



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

14 MAY 1986

DAEN-PEC-P

SUBJECT: Classification Guidance for the Park Manager/Park Ranger  
GS-025 Series

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently published a revised GS-025 Park Ranger position classification standard. The revised standard combines the GS-025 Park Ranger and the GS-026 Park Technician standards.
2. The Corps of Engineers provided substantive comments on the standard when it was in draft, strongly expressing our misgivings about the wisdom of combining the GS-025 and GS-026 series. We were particularly concerned about combining a one grade interval series with a two grade interval series. COE concerns had minimal impact on OPM's decision to publish the revised standard.
3. In January of this year a Task Force comprised of Natural Resources Management and Classification personnel was convened to develop the COE implementation guidance for the GS-025 standard. A direct result of the Task Force efforts is the clarifying guidance attached to this letter.
4. The attached guidance is Part I of a two fold effort. It is concerned with Park Manager positions in the Corps and should be used when applying the revised standard Corps-wide. The second part of the guidance concerns Park Ranger and what were formerly Park Technician positions and is projected for issuance within a month to six weeks.
5. Should there be any questions concerning this matter, please address them to Dan Carpenter, Comm. 202-272-1798.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Encl

  
R. ROSCHELLE  
Director of Personnel

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SEE ATTACHED

This guidance is intended to provide assistance in using the recently revised GS-025 series when classifying Park Ranger and Manager positions in the Corps of Engineers.

#### BACKGROUND

The Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Management Program has grown in the past thirty years, from an incidental amenity to a major program that has as its primary mission the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities for millions of Americans. The Corps philosophy for Natural Resources Management emphasizes the diversification of recreation management to satisfy as many different types of users as possible, while assuring the conservation of our finite natural resources.

The objective of all COE natural resources management activities is to assure the continued enjoyment and maximum sustained public use of the natural resource base without harm to the environment. The carrying capacity of the land is determined on a site-by-site basis by using biological, cultural, aesthetic and cultural values. This broad and at times conflicting objective requires the management of the people-oriented aspects as well as the natural resources with a view toward providing a sound recreational base for not just the present, but more importantly, for future generations. Maintenance of a fine balance between the recreational needs of the public and the ecological integrity of the land and water will become more and more difficult and complex as the public use of Corps projects continues to increase.

It is, therefore, imperative that the Corps of Engineers continue to recruit and retain the best qualified Rangers and Managers possible. The Corps Park Manager must possess a comprehensive, in-depth knowledge of conservation sciences, recreation-resources management, and park planning and administration. The manager must manage all resources, developed and natural as an integrated whole, while avoiding or minimizing use conflicts.

Corps Park Managers oversee all federally owned and/or controlled land and waters for one or more lake and/or river areas. Considerable coordination is necessary with federal, state, local and private organizations and groups to resolve conflicts that arise where and when related activities in the region overlap the Corps recreation and natural resources management program. Subordinate Park Managers may be assigned management segments of lake project areas under the supervision of the primary Park Manager.

The Corps Park Manager positions are similar to those of the National Park Service, for which the GS-025 series was originally designed. Corps Park Managers and Park Managers (Superintendents) in the National Park Service prepare long-range operational management plans, recommend modification of established programs and the development of new ones, manage work programs with responsibility for overall multiple-use management objectives, and are responsible for the technical and administrative supervision and management of subordinate staffs. Park Managers in each agency also participate in the development, modification and revision of master plans which are developed in their respective regional (district) offices.

Specific statutory and policy requirements direct the Corps to actively and intensively manage its natural resources for multiple-use and maximum sustained yield. The National Park System exercises a more passive management of natural resources, e.g., they essentially "let nature take its course." Because of these very basic differences in philosophy, statutory and regulatory requirements and management goals, Corps managers must possess more indepth knowledge in the natural sciences (e.g., forestry, fish and wildlife management, soil conservation, watershed and range management, etc.), than their counterparts in the National Park Service. In summary, when comparing park and recreation management, Corps managers are very similar to those found in the National Park Service; however, in regard to natural resources management, Corps positions more closely resemble Forest Supervisors in the U.S. Forest Service.

