Forestry Technician, GS-0462-04

Wildland Firefighter Apprentice

Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Program

SPD# FDIA004

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, and involved in 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 on a fire crew, performing recurring fire suppression and fuels management developmental duties which provide orientation and familiarization to the work processes and various functional areas of the wildland firefighting career field. 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. Assignments include different 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. May perform the duties of a chainsaw operator and perform chainsaw maintenance and simple repairs. Collects fire weather data, fuel loading data, tree stand density data and fuel and/or soil moisture samples.

Wildland Fire Engine - Apprentice

Serves as a trainee crewmember on a wildland fire engine. May assist 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. May service and make minor repairs to engine; inspects, checks and services accessories such as pump, water lines, tank, reels, or pump power plant; and keeps in fire readiness. Inspects, cleans and stows hose. Makes emergency repairs and adjustments of pump while in use. Performs line construction and mop-up activities. May perform the duties of a chainsaw operator and perform simple chainsaw maintenance.

Helitack - Apprentice

Serves on a helitack module. Loads 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. Performs helicopter longline operations and maintains accessory equipment. 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. May perform the duties of a chainsaw operator and perform simple chainsaw maintenance. May serve as a rappeller or short hauler.

Other Training and Developmental Assignments (20%)

After orientation and training, may be assigned to a fire lookout to provide detection and reporting of wildfires. Reports smoke and fire to a dispatcher giving location, estimated size and other pertinent information. Keeps the dispatcher and/or other officials informed of current weather and fire behavior conditions.

After orientation and training may serve in a wildland fire dispatch center communicating weather and resource status, responding to non-emergency radio and telephone calls.

Cleans, maintains, reconditions, and stores firefighting tools and support equipment. Inventories fire supplies and equipment.

Under the guidance of a journey worker, may perform project or other land management work such as road and trail maintenance, habitat manipulation, miscellaneous equipment maintenance.

May assist higher level workers in forestry/range/desert research efforts; in the marketing of forest/range/desert resources; or in the scientific management, protection, and development of forest/range/desert resources.

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 1-3, 350 points)

Knowledge of standard fire program requirements, suppression tactics, methods and procedures and skill in the use of wildland firefighting hand tools, radios, pumps and hoses, and chainsaws sufficient to perform routinely assigned fire suppression and prescribed fire assignment in various types of fuels and under a variety of weather and terrain conditions.

Knowledge of wildland fire behavior; causes of fire; influence of local wind, slope, and moisture; and methods of extinguishing fire.

Knowledge of wildland fire hazards, and accepted ground and aviation wildland fire safety practices and procedures to prevent injury and loss of life.

Knowledge of fire apparatus operation and pumping mechanisms to ensure equipment is operated in a safe, efficient manner.

Skill in the use of hand tools such as axes, shovels, Pulaskis, McLeods, and power tools including chainsaws, to build fireline and extinguish burning materials as well as to maintain firefighting tools and equipment.

Ability to operate four wheel drive pickup trucks and may require the ability to operate a fire engine.

Knowledge of fire terminology sufficient to communicate with other crewmembers.

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

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 reporting requirements and procedures.

Must possess the ability to verbally communicate sufficiently to work as a member of the team.

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.

Factor 2. Supervisory Controls (Level 2-2, 125 points)

Works under general supervision. Performs much of the work as a member of an established work crew, according to established procedures. Instructions are provided on a continuing basis and within the framework of established practices. Additional instructions are provided for new or unusual assignments. Work is reviewed for completeness, accuracy and compliance with operating procedures and instructions.

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

Procedures for doing the work have been established and a number of specific guidelines exist such as oral instructions, standing operating procedures, maps, equipment manuals, health and safety codes, fire line handbooks, field operations guides, and training prior to actual fuels management and fire suppression activities. The employee works in strict adherence to the guidelines, referring needed deviations or questions to the supervisor or higher graded employee who is available while performing the duties assigned.

Factor 4. Complexity (Level 4-2, 75 points)

The work of this position requires the employee to make choices and recognize which of several techniques and procedures is best suited to the specific situation encountered. While performing wildand fire activities, actions taken vary dependent 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.

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

The work involves the execution of specific rules, regulations, or procedures and may be a segment of an assignment or project of broader scope, involving specific procedures and techniques. The effect of the work performed minimizes loss of natural resources, improvements, property or life. The performance of the crew contributes to the day-to-day of a local fire program or to the overall effectiveness of a wildland fire management effort on a broader scale.

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

The personal contacts are with personnel within the immediate work unit(s), project, or organization or with members of the public in very structured or controlled situations.

Contacts are made to exchange information about the immediate work situation in which crewmembers are to receive instructions and to clarify how the work is to be done.

Meets and deals on day-to-day matters with co-workers and public land users in order 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 hose, 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 demands for activities in 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- 3	350
Supervisory Controls	2- 2	125
Guidelines	3- 1	25
Complexity	4- 2	75
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:		780
Final Grade:		**GS-4**
Official Title: Forestry Technician	**SPD# FDIA004**	
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.	