and direction of a journey level firefighter, will involve fire prevention, dispatch, and prescribed burning. The incumbent will also be instructed on the proper maintenance and repair of firefighting tools, equipment and facilities. As part of the apprenticeship program attends compulsory training in a residential academy setting.

This is a developmental position in a career ladder which functions in a training environment in order to gain the necessary experience to prepare the incumbent for meeting the required qualifications of the fully qualified senior firefighter, GS-462-05 Forestry Technician position (DOI SPD# FDI0205).

II. Major Duties

Wildland Fire Apprentice Work (80%)

Serves as a trainee member of a fire crew, performing recurring fire suppression duties under the direction and instruction of others. Performs assignments as a wildland firefighter in developing a working knowledge of fire suppression and fuels management techniques, practices and terminology by serving on the various wildland fire crew/module types listed below. The apprentice may serve on multiple module types listed below, it is required that they serve on a handcrew or engine prior to completion of the program; not all types are required.

Handcrew - Apprentice

Serves on a handcrew, or on a prescribed or wildland fire module. Performs aspects of wildland and prescribed fire operations such as, line construction, ignition device (e.g. fusees, drip torches, flares, and terra torch) use, patrolling fire line, and the use of water and hand tools to perform mop-up. Participates in the collection of fire weather data, fuel loading data, tree stand density data and fuel and/or soil moisture samples.

Wildland Fire Engine - Apprentice

Serves on a wildland fire engine. Assists in starting pump engine, priming pump, adjusting engine speed and pump valves, laying hose, and using appropriate nozzles and nozzle adjustment in effective use of water and additives. Performs line construction and mop-up activities.

Helitack - Apprentice

Serves on a helitack module. Assists in loading helicopter with personnel and cargo, considering methods, weight distribution, necessity for securing cargo, total weight, etc. Inventories and inspects helicopter accessories, fire tools, and equipment. Assures that needed tools and equipment are available for firefighting tasks. May exit helicopter in remote areas to assist in the construction of helispots, or to attack small fires, or spot fires. Performs helicopter longline operations.

Other Training and Developmental Assignments (20%)

After orientation and training, may be assigned to a fire lookout to provide detection and reporting of wildfires.

May perform forestry, range, and desert project work such as road and trail maintenance, habitat manipulation, and miscellaneous equipment and facilities maintenance.

Other Significant Facts

The duties of this position are so rigorous that employment is limited to young and physically vigorous individuals who must meet established age and physical qualification requirements.

This is a testing designated position (TDP) under the Department of the Interior Drug-Free Workplace Program.

Incumbent is subject to medical examination and must pass the work capacity test for arduous positions.

Incumbents are required to sign the apprentice agreement and adhere to the standards established by the National Interagency Joint Apprentice Agreement.

May require a valid state driver's license to operate light vehicles and 4X4s.

Performs other similar duties as assigned.

III. Factor Levels

Factor 1. Knowledge Required by the Position (Level 1-2, 200 points)

Basic knowledge of standard wildland fire management program requirements, suppression tactics, methods and procedures in the use of wildland firefighting hand tools, pumps and hoses, and chainsaws sufficient to perform both suppression and prescribed fire assignments and to maintain firefighting tools and equipment.

Introductory knowledge of fire behavior, hazards, and commonly used fire safety practices and procedures to prevent injury and loss of life.

Ability to perform duties under stressful and adverse operating conditions, such as long work hours, heavy workloads, emergency situations, adverse working and environmental conditions.

Possesses the ability to verbally communicate as a working member of the team.

Knowledge of agency and interagency qualification, position task book requirements, and certification standards and procedures adopted by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

Knowledge of appropriate act requirements to include the Equal Opportunity Act, Civil Rights Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Rehabilitation Act, 29 CFR 1604.11(a) Sexual Harassment sufficient to function within a diverse workforce.

Knowledge of reporting requirements and procedures.

Factor 2. Supervisory Controls (Level 2-1, 25 points)

The supervisor or a journey level employee assigns specific tasks and provides clear instructions on the methods to be used in completing the tasks. On any fieldwork the trainee is accompanied by an experienced or higher graded employee. .

The aid is expected to work as instructed, consulting with the readily available authority on matters which may not be specifically covered.