1. The Corps Park Manager's responsibility falls into three major program areas:

(a) PARK PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

Encompasses functional programs such as long-term planning (Operational Management Plans IAW ER 1130-2-400, Project Mobilization Plans IAW CEMOPS, etc.); determining resources carrying capacities and regulating public use to protect and conserve project resources; interagency coordination; supervisory personnel management responsibilities; facilities management (operations and maintenance of dams, levees, pumping stations, buildings, grounds, utilities, roads, trails, etc.); contract management and administration for service and construction contracts; financial administration and budget management, physical security planning and implementation; review and evaluation of facility designs, plans and specifications; emergency management including flood control, planning and implementation for emergency operations resulting from national and natural disasters, dam failures, spills of hazardous or toxic materials, etc.

(b) NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Encompasses functional programs such as forest management; wildlife management; fisheries management; outgrants management; lakeshore management; fire control; pest control (insects, rodents, plant diseases, etc.); aquatic plant control; erosion control; pollution control/preservation of water quality; range management; watershed management; and the management of cultural and historical resources.

(c) RECREATION-RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Encompasses functional programs such as public relations; interpretation; visitor and resource protection; recreation program management (including development, administration, and control of parks and recreation areas and facilities); participation in recreation research studies; resolving conflicting recreational uses; and conducting recreation use surveys and analyses of visitation/public use data to identify and quantify public demand for recreational activities.

1. The responsibility that Corps Park Managers have for the major programs described above require them to resolve administrative and technical problems resulting from inadequate facilities for accommodating the public; non-compliance with terms of permits, licenses or other outgrants, encroachments, trespasses, vandalism, theft, fire, accidents, floods and conflicting and private interests. The Manager must assure continuous and effective conduct of public relations activities and the maintenance of personal contacts with elected and appointed officials to promote acceptance, understanding and compliance with established policies and objectives, while assuring that the needs of the general public are met with respect to the use of lake areas. This requires close and effective coordination with various federal and state health, recreation, conservation and land management agencies; law enforcement authorities, environmental and conservation organizations; and local civic, social, and religious groups.

### 3. COVERAGE

This guidance is intended solely for use in evaluating jobs in the Corps of Engineers in which the park management duties and responsibilities, as defined by the GS-025 draft position classification standard, are determined to be paramount and controlling for recruitment, selection, placement and promotion.

Due to the mixed nature of the jobs and variety of work situations in some Park Manager jobs, the paramount duties and responsibilities may not always be clearly delineated. In order to fully understand the job and make the proper determination, it is necessary to consider the job in its total environment (as a whole) and to apply sound classification judgment. When Corps Project, Park and Area Managers possess duties and responsibilities that meet the definition for Park Manager described in the GS-025 (draft) standard, the position will be classified to the GS-025 series.

### 4. EXCLUSIONS

(a) When the primary duties assigned to a position involve responsibility for major construction of hydroelectric power, flood control, navigation, irrigation or other facilities, it should be evaluated through Part III of the Civil Engineer standard, GS-810.

(b) When the primary duties involve responsibility for the operation and/or maintenance of a hydroelectric power station and appertaint structures, machinery, equipment and utilities, and/or the supervision of those activities, the position should be evaluated through the appropriate position classification standard.

(c) When the primary duties involve responsibility for the operation and maintenance of lock and dam or flood control dam structures, equipment and utilities, bridges, canals or other project facilities, the position should be classified through the Facility Management Series, GS-1640 or other appropriate series in the 1600 group. This should also apply to positions with park management-type activities that are of such limited scope that they are incidental to the paramount operational responsibility of the position. Lockmasters and other jobs with wage grade, trades and crafts responsibilities, should be evaluated through the applicable job grading standards.

