

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

PRESCRIBED FIRE AND FUELS SPECIALIST – LOW COMPLEXITY

OPM Standard Requirements - GS-455/462 Technician Series

One year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade level. Graduate education may be substituted for specialized experience only when it is directly related to the work of the position. Further information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, specifically, OPM's Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Technical and Medical Support Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for either the 455 or 462 series. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

Common grade level: GS-7 *(Note: Actual grade level will depend on the duties and responsibilities of the position.)*

Specialized Experience - Applicants must have a minimum of one year of creditable specialized wildland fire management experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

Specialized experience is that experience which has provided the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully function in the wildland fire management position applied for. Possession of the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities can be evidenced by:

- participating in implementing prescribed fire or fire use plans to ensure resource objectives can be met from a fire management standpoint.
- developing initial attack incident management strategies and tactics to meet the stated resource objectives.

NWCG Incident Management Qualifications - Currency Required

Primary Core Requirement	Secondary Core Requirement
ENGB or CRWB or FIRB	ICT4

Additional required training as presented in the following courses, or agency equivalent:

- None

Selective Factor Justifications

- Attainment of any single resource boss qualification (ie CRWB, ENGB, or FIRB) is an indication that the incumbent has demonstrated competence at supervising and leading resources on wildland incidents.
- The ICT4 qualification provides the incumbent with the knowledge of fire behavior, strategies and tactics, resources, equipment, and management objectives sufficient to safely, efficiently, and effectively direct the management of wildland fires.

Employee Development Training

Employee should receive the following developmental training, (or agency equivalent) to fully achieve competencies:

- RX-301 (formerly RX-300) “Prescribed Fire Implementation”
- RX-310 (formerly RX-340) “Introduction to Fire Effects”
- RX-341 “Prescribed Fire Plan Preparation”
- RX-410 (formerly RX-450) “Smoke Management Techniques”
- L-380 (formerly S-301) “Fireline Leadership”
- S-390 “Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations”
- S-491 “National Fire Danger Rating System”
- BEHAVE
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) training

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

PRESCRIBED FIRE AND FUELS SPECIALIST – MODERATE COMPLEXITY

This position can be established at either the professional or technical level, depending upon the competency of the position which in turn will determine whether professional or technical knowledge is required. This, in turn, depends upon the structure which the position is established. If the position is established at the technical level, any professional duties would be handled by a separate, usually higher graded, professional position.

OPM Standard Requirements - GS-455/462 Technician Series

One year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade level. Graduate education may be substituted for specialized experience only when it is directly related to the work of the position. Further information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, specifically, OPM's Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Technical and Medical Support Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for either the 455 or 462 series. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

OPM Standard Requirements - GS-401 Professional Series

Bachelor's degree in biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, or a related discipline appropriate to the position being filled; OR a combination of education and experience as defined in the Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist. Additional information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for the 401 series. The Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist and assistance in interpreting the standard are posted at <http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

Common grade level: GS-9 *(Note: Actual grade level will depend on the duties and responsibilities of the position.)*

Specialized Experience - Applicants must have a minimum of one year of creditable specialized wildland fire management experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

Specialized experience is that experience which has provided the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully function in the wildland fire management position applied for. Possession of the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities can be evidenced by:

1. Experience that demonstrated understanding of fire effects on cultural and natural resources. The assignments must have shown participation in activities such as:
 - developing fire management plans to ensure plan objectives can be met from a fire management standpoint
 - conducting field inspections before and/or after prescribed fires or wildland fires to determine if objectives have been met

2. Prescribed fire/fuels management - experience in activities such as:
 - inventory methods and procedures
 - fuel treatment methods and programming
 - evaluating prescribed fire plans or fire management plans to ensure containment is possible and identify contingencies if containment is not obtained

3. Fire management operations - analyzing and applying fire management strategies, plus experience in at least four of the following activities:
 - mobilization and dispatch coordination
 - fire prevention
 - training
 - logistics
 - equipment development and deployment
 - fire communication systems
 - suppression and preparedness

