

Model Position Description

Unit Leader, Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Research Wildlife Biologist, Research Fish Biologist, Research Ecologist

GS-486/482/408

Grades 13 to 15

Introduction: The Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program was established to facilitate cooperation between the Department of the Interior, universities, State natural resource agencies, and private organizations and to conduct programs of research and education related to fish and wildlife resource management. The operations of the Unit are governed by a formal Cooperative Agreement signed by USGS, university, State natural resource management agency, and the Wildlife Management Institute. By appointment, the Unit Leader is a member of the graduate faculty of the host institution, serving without compensation from the University.

Factor I – Research Assignment

A. Management Role - Unit Leader

- Serves as the Leader of a Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, managing the scientific and administrative operations of the Unit. Directs the unit's research program to solve basic science and applied problems related to **wildlife/fish/ecosystems** in areas of mutual concern to the University and other partners. Responds to the research and training needs of the cooperators. Administers Federal, State and research grant funds to the Unit, assuring that they are dispersed according to Federal, State and other fiscal regulations depending on the source of the funds. Oversees operational activities, including preparation of administrative records and reports. Supervises a small staff of Federal employees assigned to the Unit.
- Provide technical advice and assistance to Federal, State, and private conservation agencies involved with research and management of **wildlife/fish/ecological resources** and other natural resources. Coordinates extensively with universities, DOI bureaus, Federal and State agencies, and private conservation agencies in the geographical area of the unit on natural resource issues. Also serves as a consultant on research and management problems to the headquarters, regional, and area offices of the USGS, and to other Federal, State and private conservation agencies.
- Participates in technical conferences and outreach activities concerned with wildlife management and research programs. Directs, prepares, and/or provides lectures,

demonstrations, publications, and information products which advance conservation education.

- Guides the education of students in **wildlife biology/ fish biology/ecology** at the graduate level, and provides in-service training for agency employees. As a member of the faculty of the University, teaches formal courses at the graduate level in the incumbent's research specialty and related fields. Recommends and aids in selection of graduate students receiving Unit research assistantships, serves as faculty advisor to graduate students in his/her specialty field; cooperates with other members of the University faculty in development of suitable curricula in wildlife science; presents seminars; and gives lectures on research, management and environmental influences on suitable occasions.

B. Personal Research Assignment

Performs **wildlife/fishery/ecological** research, individually and as a team leader overseeing work of graduate students and others.

Define the primary areas(s) of research, including:

- **Objective(s) of research**
- **Approach(s) to be taken**
- **Complexity of assignment**
- **End result expected**

Acting singly or jointly with other University faculty members, delineates the scope of individual research projects and shapes each project into a form suitable for pursuit of an advanced degree by a specific student, integrates and coordinates individual research projects so that the overall attack on a specific problem has sufficient scope and depth. Research projects vary widely in kind and complexity and may frequently be involved in environmental impact assessments and natural resource planning peculiar to the ecological area in which the Unit is located.

Factor II – Supervision Received

Address the following:

- Who is the supervisor?
- How work is assigned?
- How independently work is performed
- How work is reviewed

GS-13 Model: The scientist works under the supervision of the **Eastern/Southeastern/Western** Unit Supervisor, who provides guidance on USGS policy, funding limitations, and program goals. The scientist functions with broad technical freedom in performing personal research, and in overseeing the research of others in his/her fields of specialization. The scientist takes the initiative in technical matters and issues requiring

coordination with the University, State, or other authority. Within these parameters, the incumbent is free to develop and implement new research objectives, establish project priorities, define methods of approach, and execute the study. The incumbent keeps supervisor informed of progress and future plans through periodic discussions. Scientific conclusions and interpretations are considered technically complete and are subject to normal peer review and supervisory approval for accomplishment of objectives.

GS-14 Model: The scientist works under the supervision of the **Eastern/Southeastern/Western** Unit Supervisor, who provides guidance on USGS policy, funding limitations, and program goals. The scientist functions with broad technical freedom in performing personal research, and in overseeing the research of others in his/her fields of specialization. The scientist takes the initiative in technical matters and issues requiring coordination with the University, State, or other authority. Within these parameters, the incumbent is free to develop and implement new research objectives, establish project priorities, define methods of approach, and execute the study. The incumbent keeps supervisor informed of progress and future plans through periodic discussions. Scientific conclusions and interpretations are considered technically complete and authoritative, and are subject to normal peer review and supervisor's approval for accomplishment of objectives.