(d) Position which have as their primary responsibility the supervision of Federal employees engaged in a variety of trades and occupations involving the maintenance and/or related construction of facilities including parks, forests, roads, beaches, campsites, picnic areas, launching ramps, etc., under the supervision of a Park Manager should be classified through the Facility Management Series, GS-1640 or through the appropriate wage grade series when there is a paramount requirement for extensive knowledge of one or more of the trades supervised.

## 5. AUTHORIZED TITLES

Park Manager is the authorized title for positions which direct personnel, control and guide the use of funds, materials, and facilities to carry out a complex of park and project programs, and perform important, proactive, public relations activities in support of the park, project area.

The title Park Manager denotes management and supervision. "Supervisory" will not be used in titles for managers.

## 6. GRADING OF POSITIONS

This guidance is intended to provide supplemental evaluation criteria for Corps Park Manager positions, GS-025-11 through GS-025-13. It supplements criteria provided in Part II, Forester (Administration) of the GS-460 OPM classification standards and the draft OPM classification standard for Park Ranger, GS-025.

Since Corps Park Manager positions are properly evaluated by the same factors as those described in the Forester standard as well as the draft GS-025 Park Ranger standard, Corps Park Manager work is properly evaluated by the following four factors:

### (A) NATURE OF ASSIGNMENT:

This factor deals with the scope, complexity, and impact of the assignment. It includes the organizational scope of the position in terms of the degree of program responsibility, the planning, execution, coordination, and policy development duties and responsibilities in assignments; managerial and supervisory responsibilities; the condition and characteristics of the project; and the pace and intensity of management required.

### (B) MENTAL DEMANDS:

This factor includes the required skills, knowledges, and abilities as measured by the scope of the project; mental demands in resolving problems in terms of guidelines and judgment required in selecting, interpreting, adopting and applying guidelines; and the originality required to create and/or devise methods, instructions, procedures, techniques and/or guidelines to manage the programs of the project.

### (C) Level of Responsibility:

This factor deals with issues such as the manner in which assignments are received, the review process and the degree of supervisory

involvement during the work process; the evaluation work product(s) and program effectiveness. It considers the effect of decisions and judgments on Corps programs; on the effectiveness of managing the project; and on the quality and importance of the work accomplished in meeting park management objectives. It also involves the measurement of public administration implications in terms of public interest/reaction, nature and availability of precedents which apply to the management of the project and the importance of project problems as a potential precedent in local program administration.

(D) PERSONAL WORK RELATIONSHIPS:

The factor considers personal contacts and work relationships outside the supervisory chain. It specifically concerns the frequency and difficulties encountered during personal contacts, e.g., the importance, impact and consequence of attaining stated objectives through the exchange of information; through explaining policy and methods in order to gain support for action; and recognition of the sensitivity/complexity of problems in person-to-person contacts in order to create strategies to marshal support for the program. This factor attempts to measure the requirements inherent in the position demanding the obtaining of cooperation for public use programs in the face of public, political and organizational opposition; and the requirement to convince the public the necessity for change in public use policies despite public opposition and/or lack of favorable perception.

6. NATURE OF ASSIGNMENTS EVALUATION GUIDANCE:

This guidance is supplemental and interpretive and does not cover all considerations in the GS-460, Forestry standard. All criteria contained in the OPM standards for Forestry and Park Ranger should be considered when determining the final grade of a position.

The following brief descriptions are intended to describe typical Corps situations at the GS/GM 11, 12, and 13 grade levels for Park Manager positions. Significant duties and responsibilities not specifically covered by this guidance may be compared with this guidance, the Forestry, GS-460 and Park Manager, GS-025 standards. Grades for fully performing Park Managers in the Corps below GS-11 and above GM-13 are rare.