NWCG Incident Management Qualifications - Currency Required

Primary Core Requirement	Secondary Core Requirement
RXB2	ENGB or CRWB

Additional required training as presented in the following courses, or agency equivalent:

- None

Selective Factor Justifications

- PFFS positions are required to have skill in planning and implementing wildland fire and fuel treatment plans.
- RXB2 provides the incumbent with the skill and knowledge to develop fire behavior prescriptions to meet ecologically based objectives established in land management plans.
- Attainment of either single resource boss qualification (ie CRWB or ENGB) provides the incumbent the competencies required to supervise and lead fire fighters on wildland fire incidents.
- Moderate complexity programs typically involve projects that require numerous personnel and resources to achieve. The CRWB or ENGB qualifications are commensurate skill levels for implementing projects.

Employee Development Training

Employee should receive the following developmental training, (or agency equivalent) to fully achieve competencies:

- M-580 “Fire and Ecosystem Management” (national or geographic level)
- RX-310 (formerly RX-340) “Introduction to Fire Effects”
- RX-341 “Prescribed Fire Plan Preparation”
- RX-410 (formerly RX-450) “Smoke Management Techniques”
- S-490 “Advanced Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations”
- S-491 “National Fire Danger Rating System”
- 40-hour Supervisory Training
- Aviation safety, operations, and management training
- BEHAVE
- Contracting Officer’s (Authorized) Representative (COR) training
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) training

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

PRESCRIBED FIRE AND FUELS SPECIALIST – HIGH COMPLEXITY

OPM Standard Requirements - GS-401

Bachelor's degree in biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, or a related discipline appropriate to the position being filled; OR a combination of education and experience as defined in the Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist. Additional information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for the 401 series. The Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist and assistance in interpreting the standard are posted at <http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

Common grade level: GS-11 *(Note: Actual grade level will depend on the duties and responsibilities of the position.)*

Specialized Experience - Applicants must have a minimum of one year of creditable specialized wildland fire management experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

Specialized experience is that experience which has provided the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully function in the wildland fire management position applied for. Possession of the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities can be evidenced by:

- reviewing and evaluating fire management plans for ecological soundness and technical adequacy.
- conducting field inspections before and after prescribed or wildland fires to determine if objectives were achieved and/or evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken.
- developing analyses on the ecological role of fire and its use and/or exclusion, and smoke management.

In addition to fire program management, appropriate experience must have included either prescribed fire/fuels management - OR - fire management operations as described below:

Prescribed fire/fuels management - experience in a broad range of activities such as:

- inventory methods and procedures
- fuel treatment methods and programming
- land use planning and environmental coordination
- evaluating prescribed burn plans or fire management plans to ensure containment is possible and identify contingencies if containment is not obtained.

Fire management operations - analyzing and applying fire management strategies, plus experience in at least five of the following activities:

- mobilization and dispatch coordination
- fire prevention and education
- training
- logistics
- equipment development and deployment
- fire communication systems
- suppression and preparedness
- aviation

NWCG Incident Management Qualifications - Currency Required

Primary Core Requirement	Secondary Core Requirement
RXB2	ICT3 or TFLD

Additional required training as presented in the following courses, or agency equivalent:

- None

Selective Factor Justifications

- PFFS positions are required to have skill in planning and implementing wildland fire and fuel treatment plans.
- RXB2 provides the incumbent with the skill and knowledge to develop fire behavior prescriptions to meet ecologically based objectives established in land management plans.
- Higher complexity programs typically involve projects of higher difficulty to achieve. The ICT3 or TFLD qualifications are commensurate skill levels for implementation of plans that require a larger workforce over multiple burn periods.