GS-15 Model: The scientist works under the supervision of the **Eastern/Southeastern/Western** Unit Supervisor, who provides guidance on USGS policy, funding limitations, and program goals. The scientist functions with broad technical freedom in performing personal research, and in overseeing the research of others in his/her fields of specialization. The scientist takes the initiative in technical matters and issues requiring coordination with the University, State, or other authority. Within the framework of the USGS mission, client needs, and available resources, the incumbent is free to identify the most promising new research directions, determine lines of attack, develop plans for projects that will move the science forward, define methods of approach, and execute the studies. Scientific conclusions and interpretations are considered technically complete and authoritative, and are subject to normal peer review and supervisory approval for accomplishment of objectives.

Factor III – Guidelines and Originality

Describe:

- Existing scientific knowledge and its applicability to the personal research assignment.
- Originality required by the position in conducting the personal research assignment.

Factor IV – Qualification and Scientific Contributions

Address the following (without personal references to the incumbent):

- Level of professional standing or research capability expected
 - e.g., independent researcher or member of a research team;

- Mature, competent, and productive researcher;
- Nationally recognized leader and authority.
- Knowledge, skill, or experience required
- Demonstrated research attainments or ability
- Expectations for authorship or publications
- Nature of consultations expected relative to scientific stature
- Any other special research qualification requirements, if applicable

GS-13 Model: The incumbent is a competent and productive researcher capable of conceiving, formulating, conducting, and/or leading research studies in the field of _____.

The work requires an advanced professional knowledge of **wildlife biology/fishery science/ecology**, with a specialization in _____.

The position also requires skill in _____ and experience with _____.

The researcher should have demonstrated ability to make significant research contributions to his/her field. The incumbent is expected to:

- (1) author publications, peer-reviewed journal articles, scientific reports, and/or other products of considerable interest to science and/or technology in the area of specialization;
- (2) present results of research at scientific meetings, professional societies, interagency meetings, and before the general public;
- (3) critically review manuscripts and proposals of other scientists in the incumbent's areas of specialized knowledge;
- (4) serve on professional and technical committees with other government and non-government scientists; and
- (5) address information needs of DOI and other federal and state agencies.

The researcher is sought out for consultation by scientists and managers within the USGS and in other outside organizations as a technical expert on issues related to the specialty field.

The scientist must meet all requirements for admission to the graduate faculty at the host University. This is usually satisfied by attainment of a Ph.D. degree and a record of demonstrated accomplishments in publishing research results.

GS-14 Model: The incumbent is as a recognized research leader capable of conceiving, formulating, conducting, and leading research relevant to _____.

The work requires advanced professional knowledge of **wildlife biology/fishery science/ecology** with a specialization in _____. The position also requires skill in _____ and experience with _____. The researcher should have demonstrated leadership ability by making significant contributions to the professional field and also by leading research teams or leading in the formulation of productive research ideas. The incumbent is expected to:

- (1) author publications, , peer-reviewed journal articles, scientific reports, and other products which have a significant impact on science and technology;

- (2) present results of research at scientific meetings, professional societies, interagency meetings, and before the general public;
- (3) critically review manuscripts and proposals of other scientists in the incumbent's areas of specialized knowledge;
- (4) serve on professional and technical committees with other government and non-government scientists; and
- (5) address information needs of DOI and other federal and state agencies.

The researcher is sought out for consultation by scientists and managers within the USGS and in other outside organizations as a recognized leader in areas of specialized knowledge. The scientist must meet all requirements for admission to the graduate faculty at the host University. This is usually satisfied by attainment of a Ph.D. degree and a record of demonstrated accomplishments in publishing research results.

GS-15 Model: The incumbent is a recognized research authority in the field of _____. The work requires extensive professional knowledge of **wildlife biology/fishery science/ecology** with a specialization in _____. Research requires skill in _____ and experience with _____.

The researcher should have demonstrated outstanding research attainments with contributions of such magnitude that they move the science or technology significantly forward.

The incumbent is expected to:

- (1) author a number of definitive publications, peer-reviewed journal articles, scientific reports, and other products which have a major impact on the science and/or technology;
- (2) present results of research at national and international meetings as a recognized leader in the professional field;
- (3) critically review manuscripts and proposals of other scientists in area of specialized knowledge;
- (4) serve on professional and technical committees with other government and non-government scientists; and
- (5) address information needs of DOI and other federal and state agencies.

The researcher serves as an authoritative consultant to USGS managers and other contacts within and outside the government on research results and program direction in the specialty field.

The scientist must meet all requirements for admission to the graduate faculty at the host University. This is usually satisfied by attainment of a Ph.D. degree and a record of demonstrated accomplishments in publishing research results.