The GS-460 standard outlines a number of resource values; the following describes resource values common to Corps Projects/Parks:

- Cultural/Historic Resources
- Fisheries
- Forests
- Hydropower
- Navigation
- Range
- Recreation
- Soil
- Water
- Wildlife

Plans, coordinates, and directs the execution of Project programs. Work involves a variety of assignments that require the manager to independently resolve complex problems on a regular and recurring basis. Positions at this level are characterized by one or a combination of work situations such as the following:

(1) An overall multiple-use management program that requires substantial management of recreation resources which requires the Manager to plan, develop, operate, and maintain recreation facilities to meet heavy public use demands for a variety of outdoor recreation activities. Typically, neither the recreation use nor the demand for recreational opportunities exceeds the overall carrying capacity of the parks and recreation areas under the Manager's control. However, one or two of the recreation areas may be over-utilized, requiring the Park Manager to develop alternate plans and methods for preserving the resource base while accommodating public use demands.

(2) The condition of and characteristics common to the public use areas of the projects are such that the Manager must plan, develop, coordinate and execute policies to accomplish substantial programs in: public health and safety; visitor and resource protection; and physical security. The Manager must develop for each of these programs a specific project plan that meets the requirements of the project and contributes to accomplishing Corps objectives in those areas.

(3) The Manager must determine the most effective allocation of resources and deal with personnel management policy matters. The Manager develops annual work plans and 5-year plans to cover the management of the recreational and natural resources of the project area. Typically, the work involves managing a small to moderate sized staff of general schedule and Federal Wage System employees. The work requires the manager to change work plans and shift people and budget items to meet changing goals/needs.

(4) The Manager must deal with a variety of natural resources management activities complicated by problems of watershed protection, public use, adjacent land uses, public land buildings, and environmental concerns that require the development and adjustment of resources management programs to fully meet multiple-use objectives. The Manager is required to develop policies and plans, execute and coordinate balanced programs in one or more of the following areas:

- Natural Resources protection including fire protection pest and erosion control;
- Fish and wildlife habitat enhancement;
- Flood control with responsibility for the operation and maintenance of a multi-purpose dam and reservoir;
- Pollution control;
- Cultural resources protection.

Pressures from competing uses of land and water for recreation, wildlife, aesthetics timber, grazing, etc., require the Manager to assure coordination with the users of resources, elected and appointed officials, adjacent land owners, private organizations and agencies in developing acceptable plans for the management of natural and cultural resources.

(5) The Manager is occasionally expected to act and make decisions on behalf of the District Commander on unusually sensitive and/or controversial matters which may have regional implications. Controversial policy questions are usually resolved with supervisory participation in the decision process.

## B. GS-12 PARK MANAGER

### NATURE OF ASSIGNMENT

The Manager typically plans, coordinates and directs the execution of programs that are subject to numerous problems that are complex and require complicated coordination. Work requires that the Manager regularly resolve highly complex problems that require coordination of multiple-use features, high visitation causing problems in project density (area overuse), conflicts between public and private interests, etc., that create intensive program administration problems. Positions at this level are characterized by one or a combination of work situations such as the following:

(a) Public use characteristics and the number and diversity of Parks and recreation areas require the Manager to frequently reevaluate recreation management objectives and develop plans to meet new and/or revised objectives. The Manager must consider programs to address problems and concerns such as recreation user fees; renovation of areas to reduce Operations and Maintenance (O&M) cost and/or to increase revenue; plans for closing inefficient and/or under utilized recreation areas or consolidation of such areas to enhance O&M efficiency; and careful consideration for the social, political, environmental, and economic impacts that may result from such changes.

(b) A significant number and variety of Natural Resources Management activities are present, with multiple-use integration and coordination both prominent and complex because of the resource limitations of the project area and/or inherent conflicting demands for use. The Manager often conducts extensive analyses and surveys that often require significant contributions from the public, scientists, and other professionals to determine which natural resources management objectives and techniques will yield optimum results in the overall, long-term public interest. The Manager's development and implementation of long-range natural resources management plans is a substantial and significant part of the work, and is reflected in programming and planning documents.

(c) There are one or more natural resources management programs that require an unusual degree of management, protection, and utilization of resources and which create intensive administrative and technical problems of unusual complexity and heavy workload. Illustrative examples include:

- Extensive fish and/or wildlife mitigation program;
- Extensive forest management program characterized by the full range of silvicultural practices including timber stand improvements, reforestation, timber harvesting, and complex cut and harvesting techniques;
- Unusually complex range management programs.