Employee Development Training

Employee should receive the following developmental training, (or agency equivalent) to fully achieve competencies:

- M-580 “Fire in Ecosystem Management” (national or geographic level)
- RX-410 (formerly RX-450) “Smoke Management Techniques”
- RX-510 (formerly RX-540) “Applied Fire Effects”
- RX-580 “Advanced Fire Use Applications”/“National Park & Wilderness Fire Management”
- S-490 “Advanced Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations”
- S-491 “National Fire Danger Rating System”
- Aviation safety, operations, and management training
- Contracting Officer’s (Authorized) Representative (COR) training
- Leadership and organizational skills training
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) training

COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR PRESCRIBED FIRE/FUELS SPECIALISTS

Prescribed Fire/Fuels Specialist Position Descriptor

A Prescribed Fire/Fuels Specialist is one who integrates prescribed fire, smoke management, fuels modification principles and procedures, fire effects knowledge, and knowledge of scientific data collection and analysis principles into a comprehensive prescribed fire and fuels management program.

EXPERTISE LEVELS DEFINITIONS

WORKING – W

Definition: The minimum level of experience and/or training that it takes to produce work of acceptable quality.

JOURNEY – J

Definition: Has sufficient experience to be considered a seasoned employee. Is skilled in performing the more difficult tasks related to the function. Has received advanced training in the function.

EXPERT – E

Definition: Reflects the quality of experience and/or training needed to perform the most challenging aspects of the position.

"Program Complexity Levels" refers to those determined from the complexity analysis process. Some positions do not vary in the expertise levels of competencies, regardless of the complexity of the program to which they are assigned. Others have only a minimum level of competency expertise defined, recognizing that there is too wide a variety of programs within and between agencies to define all situations. The remainder have either two or three levels of competency expertise, based on their unit's program complexity.

Example of Expertise and Complexity Levels

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of processes and sources of training.	W	J	J

In this example, a “W” Working level of expertise is required in a Low complexity fire program; a “J” Journey level of expertise is required in both Moderate and High complexity fire programs.

I. Program Management

Description

This element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to develop and manage a prescribed fire/fuels management program.

Outline

- A. Develop, implement and evaluate program goals and objectives in support of mission accomplishment. Implement corrective actions.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of wildland fire science. (Appropriate management response, and prescribed fire) and fuels management policies, practices and procedures.	W	J	E
Knowledge of natural and cultural resource management concepts, principles, and practices applicable to the full range of duties associated with fire management.	W	J	J
Knowledge of landscape and disturbance ecology.	W	J	J
Knowledge of smoke management regulations, including EPA, state, tribal, local, and agency specific.	W	J	J
Knowledge of fire effects as it relates to fuel modification and prescribed fire.	W	J	E
Knowledge of program monitoring and evaluation process and procedures.	W	J	J
Knowledge of reporting requirements and procedures.	W	J	E
Knowledge of social and political implications on wildland fire management.	W	W	J
Ability to prepare and integrate program goals and objectives.	W	J	E
Ability to apply corrective actions to increase efficiencies and effectiveness.	W	J	J
Ability to identify and define fire-related management issues, resolve issues with through research, and make recommendations.	W	J	J

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Ability to serve as technical consultant and authoritative expert on prescribed fire and fuels management to the line officer and/or fire management officer.	W	J	E
Ability to identify alternative treatment options that include biomass utilization through opportunities such as timber harvest, stewardship contracts, and special forest products.	W	J	J
Ability to provide technical expertise to participate on task groups, technical and program reviews, and review teams (such as escape fire investigations and financial audits).	W	J	E
Ability to maintain project records in accordance with agency policies.	J	J	E

B. Develop, implement and evaluate program management budgets.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of agency budget procedures.	W	W	J
Ability to prioritize projects based upon funding, program goals and objectives.	J	J	E

C. Supervise and develop employees.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of processes and sources of training.	W	J	J
Knowledge of agency and interagency qualification and certification standards.	J	J	J
Ability to implement development/training plans.	W	J	J
Ability to develop and teach formal/informal prescribed fire and fuels management training.	W	J	J

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of supervisory methods and techniques.	W	W	J
Ability to lead and supervise.	W	J	E

D. Develop and maintain agency/bureau and interagency partnerships.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of cooperating agencies' missions, organizations and operating procedures.	W	J	J
Knowledge of development and execution of agreements with cooperating agencies.	W	J	J
Knowledge of the structure and function of interagency fire organizations, such as National Wildfire Coordinating Group, National Multi-agency Coordinating Group, geographic area coordinating groups, state, tribal, and local groups.	W	J	J
Ability in working with agreement and contracting personnel.	W	W	J
Ability to work with interagency partners at the appropriate level.	J	J	E

