Department of the Interior Standard Position Description
PD Number: DE00600

Classification: Student Trainee (Wildland Fire Management), GS-0499-03

INTRODUCTION

This position is organizationally located on a wildland fire module or crew within one of four fire bureaus within the Department of the Interior (Department); however, this position may be assigned work on interagency crews where the crew leader is from a different bureau or agency.

As a Student Trainee in Wildland Fire Management, the position involves periods of formal education and periods of employment as a Wildland Firefighter. The education and employment are part of the Pathways Intern Program. The level of education and experience completed by the student is a major consideration in establishing the level of on-the-job training and work assignments.

MAJOR DUTIES (100%)

This is an entry level position. Receives training (formal and on-the-job experience) in the fundamental procedures and techniques of wildland fire management work. This includes managing risks and hazards, safety protocols, and proper use of equipment.

Works with higher-graded firefighters and receives on-the-job training, instruction, and orientation in prevention and preparedness activities such as maintenance of fire tools, equipment, and fire caches; use of radios and telecommunications equipment; keeping records of firefighting equipment; orientation of dispatching procedures; inspecting campgrounds and public use areas; explaining basic fire prevention measures to visitors; and preparing reports of lost or damaged articles.

Participates in fuels management, fire suppression, monitoring, and post-fire activities under the direction of higher-graded firefighters by attacking, controlling, or mopping up fires, building or patrolling firelines, cleaning up burned areas within firelines, suppressing spot fires, felling snags or trees, and cutting brush. On natural caused fires when applying a strategy other than full suppression may be tasked to observe, collect, and record fire-related data with regards to fuels, topography, weather, fire behavior, fire effects, smoke, and fire location. Uses standard firefighting tools such as Pulaskis, shovels, McLeods, chainsaws, fire hose, backpack pumps, drip torches, and fusees.

Participates in physical fitness programs.

Training may include serving in other fire program areas such as logistical dispatch, cache warehouse, incident business, and administrative support.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

FACTORS

Guidelines

A large body of specialized technical firefighting, safety, fire prevention, and fire organization guides exist and must be thoroughly understood and applied. These guides include manuals, handbooks, training aids, maps and charts, and special instructions and practices pertaining to the use of mechanized equipment, aerial techniques, and other procedures related to fire management work. The trainee will learn and be aware of the guidance, as well as the constantly changing nature of guidelines as new or modified techniques emerge.

At this level, works in accordance with standard orders and established operating procedures furnished by supervisors, crew leaders, and higher-graded firefighters at the beginning of and during their assignments. May receive supplemental instructions and guidance as necessary due to changing conditions.

Complexity

Uses basic knowledge to perform individually or as a member of a module/crew in a variety of trainee assignments. The approach taken by the module/crew may vary based upon the fire terrain, intensity of fire, fuels availability, wind velocity, and resource values. Specific tasks, use of tools and methods, and the sequence in which tasks are to be done are determined by evaluation of the situation and issues involved. Consideration must also be given to slope, weather conditions, fuels, smoke, and other fire behavior factors while performing wildland fire management.

Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts

Contacts include members of the module and crew, including leaders, supervisors, fire management officers, and dispatch. Contacts are to receive instruction, training, and mentorship and to communicate details related to the assignment.

Supervision Received

At this level, receives specific instructions and detailed work assignments from supervisors or higher-graded firefighters/crew leaders who outline procedures to follow and the results desired. Supervisors are available to answer questions regarding methods, practices, and procedures and frequently review the firefighters' work for compliance with instructions.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

<u>The duties of this position are so rigorous that employment is limited physically vigorous individuals who must meet established maximum age and physical qualification requirements</u>.

<u>Physical Demands</u>: Arduous exertion for protracted periods of time such as, but not limited to, extensive running, walking, climbing, kneeling, stooping, pulling hoses, jumping and

twisting, 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.

Work Environment: 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 may 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. Employee must adjust and cope with exposure to weather elements, dust and smoke, poor bivouac and eating situations under an unpredictable set of circumstances. Firefighters 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 (e.g., boots, hard hat, gloves, flame resistant clothing). Work may require travel by fixed-wing or rotor-wing aircraft.

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.

Position may require a valid state driver's license to operate light vehicles and 4X4 vehicles.

When this position description is used in helitack, wildland fire module, or hotshot operations, specific qualification requirements apply (e.g., Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations, National Wildfire Coordinating Group Guidance).