

**APHIS  
Wildlife Services**

**Wildlife Biologist  
GS-0486-5/7/9**

**SJ#: 425**

*Note: This position can be filled at a GS-05, GS-07, and GS-09 multi-grade career ladder. Attached responsibilities are at the Full Performance Level. At developmental grade levels, assignments will be of more limited scope, performed with less independence and may reflect limited complexity and personal contacts. At developmental levels, the incumbent will be acquiring the background necessary to function at the Full Performance Level.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The incumbent serves as a Wildlife Biologist within the Wildlife Services (WS) Program of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), responsible for developing and implementing a Wildlife Management Program to minimize wildlife hazards to air operations and enhance human safety. The incumbent coordinates project activities and performs assignments involving project management and administration. The wildlife biologist assists with other wildlife damage management projects and spends much of their time working independently and with airport and other state/federal wildlife personnel.

**MAJOR DUTIES**

The incumbent acts as an Airport Wildlife Biologist within the state WS program. Work involves assisting civil and military airports in reducing wildlife hazards to aircraft.

The Wildlife Biologist monitors wildlife behavior and abundance and evaluates hazards posed by various species of wildlife on airports and surrounding properties. The incumbent may conduct a formal Wildlife Hazard Assessment at the airport and surrounding environment and update the airport's Wildlife Hazard Management Plan.

The incumbent collects, summarizes, analyzes, and presents ecological data on wildlife hazards to airport staff and appropriate regulatory agencies through regular program reports and at stakeholder meetings.

The Incumbent conducts wildlife damage management activities in an integrated pest management (IPM) approach to prevent or reduce economic loss to property and agriculture or to protect human health and safety. Management techniques and/or tools include the use of pesticides, pyrotechnics, firearms, binary explosives, aversive agents, auditory devices, exclusion, and cultural methods. IPM strategies will include non-lethal and lethal techniques.

The incumbent monitors and ensures compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and assists airports with compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), Endangered Species Act, Federal Air Regulations, and Department of Defense Regulations. The incumbent assists airports and other customers with obtaining migratory bird depredation permits and drafts documents required by NEPA, including categorical exclusions and environmental assessments at the project level.

Technical assistance may be provided to multiple airports requesting assistance, along with conducting site visits or wildlife hazard assessments on other airports as assigned. The incumbent develops and delivers training for airport employees or members of the military to meet Federal Aviation Administration and DoD requirements.

The Wildlife Biologist establishes and maintains cooperative relationships with other agencies, organizations, institutions, industry groups and individuals in meeting program needs and goals. The wildlife biologist may negotiate or participate in the negotiation of cooperative service agreements with airports and other cooperators to initiate or maintain cooperative human-wildlife conflict mitigation projects.

The biologist represents the WS Program and presents program information to various groups, including airport organizations, educational institutions, industry groups, and state extension programs; may present technical papers at professional conferences.

The Incumbent complies with program directives, local, state and federal laws in wildlife damage management activities. Incumbent may be required to pass examinations to become certified to apply pesticides within a specified time period after appointment to the position.

The incumbent recommends areas for potential research, assists scientists with research projects as requested by the state director, and may collect biological specimens for wildlife disease sampling purposes.

The incumbent assists other WS employees as requested and may assist in training new WS personnel. The wildlife biologist may be asked to provide technical supervision and/or guidance to lower graded employees and complete other duties as assigned.

The incumbent must demonstrate an awareness and respect for safety in all operations including the operation of boats, motor vehicles, firearms, control devices, pesticides and equipment.

The incumbent may be required to conduct other duties as assigned.

## **FACTORS**

### **KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION**

The Incumbent possesses professional knowledge of the principles and practices of wildlife ecology and management and a working familiarity with related disciplines as they pertain to WS programs and wildlife management.

The incumbent has knowledge of human-wildlife conflicts and principles of wildlife damage management and airport wildlife hazard management.

Incumbent possesses knowledge of wildlife damage management techniques including habitat management and cultural methods, exclusion, dispersal, and removal. The wildlife biologist has knowledge and experience with the use of pesticides, firearms, explosives, repellents, auditory devices, traps, and other mechanical devices, and their appropriate application for safe and effective control strategies.

The incumbent can identify North American wildlife species and is familiar with their behavior and appropriate methods for sampling their abundance and distribution.

The incumbent has knowledge and experience with computers and word processing, spreadsheets, and databases. The incumbent has the ability to use GPS and GIS technologies and web-based systems for data entry and administrative processes.

The incumbent has knowledge of the requirements of federal, state, and local regulations affecting wildlife management at airports especially the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Federal Air Regulations, and state permit requirements.

Incumbent possesses knowledge of agency policies, procedures and statutory requirements related to the WS Program and the ability to conduct a wildlife damage management program independently within these guidelines.

Incumbent has the ability to communicate effectively in spoken and written formats through technical and popular outlets to report program goals, needs, and accomplishments to customers, coworkers, the general public, and other stakeholders.