E. Identify research needs and apply new technologies.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of research programs and development centers (e.g. Joint Fire Science Program, USGS, FS Research Stations, FS Equipment Development Centers)	W	W	J
Ability to identify and clarify program management issues, and develop research recommendations, if necessary.	W	J	J
Ability to apply research and technology in fire and fuels management activities.	W	J	J

II. Planning

Description

This competency element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required for participation in the planning processes involved in prescribed fire, wildland fire use, and fuels management programs. These levels must be sufficient to allow for participation on interdisciplinary teams in the development of:

- Unit-level fire and fuels management plans- these plans could include pre-attack plans and other suppression-related plans.
- Annual Operating Plans- these plans could include Memoranda of Understanding and Cooperative Agreements, mobilization plans, step-up staffing plans, etc.
- Project plans-these could include prescribed fire, wildland fire use, and fuels management project plans.
- Other resource management plan that include use of wildland fire use, prescribed fire, and fuels management as treatment objectives.
- Environmental documents.

Outline

A. Develop plans compliant with environmental laws, regulations and policies.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Ability to obtain essential information from partnering agencies (cooperating, regulatory and policy bodies affecting your program).	W	J	E
Ability to implement direction provided by laws, regulations, policies and plans.	W	J	E
Knowledge of environmental laws, regulations, and policies including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, the Wilderness Act, Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA), and the National Historical Preservation Act.	W	J	E
Ability to write environmental documents and participate on interdisciplinary teams in	J	J	E

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
accordance with NEPA requirements for wildland fire management projects.			
Ability to resolve complex prescribed wildland fire management issues that involve use and interpretation of conflicting fire and resource objectives, policies, or laws.	W	W	J

- B. Prepare and review plans and/or plan components including, but not limited to:
1. Annual Operating Plans
 2. Training plans
 3. Program and implementation plans appropriate to wildland fire management.
 4. Safety plans
 5. Monitoring plans

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of components of required plans under area of responsibility.	W	J	J
Skill in developing a description and schedule of treatments to meet objectives established in the fuel management plan (to include mechanical, prescribed fire, chemical, and biological).	W	J	E
Skill in developing contingency plans to manage prescribed fire risks at appropriate levels.	W	J	E
Skill in developing fire behavior prescriptions to meet objectives established in prescribed fire plans.	W	J	E
Ability to develop project goals and objectives and treatment alternatives.	J	J	E
Ability to ensure fuels management and burn plans are prepared and reviewed in accordance with agency policies.	J	J	E

C. Conduct smoke management planning and analysis.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of health effects of smoke.	J	J	J
Knowledge of the best available air quality monitoring and mitigation practices.	W	J	E
Knowledge of smoke emission and dispersion models.	W	J	E
Skill in implementing project level smoke mitigations plans that comply with federal, state, tribal, local, and agency laws, regulations, policies, and procedures.	W	J	E
Ability to relate fuels, weather and fire behavior to expected smoke conditions.	W	J	E

III. Operations

Description

This element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to manage and support operational program components to achieve land management objectives established for the unit. Operational components include fire effects, wildland fire use, prescribed fire, fuels modification, and aviation.

Outline

A. Implement the full range of wildland fire and fuels management practices.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of the full range of fuel treatments to include prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical, and biological treatments.	W	J	E
Knowledge of methods for the collection, storage, retrieval, and analysis of results from fuels treatment and fire effects monitoring.	W	J	E
Knowledge of modeling, verification, and documentation of fire weather, fire behavior, and fire danger.	W	J	E
Knowledge of aerial and ground-based ignition methods and techniques.	W	J	E
Knowledge of geospatial technologies in wildland fire management.	W	J	J
Knowledge of contracting procedures (service contracts, Indian self determination contracts).	W	J	J
Skill in implementing wildland fire and fuel treatment implementation plans.	W	J	E
Skill in setting priorities and allocating resources involving multiple projects.	W	J	E
Skill in preparing and administering hazardous fuels reduction contracts (project inspector, COR, or COTR).	W	J	J
Skill in documenting project daily status, fire behavior and effects, and financial obligations, etc.	W	J	E