The work is closely monitored, with work reviewed in progress. Completed work is reviewed for compliance with instructions given.

Factor 3. Guidelines (Level 3-1, 25 points)

Procedures for doing the work have been established and a number of specific guidelines exist which require little or no judgement. These may include oral instructions, standing operating procedures, maps, equipment manuals, health and safety codes, fireline handbooks, field operations guides, and hands on training received prior to performing fuels management and fire suppression activities. The

employee works in strict adherence to the guidelines, questions needing clarity to the supervisor or higher graded employee who is available and in the field during wildland fire suppression activities.

Factor 4. Complexity (Level 4-1, 25 points)

Performs a variety of routine tasks directly related to the suppression of wildland fires. Duties assigned familiarize the Incumbent with the occupational field of wildland firefighting. May use several types of hand and power tools and equipment. Specific tasks, use of tools and methods, and the sequence in which tasks are to be done are first demonstrated by higher graded wildland firefighters. Generally the work is quickly understood and accomplished. Actions taken vary dependent upon the fire terrain, intensity of fire, fuels availability, wind velocity, and values at risk.

Factor 5. Scope and Effect (Level 5-2, 75 points)

The primary focus of the trainee's work as a member of a module/crew contributes to the overall effectiveness of an organization's wildland fire management effort. The work involves the execution of specific rules, regulations, or procedures and typically comprises a complete segment of an assignment or project of broader scope. Work involves the execution of specific procedures, techniques, which differ with each fire's fuel type, weather conditions, and topography. The effect of the work performed is to minimize loss of natural resources, improvements, property or life.

Factor 6. & 7. Personal and Purpose of Contacts (Level 1/A, 30 points)

Contacts are primarily with other members of the crew, the crew leader/supervisor, and others in the wildland fire management organization.

Contacts are made to exchange information about the immediate work situation and receive instructions, ask questions, and receive any needed clarification on how the work is to be done.

Meets and deals on day-to-day matters with co-workers and the general public to exchange information.

Factor 8. Physical Demands (Level 8-3, 50 points)

Essential functions require arduous exertion for protracted periods of time such as, but not limited to, extensive running, walking, climbing, kneeling, stooping, pulling hoses, jumping and twisting.

Duties involve rigorous fieldwork requiring above average physical performance, endurance and superior conditioning. Work requires prolonged standing, walking over uneven ground, and recurring bending, reaching, lifting and carrying of items weighing over 50 pounds and shared lifting and carrying of heavier items, and similar activities requiring at least average agility and dexterity.

Duties include the performance of physically demanding activities during emergencies, under adverse environmental conditions, and over extended periods of time. Operation of some specialized fire equipment can place extended physical stress on employee during fire activities.

Factor 9. Work Environment (Level 9-3, 50 points)

The work is primarily performed in forest, range and desert environments in steep terrain where surfaces may be extremely uneven, rocky, covered with thick tangled vegetation, smoky conditions, etc. Temperatures commonly exceed 100 degrees F and fall below freezing. Risks include smoke inhalation, fire entrapment, snake or insect bites and stings, exposure to excessive machinery noise, and falling and rolling material. Personnel must adjust and cope with exposure to weather elements, dust and smoke, poor bivouac and eating situations under an unpredictable set of circumstances. Incumbent may be required to live in backcountry camps for extended periods of time. The hazardous nature of the work requires that personal protective equipment be worn (boots, hardhat, gloves, flame resistant clothing, etc.). Work may require travel by light fixed-wing or rotor-wing aircraft.

Evaluation Summary	**Final Level**	**Points**
Knowledge Required by the Position	1- 2	200
Supervisory Controls	2- 1	25
Guidelines	3- 1	25
Complexity	4- 1	25
Scope and Effect	5- 2	75
Personal Contacts	1	
Purpose of Contacts	A	30
Physical Demands	8- 3	50
Work Environment	9- 3	50
Total Points:	480	
Final Grade:		**GS-3**
Official Title: Forestry Aid	**SPD # FDIA003**	
Standard(s) used to evaluate the position	Flysheet for Forestry Technician, GS-0462, TS-111 Dec 1991, Aid & Technical Work in the Biological Sciences Series, GS-0400,TS-111 Dec 1991	
Comments: Major duties account for 100% of time. This position is at the full performance level.		