

**STATE OF WISCONSIN**  
**CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION**  
**CONSERVATION BIOLOGIST**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

A. Purpose of This Classification Specification

This classification specification is the basic authority (under ER 2.04, Wis. Adm. Code) for making classification decisions relative to present and future professional endangered resources positions. Positions allocated to this series promote and manage endangered resources management and protection programs within the Department of Natural Resources. This classification specification will not specifically identify every eventuality or combination of duties and responsibilities of positions that currently exist, or those that result from changing program emphasis in the future. Rather, it is designed to serve as a framework for classification decision making in this occupational area.

Classification decisions must be based on the “best fit” of the duties within the existing classification structure. The “best fit” is determined by the majority (i.e., more than 50%) of the work assigned to and performed by the position when compared to the class concepts and definition of this specification or through other methods of position analysis. Position analysis defines the nature and character of the work through the use of any or all of the following: definition statements; listing of areas of specialization; representative examples of work performed; allocation patterns of representative positions; job evaluation guide charts, standards or factors; statements of inclusion and exclusion; licensure or certification requirements; and other such information necessary to facilitate the assignment of positions to the appropriate classification.

B. Inclusions

This series encompasses professional endangered resources positions found in the central, district, area, or field offices of the Department of Natural Resources. Positions within the Department of Natural Resources' Endangered Resources Program identify, assess, protect, manage and restore rare and other native terrestrial or aquatic animals, plants, natural communities and ecosystems and promote knowledge and stewardship of such species and communities and ecosystems.

C. Exclusions

Excluded from this classification series are the following types of positions:

1. Positions which meet the statutory definition of supervisor or management as defined in Wis. Stats. 111.81 (19) and (13) as administered and interpreted by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission.

2. Positions performing work related to endangered resources programs of a non-scientific or non-professional nature, which are located in the Blue Collar, Technical, Security and Public Safety, Research, or Engineering Bargaining Units.
3. Positions which have some responsibilities identified within this series and whose work activities affect the endangered resource programs but do not perform the work the majority of the time, and which are better identified in a different program specific classification; and
4. All other positions which are more appropriately identified by other classification specifications.

D. Entrance Into This Series

Employees typically enter this classification series by competitive examination. Progression to the senior level will occur through reclassification. Progression to the advanced level will typically occur through some form of competitive examination.

## II. DEFINITIONS

### CONSERVATION BIOLOGIST

Positions work under close progressing to limited supervision. Principles and practices have been learned prior to entrance into this classification series. The emphasis is in developing skills in working with and/or understanding the program, state systems, user group(s) and the mechanics of the program; and developing an understanding and applying the statutes, rules, regulations, administrative code and standards required in the program area. Initial work assignments are well defined and short term in duration. Over time the work assignments become long term or short term with the employee expected to exercise independent judgment in determining specifics and priorities, as the objectives are progressively less clear.

The positions may be in contact with outside entities and may have assignments which cross program lines depending on where the individual employee's performance level is determined. The supervisor reviews the work to determine the completeness or accuracy and adherence to policy.

### CONSERVATION BIOLOGIST-SENIOR

This is the full performance level for positions performing professional endangered resources work. Positions at this level develop and work on major work projects with little or no specific direction or review; assume an independent role in working with consultants, other governmental agencies, and/or department staff; and make decisions independently on complex assignments. Positions allocated to this level function as: (1) an endangered resources biologist responsible for developing, administering and evaluating the endangered resources program in the assigned geographic management unit/area; (2) a conservation biologist responsible for developing, administering and evaluating a major portion of the endangered resources program being implemented regionwide; or (3) as a program specialist responsible for the implementation of a program which is smaller in scope and complexity and does not have the interaction and policy development that is found at higher levels.

**Representative Position:**

Natural Areas Management Specialist - On a statewide basis, administer the protection and management practices on State Natural Areas and Critical Species Habitats; direct the development of management plans; provide project writing guidance to staff; and develop and initiate site inspection program. Provide technical and scientific expertise to bureau and region staff, land trusts and private landowners on inventory, environmental assessment and site evaluations, and management and master plans. Manage assigned areas and implement land stewardship program.

**CONSERVATION BIOLOGIST-ADVANCED**

This is the advanced level for positions performing professional endangered resources work. Positions at this level function as the department expert for a significant segment of the endangered resources program which devote the majority of time and are responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating statewide policies and programs. Employees in this classification are considered the statewide expert and provide this expertise and consultation statewide. These positions work independently, require high level and complex contacts, and represent an important aspect of the program.

**Representative Positions :**

Cold-Blooded Species Program Manager - Develop and administer a statewide program for nongame species of reptiles, amphibians, mussels, insects and nongame fish in Wisconsin; initiate and develop policies and regulations, and statewide planning, species conservation, management and recovery, and educational efforts for the assigned species with primary emphasis on critically rare species; develop and administer a landowner contact program for rare herptiles and invertebrates; develop and administer control programs for the harvest and sale of cold-blooded species; develop research proposals. Integrate with other state and federal agencies to insure uniform regional protection of rare cold-blooded species; and integrate with other DNR programs to insure consideration in biodiversity planning and regulation development.

Natural Heritage Inventory Ecologist - Coordinate the development and implementation of the natural community portion of the statewide Natural Heritage Inventory program; develop a natural community classification for Wisconsin; serve as the department's expert on natural communities and interpret for internal and external use the natural community portion of the program, develop protection strategies for high priority elements, advise on environmental reviews; and provide departmentwide expertise in the field of conservation biology, landscape ecology and restoration ecology.

**III. QUALIFICATIONS**

The qualifications required for these positions will be determined at the time of recruitment. Such determinations will be made based on an analysis of the goals and worker activities performed and by an identification of the education, training, work, or other life experience which would provide reasonable assurance that the knowledge and skills required upon appointment have been acquired.

**IV. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

This classification was created effective October 12, 1997 and announced in Bulletin CC/SC-74 to describe positions which perform conservation biologist work at the Department of Natural Resources. The creation of this classification resulted from the Governor's Human Resource Commission recommendation to reduce the number of classification titles. This action resulted in the abolishment of the Conservation Biologist classification series (class codes 41701 through 41705).

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