Incumbent has the knowledge and ability to design a wildlife survey program that detects spatial and temporal differences in wildlife abundance and provides a suitable index of wildlife hazards at the airport.

Incumbent has the ability to coordinate multiple projects and multiple facets of large projects, and to prioritize work for themselves and co-workers to complete multiple tasks of varying complexities and durations.

Incumbent possesses knowledge of state pesticide application procedures and may be required to successfully pass examinations to become certified to apply pesticides within set deadlines following appointment to the position.

### **SUPERVISORY CONTROLS**

The scope of the assignment, immediate objectives, and priorities are specified by the supervisor. The supervisor will be located in the State or District Office.

The incumbent is expected to plan and carry out the assignment independently in accordance with approved wildlife ecology and management techniques and practices, and previous experience. On assignments that involve controversial matters, the incumbent will discuss the issues and possible approaches with the Supervisor before carrying out the assignment.

The incumbent will communicate with the supervisor and State Office on emerging issues and keep the Supervisor informed of activities and project status.

Completed work is reviewed for adequacy, technical soundness, and accomplishment of program objectives. Potentially controversial actions or recommendations are reviewed for impact on WS state programs and policies.

### **GUIDELINES**

Guidelines include Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, and program policies and directives, standard operating procedures, and supervisory instructions. Published literature and manuals on wildlife ecology and management, wildlife damage management, and related sciences provides guidelines for the ecologically sound practice of wildlife management.

Most assignments require the incumbent to select, adapt or interpret existing methods, practices and instructions or to generalize from several guidelines to resolve more complex problems. Some assignments require frequent departures from standardized procedures. The incumbent determines when problems require additional guidance.

### **COMPLEXITY**

The work involves identification and evaluation of property damage and safety threats caused by a variety of wildlife on airports and various damage situations. The employee must analyze each situation encountered and select and apply, or recommend for application, the most appropriate management strategy. The employee must be able to identify inadequacies and recommend strategies for program improvement. The demands from interested groups or individuals are often conflicting and occasionally result in high-level inquiries. Considerable insight, judgment and communication skills are required to effectively understand, select, implement, evaluate, and communicate feasible management strategies.

## **SCOPE AND EFFECT**

The purpose of the work is to investigate and analyze a variety of conventional wildlife damage management situations and to recommend and/or implement solutions to deal with them. The effective performance of the position contributes to an effective and efficient wildlife management program that reduces economic losses agriculture and property, and alleviates public health and safety hazards at airports and throughout the state.

## **PERSONAL CONTACTS**

Personal contacts are with City, County, State and Federal agency personnel, private landowners, landowner groups, non-governmental organizations, the aviation community, personnel from other WS offices or programs, and the general public. Some contacts may not be receptive to the activities of the incumbent or the mission of the WS program itself and may be hostile or uncooperative.

## **PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

Contacts are primarily to advise, negotiate, coordinate and facilitate wildlife management activities and to report, instruct and administer all program functions. Education and persuasion are frequently necessary in dealing with contacts to resolve conflicting objectives. A high degree of interpersonal communication skill is required.

## **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The work requires moderately strenuous physical exertion. Physical exertion includes lifting moderate weights, walking over wet, rough, uneven, muddy, or rocky surfaces, bending, crouching, stooping, stretching or similar activities. This work does require average agility and dexterity. The job also requires a flexible schedule, working odd hours, frequent weekend work, and must be conducted at the affected site.

## **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Work is performed in both office and field locations. There is regular and recurring exposure to moderate risks and discomfort, such as adverse weather conditions, noisy environments and extensive vehicle travel. The incumbent is expected to conduct all duties in a safe and orderly manner to prevent injury to self, fellow workers, cooperators or property. The incumbent will be exposed to hazardous situations; including aircraft ground movements, the use of pyrotechnics and firearms, and the application of toxicants and will require the use of personal protective equipment. Duties may routinely be conducted on narrow elevated walkways and rooftops. Operation of Government-owned or leased vehicles is required.

## **OTHER CONDITIONS**

To fulfill field or laboratory requirements of this position, proof of specific vaccinations, including boosters may be required as a condition of employment.

The legal and physical ability to possess and discharge firearms is required.

APHIS is an emergency response agency. This means that all Agency employees may be asked or assigned to participate in rotating temporary duty assignments away from their assigned duty station to support emergency programs at some time during their careers with APHIS.

Travel for temporary program assignments and training is required.

The incumbent will be required to successfully obtain and maintain the appropriate pesticide applicator license(s), through completion of the necessary Certified Applicators courses and/or examinations within set deadlines after appointment to the position.

The incumbent will be required to obtain certification as an Airport Wildlife Biologist.

The incumbent will be required to successfully obtain and maintain all secure access credentials, vehicle operation certifications, and other certifications or trainings required by the agency and host entity for operations on an airfield.