



WILDLIFE SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs wildlife management, mitigation, and control of carnivores, rodents, birds, and other animals in urban and rural environments; controls wildlife damage when there is danger to man's economic interest, health, or safety, including control of predatory and disease-carrying animals for the protection of livestock, agricultural, and forest products; provides information to the public, citizens groups, farmers, ranchers, and others regarding the County's Wildlife Services Program; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Agriculture Commissions of Sealer/Weights and Measures. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a fully qualified journey-level classification. Incumbents perform experienced wildlife management, mitigation, and wildlife damage control, particularly related to predatory animals. Successful performance of the work requires initiative and independent decision-making in the field with safe and responsible use of weapons, poisons, and traps in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations and ordinances. Positions at this level apply specialized technical knowledge, perform the full range of duties as assigned, work independently, and exercise judgment and initiative. Positions in this class receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies.

EXAMPLE OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Interprets and implements local, state, and federal rules, regulations, and ordinances relating to wildlife management, predatory animal control, endangered species, and the application of pesticides and toxic chemicals.
- Responds to calls from homeowners, residents, and businesses regarding problems with skunks, raccoons, coyotes, porcupines, beavers, and other wildlife that pose a threat to safety, pets, or property; advises homeowners on control techniques.
- Identifies predatory animal problems, sets and baits traps, and picks up animals caught in traps; evaluates animal behavior to determine appropriate destruction or relocation of animals.
- Sets poisoned bait for animals causing wildlife damage; uses traps, snares, and controlled pesticides to eliminate predatory animals.
- Provides technical assistance to the public on methods to exclude wildlife from homes, buildings, etc. to prevent damage and reduce the need to eliminate wildlife.
- Utilizes rifles, shotguns, or other weaponry to control predatory animals; tracks and hunts animals both during daylight hours and after dark.
- Inspects beaver damage to residences, boat docks, forested areas, and waterways; determines plans to remove animals with minimal impact to the public.
- Assists ranchers with control programs to reduce the coyote killings of sheep and small farm and domestic animals; uses traps and snares to eliminate coyotes; may shoot coyotes from a helicopter.

- Assists landowners with control programs to reduce damage to young seedlings and trees caused by porcupines; determines and implements control strategies.
- Removes skunks, raccoons, possums, and other nuisance wildlife from residential areas; collects specimens to sample for diseases, including bubonic plague and rabies.
- Maintains records of predator destruction; keeps logs of types of damage, action taken, and all traps and equipment used in control.
- Communicates with the public regarding predatory animal control programs; meets with concerned citizens to explain hunting and trapping programs and animal-borne infectious diseases.
- Provides technical assistance regarding bird problems; advises on methods to minimize crop damage; recommends and implements programs to minimize bird-aircraft conflicts.
- Works with members of the public, citizens' groups and associations, farmers, ranchers, public land managers, other Wildlife Services employees, and various local, state, and federal agencies; provides information regarding El Dorado County's Wildlife Services Program as needed.
- Acts as an instructor and conducts demonstrations and training for interested groups on Wildlife Services control methods, procedures, and program objectives.
- May work in cooperation with the U.S.D.A. Wildlife Services or other County predatory animal control programs, on special projects in El Dorado County, or other counties in the State of California.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles of biological sciences and technical methods and procedures related to wildlife damage management.
- Endangered species concepts and regulations, and ranges of threatened and endangered species, which may come in conflict with any phases of wildlife services programs.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances pertaining to predatory animal control and application of pesticides and toxic materials.
- Symptoms and behavior associated with rabies, bubonic plague, and other common animal diseases.
- Species and breed identification, habits, behavior, life cycles, feeding habits, general characteristics, and habitats occupied by a wide variety of avian and mammalian livestock and the safety of County residents.
- Safe work practices relating to the handling and use of poisons, firearms, and traps.
- Basic recordkeeping principles and practices.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

Ability to:

- Determine the type of predator involved in incidents, including identifying species by sight, sound, tracks, and evaluation of the damage which occurred.

- Effectively set traps and snares with regard to safety of domestic and range animals; attract wild animals with bait, scent, or calls.
- Use and discharge of shotguns, rifles, side arms, and other related equipment safely and accurately to control or destroy dangerous and/or injured wild animals, as a last alternative.
- Humanely perform euthanasia procedures to ensure safe treatment of wild animals in accordance with standard operational procedures, including properly measure drugs and use hypodermic syringes for chemical restraint and euthanasia.
- Assess animal behavior and make appropriate decisions regarding capture or destruction of an animal.
- Act quickly and calmly in emergency situations.
- Read maps and following directions.
- Maintain accurate records and prepare standard reports of work performed.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Effectively represent the department and the County in meetings with governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations; and in meetings with individuals.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Safely operating County vehicles, a four-wheel drive and All-Terrain Vehicle, radios, animal control tools and related equipment.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of the required experience, education, and training that would provide the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying.

Equivalent to graduation from high school, supplemented by twelve (12) college-level semester units in wildlife management, biology, zoology, or a closely related field;

AND

One (1) year of experience in trapping and hunting predatory animals in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain and maintain, a valid California or Nevada Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record.
- Must pass the California Qualified Applicator's Certification (QAC) within six (6) months of the hire date.
- Must satisfactorily complete an accredited firearms training course, including rifle, shotgun, and handgun within 12-months of the hire date.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in the field; strength, stamina, and mobility to work in confined spaces and around animals, to backpack over rough, uneven, rocky and steep terrain, to operate varied hand equipment, and to operate a motor vehicle and visit various urban and rural locations within the County; vision to read printed material and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone or radio. The job involves fieldwork requiring frequent walking in operational areas to identify problems or hazards. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate above-mentioned tools and equipment. Positions in this classification bend, stoop, kneel, reach, and climb to perform work and inspect work sites. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials, animals, and objects weighing up to 80 pounds, or heavier weights with the use of proper equipment and assistance from other staff. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work in the field and are exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, road hazards, vibration, confining workspaces, chemicals, dangerous animals, and hazardous physical substances and fumes. Employees may interact with members of the public or with staff under emotionally stressful conditions while interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Must be willing to work alone or with others in remote or isolated areas. Must be willing to work evenings, nights, and other off-shift hours.