



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Environment and Climate Change	Forest Officer	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
23-2809	Norman Wells	Sahtu

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Forest Officer is accountable for the delivery of key aspects of the forest resources program including the prevention, detection, pre-suppression and suppression programs for wildland fire management, the safety and training program for wildland fire management in the Region, and forest resource management activities.

## SCOPE

The Forest Management Program of Environment and Climate Change (ECC) provides for management of forest resources and the protection of forests and communities from wildfire on 75 million hectares of land in the Northwest Territories. Operational delivery of the program is through the five (5) administrative Regions of the Department.

Located in Norman Wells and reporting to the Manager, Forestry Operations (Manager), the Forest Officer works within a team environment providing technical and operational support for forest resources and wildland fire management functions within the Regions. The position works with other staff at the regional level and with staff of the Forest Management Division (FMD) located in Fort Smith and Hay River in delivery of the programs.

Work directly affects the safety and wellbeing of the communities, infrastructure, resource values and other values at risk in the Region, as a result of the role that position has in the delivery of the wildland fire management program in the Region and the accountability that the job has as a Regional wildland fire response manager (Regional Duty Officer). The Regional Duty Officer in each region determines resources requirements; deals with issues arising from fire activities and makes decisions regarding assignment of resources/tactics which have a direct impact on the safety of firefighters and communities affected by wildfire. These decisions can have significant financial impacts.



The Forest Officer is accountable for ensuring that wildland fire crews are trained and conversant with all operating procedures. The effective training of fire line personnel has a direct impact on the effective suppression of fires in the Region. Coordination of wildland fire safety program for the Region impacts the safety of all Fireline personnel within this geographic area.

The position provides functional supervision to the seasonal contract wildland fire crews and casual staff during the fire season and makes decisions regarding tactics, resource management, and related to increase/reduce resources. The impact of work is also territorial in terms of the contribution the Forest Officer makes on territorial working groups that are accountable for the development of Standard Operating Procedures.

The Forest Officer also ensures that forest resource management activities are conducted appropriately and consistent with legislation and policy. Collaboration and coordination with staff of the FMD in proposing terms and conditions for authorizations for use of forest resources and in carrying out field operations is required. The Forest Officer position has the authority to make decisions where clear policy, precedent and/or legislation does not exist, and to enforce the legislation through public education, compliance monitoring and enforcement actions.

The position delivers forest stewardship and wildland fire prevention messages to the public, stakeholders, industry, and other government agencies. Consultation with communities, First Nations organizations and other governments is an important aspect of this position. The incumbent must establish and maintain position relationships and support for the program.

The Forest Officer may lead the organization of meetings, make presentations, or take on the role of chairperson.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Actively carry out a variety of roles to assist with the prevention, detection pre-suppression and suppression program components within the Regional and Territory as required.**

- Participate in the planning, implementation and operation of wildland fire detection systems including lookouts, smoke patrols, lightning location system and public reporting.
- Coordinate annual consultation with communities prior to the beginning of the wildland fire season.
- Participate in the development of preparedness plans including the analysis of fire activity statistics and recommend improvements to preparedness plans.
- Assist Regional/Territorial Duty Officer with coordination and briefing of incoming resources and communication with stakeholders and communities.



- Assist in arranging for equipment and manpower for fires within the region or to be exported to other areas.
- Coordinate the completion of wildland fire investigations on person caused fires and responds to fires as the initial investigator for incidents not considered high profile or complex in nature.
- Assist in planning for and participating in communication of the wildland fire prevention message to the public, stakeholders, and other government agencies.
- Assist with hazard reduction planning and implementation.
- Assist in the development of and implementing as directed, wildland fire prevention strategies and programs including support to communities to develop and implement Fire Smart Plans.
- Participate in the development and maintenance of Interface Wildland Fire Management Plans and Landscape Wildland Fire Management Plans.
- Ensure that record keeping and reporting requirements are met, including occurrence reports, season wildland fire reports (with digital maps created to established standards) and the annual fire management report for the Region.

**2. Conducts wildland fire incident command and wildland fire response functions and to ensure regional preparedness.**

- Determine fire readiness levels through the effective use of wildland fire management planning tools to pre-position resources and monitor and adjust local wildland fire preparedness conditions as necessary, including the completion of Wildlife Situation Analysis reports and Wildland Fire Response Plans and the use of the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Ratings System to assess wildland fire danger and communicate potential wildland fire behavior.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of equipment and report on efficiencies of contracted services.
- Make time constrained decisions to ensure that appropriate resources, strategies and tactics are used to suppress wildfires in the Region as outlined in the Wildland Fire Management Standard Operating Procedures.
- Prioritize wildland fire suppression targets based on policy, resources available and values at risk.
- Prioritize and direct wildland fire control operations, including developing and ensuring cost benefit thresholds are recognized in continuing fire suppression action and decision-making.
- Provide technical advice to land and resource managers in wildland fire prevention issues, fire danger conditions.
- Carry out community consultation as needed on wildland fire events near communities.
- Performs the duties of Regional Duty Officer on an assignment basis and coordinate wildland fire response activities according to the Wildland Fire Management Standard Operating Procedures.