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Ability to document, track, and report accomplishments using NFPORS and agency guidelines.	W	J	J
Skill in performing as a Prescribed Fire Burn Boss, as defined by NWCG and agency policies.	W	J	E
Ability to schedule burning and evaluate current weather and burning conditions (includes discussion with National Weather Service).	J	J	E
Ability to evaluate and validate weather and fuels data and resolve identified issues (such as weather observations, RAWs data, spot forecast information, and historical weather data).	J	J	E

B. Support wildland fire program components to include but not limited to:

1. Strategy and tactics
2. Incident management
3. Appropriate management response
4. Wildland fire use

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of the Incident Command System component of National Interagency Incident Management System.	W	J	J
Knowledge of wildland and urban interface fire suppression strategies and tactics.	W	J	J
Knowledge of the full range of wildland fire appropriate management responses.	W	J	E
Knowledge of fire behavior, strategy and tactics, resources, equipment, and tools sufficient to safely, efficiently, and effectively direct the management of wildland fires up to Type 3 Incident Commander and Task Force Leader and Type 2 Burn Boss.	W	J	E

- C. Support unit fire aviation programs or operations as appropriate, including, but not limited to:
1. Tactical application of aircraft including aerial ignition methods and techniques
 2. Aviation safety management
 3. Administration

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of capabilities, limitations and approved safety standards and operating procedures of commonly used fixed and rotary-wing aircraft.	W	J	J
Knowledge of aviation administration requirements and procedures, such as contract solicitation, awarding and administration, use tracking and reporting and fiscal accounting.	W	J	J
Ability to obtain compliance with established personnel safety requirements, such as training, use of personal protective equipment, determination of payloads, manifesting, flight following, crash/rescue response, etc.	W	J	J

IV. Safety and Welfare

Description

This competency describes the knowledge, skills and abilities required to manage the environmental, workplace, and vehicles hazards of the wildland fire environment. It focuses on the Prescribed Fire/Fuels Specialist’s ability to provide leadership and direction to subordinates in the recognition and mitigation of these hazards using all applicable laws, policies and guidelines. Personal accountability and zero tolerance for unsafe acts are paramount.

Outline

- A. Conduct prescribed fire/fuels modification operations and activities in accordance with safety-related laws, policies and guidelines, including:
 1. Occupational Safety and Health Act
 2. Applicable state and tribal safety regulations
 3. Department and agency policies and guidelines
 4. NWCG guidelines
 5. Department of Transportation (DOT) Regulations

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge and comprehension of the laws, policies and guidelines pertaining to safety such as the Code of Federal Regulations, national and agency policies and guidelines, 10 Standard Fire Orders, 18 Watch Out Situations, and other related fire safety guidelines, including OSHA, DOT, and NWCG guidelines.	W	J	E

- B. Conduct safety related education programs focusing on:
1. Training
 2. Certification
 3. Safety briefings
 4. After Action Reviews
 5. Lessons Learned

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Ability to conduct and integrate safety briefings and after action reviews.	J	J	E
Skill in the effective use of training and certification to achieve safety management objectives and ensure compliance.	W	J	E

- C. Prepare job hazard analysis and risk assessment for wildland and prescribed fire, and fuels management activities.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of risk assessment process.	J	J	E
Knowledge of job hazard analysis process.	J	J	E
Skill in developing and communicating job hazard analysis.	J	J	E
Skill in developing risk assessment based upon prescribed fire complexity rating system.	W	J	J
Ability to identify, document, and communicate project specific hazards and risks.	J	J	E

D. Follow up identified hazards and risks with appropriate mitigation actions.

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Skill in recognition and mitigation of a variety of miscellaneous hazards and risks encountered within the wildland fire environment and other work environments; e.g., aviation, mechanized equipment, smoke, and hazardous materials.	W	J	J
Ability to communicate mitigation actions for identified hazards and risks.	J	J	E