(d) Land ownership patterns and extensive residential, commercial, and/or industrial development of privately owned contiguous lands are such that the Manager must develop and implement complex plans to manage public access; for example:

- A lakeshore management plan specific to the project to preserve the actual resources by regulating the extent of shoreline alteration and private moorage facilities;
- A plan depicting corrective measures to resolve significant encroachment and trespass problems;
- A plan to minimize or eliminate private exclusive use of public lands;
- A plan to establish/reestablish, inspect, and maintain the government boundary line where numerous conflicts and boundary disputes with adjacent property owners frequently occur.

(e) There exists a dependency of local communities on the recreational use of the project for economic stability. The recreation resources management program is complicated by major problems resulting from public demands and (often conflicting) pressures to increase the use of parks and recreation areas beyond the existing carrying capacity. Extensive renovation of recreation facilities is often necessary due to overuse; pressures from industry, business, sportsmen, special recreation interests, or other organizations require development of additional facilities or redirection of resources utilization and management in order to meet changes in emphasis/need. Controversial policy questions are often resolved without supervisory participation in the decision process.

### C. GM-13 PARK MANAGER

#### NATURE OF ASSIGNMENT

Plans, coordinates and directs the execution of programs that involve the management of a variety of project resources under intensive multiple-use. The Manager regularly handles situations in which current demands and requirements for development of both the natural and recreational resources credit highly complex problems that must be addressed in order to achieve optimum utilization and long-range management of all the project resources. Larger areas of the Project are typically sub-divided into smaller areas and assigned

the subordinate Managers or Supervisory Rangers. Managers at this level independently resolve significant problems and controversial policy questions with supervisory participation in only the most controversial or sensitive issues. The Manager at this level provides information and expert advice to higher headquarters on local conditions and the actual or anticipated effects of proposed plans, programs, and policies; the Manager contributes significantly to the formulation, promulgation, and implementation of District natural resources management policies and programs.

In addition to work situations described at the GS-12 level, positions at the GM-13 level are typically complicated by three or four of the types of interrelated conditions described in paragraphs (1) through (5), pages 55 and 56 of Part II of the GS-460 standard or the following types of inter-related conditions:

(1) The natural and developed resources of the Corps lake are such that the lake has significant regional importance as a water resources development project and attracts heavy visitation from a large regional area of the United States. Typically, a multi-million dollar recreation and tourism industry is supported either directly or indirectly by the Corps project, and the Manager must consider socio-economic factors in the development of resource management plans in order to provide quality recreational opportunities to support the economic stability of recreation-related businesses and industries, and the social stability of surrounding communities, cities, and counties.

(2) The extent of residential, commercial, and/or industrial development of privately owned contiguous lands, and the diversity and significance of the natural, cultural and aesthetic resources of the Corps project are such that the Manager must often resolve controversies and deal with pressures to change the lakeshore management plan or other resource management plans for managing public lands and waters.

Typically, the Manager must deal with several thousand adjacent land owners whose demands are often in conflict with sound resources management for the benefit of present and future generations.

(3) A variety of critical or highly significant resources management problems such as:

- Preserving and protecting habitat where several rare, threatened or endangered species of flora or fauna are found;

- Potentially serious water quality problems resulting from toxic wastes, hazardous chemicals, and runoff from mining operations within the watershed, etc., that require the Manager to develop contingency plans to ensure public health and safety;

- Unique cultural and/or historical sites (usually of national significance) which require the Manager to exercise a high degree of judgment, sensitivity, and professional knowledge in developing and implementing plans for the operation, maintenance, and preservation of the areas.

Descriptions for these three factors in Part II of the GS-460 standard (p.p. 50-52 for GS-11, p. 54 for GS-12 and p.p. 57-58 for GM-13) require no additional supplementation. Interchanging Park Management terminology with Forest Administration terminology and the application of sound classification judgment should enable the position classification specialist to evaluate the Park Manager position by direct comparison with OPM criteria.