- Provide leadership to and/or participate on special Territorial Incident Command Teams according to certification in an effort to contain and suppress wildfires.
- 3. Conduct activities in support of forest resource management in areas such as silviculture, timber harvesting, integrated resource management and administration of authorizations.**
- Carry out forest sampling to divisional standards (such as temporary volume sampling, operational timber cruising, and specialized data collection).
  - Provide direction to field crews and supervise silviculture work such as planting and cone collections.
  - Perform pre-harvest ecological assessments and post-harvest silviculture prescription activities.
  - Assist in using wildland fire as a tool for management of the forest resource including the development and implementation of burn plans for resource management open burning to modify forest fuel loads, improve planting sites or improve wildlife habitat.
  - Participate in the reforestation monitoring.
  - Review applications for forest management authorizations (including Timber Cutting Licenses and Permits) and issue Free Timber Cutting Permits.
  - Inspect proposed harvest area, verify license/permit plans for compliance with relevant operating procedures, acts and regulations and monitor harvesting operations to confirm compliance with authorization terms and conditions, initiating corrective action when required. Monitor timber scaling and perform check scaling on timber harvest operators.
  - Monitor and enforce compliance with the *Forest Protection Act* and take appropriate corrective measures including enforcement action in cases of non-compliance with the *Forest Management Act* and Regulations.
  - Work with stakeholders, the timber operator and various referral agencies to resolve conflicts and determine the most appropriate conditions of approval.
  - Review and provide input on major amendments to harvest plans.
  - Maintain records on timber production, issuance of authorizations and entry of data.
- 4. Coordinate the wildland fire management and forest resources training and safety programs for the Region ensuring that all operations are conducted safely and in accordance with all applicable policy and legislation.**
- Plan and deliver the annual wildland fire management training program for the Regional to support wildland fire fighting operations in a safe and effective manner.
  - Monitor activities of the crews to ensure training is being applied in carrying out fire management responsibilities.
  - Maintains the Regional record of training and qualification of wildland fire management and forest resources personnel capacity.



- Implement a safety program within the region and ensure staff are familiar with Standard Operating Procedures for fireline safety.
- Audit Fireline activity and crew performance in the region to ensure that operations adhere to guidelines and procedures.
- Investigate Fireline incidents and make recommendations as appropriate.
- Ensure communication of safety plans and alert status to pre-suppression resources, ensure safety briefings are conducted and Wildland Fire Behaviour Alerts are issued as needed to Fireline personnel.

**5. Participate in territorial task forces, working groups and committees to develop Wildland Fire Management Standard Operating Procedures and training requirements.**

- Member of Territorial Training Working Group and Wildland Fire Management Safety Group.
- Provide input, advice and assistance with the development of Standard Operating Procedures, development revision of training requirements from a front-line regional perspective.
- Participate as an instructor in wildland fire training courses and programs.

**6. Provide support to regional Wildlife and Environmental Protection programs when required.**

- Assist clients by providing information and assistance in completion of applications for Departmental renewable resource development programs and services.
- *Enforce the Wildlife Act, Environmental Protection Act, Parks Act, Wild Animal and Plant Protection Act* and all other associated and relevant Territorial and Federal legislation and regulations.
- Administer the fur price program including evaluating incoming fur, issuing payment to trappers, maintaining trapper files, receiving/storing/shipping fur in an appropriate manner, explaining and promoting the program to trappers and accounting for promissory notes issued.
- Respond to contaminant and hazardous waste spills and overseeing the clean-up process on Commissioner's Lands, including informing the spill line of progress, coordination of personnel, collection of evidence and enforcement of the *Environmental Protection Act* up to and including the issuance of Clean-up Orders.
- Provide problem wildlife control to ensure safety of the public within communities, parks and remote camps.



## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

Working extended hours, traveling extensively and being on standby for extended periods of time in accordance with operational plans for the NWT Fire Season (nominally from April 1 to September 30 each year).

A level of physical fitness is required that will permit the incumbent to exert strenuous physical effort while engaged in wildland fire suppression activity or in traveling in the bush related to carrying out forest surveys and forest sampling.

### **Environmental Conditions**

Working under adverse conditions such as smoke, extreme heat, mountainous terrain, in remote and isolated locations, and working and living in a camp-style environment with many others and sleep in shared tent accommodations.

Spending extensive periods of time in aircraft in often adverse flying conditions.

### **Sensory Demands**

A high level of attention is required under stressful situations to assess response requirements and organizing and directing wildland fire crews and aircraft in the field.

### **Mental Demands**

The job involves consulting with people in stressful situations. The severity of the wildland fire season determines the incumbent's workload and is a factor beyond control of the incumbent. Traveling and working away from home for long periods of time during the wildland fire season. Responsibility for the safety of others can add stress.

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- Knowledge of wildland fire suppression strategies and tactics.
- Knowledge of fire cause and investigation.
- Knowledge of the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System.
- Knowledge of fireline safety and safe work practices.
- Knowledge of wildland fire suppression resources and their capabilities (i.e., aircraft, personnel, equipment and communications).
- Knowledge of wildland fire prevention, preparedness, detection, and fuel management.
- Knowledge of applicable acts regulations, policies and procedures related to forest management (*Forest Management Act*, and regulations, Timber Harvesting Standard Operating Procedures, *Forest Protection Act*, NWT Fire Management Policy).
- Knowledge of collective agreements, government contracting, financial management





and procurement procedures.

- Knowledge of the Incident Command System.
- Knowledge of forest biology, succession and how factors act to control forest processes (climate, soils, terrain, moisture, and vegetation).
- Knowledge of Commercial Timber Harvest Standard Operating Procedures and other procedures and guidelines and practices developed as management tools.
- Knowledge in applying acts and regulations, monitoring, and enforcement techniques.
- Ability to plan and manage own and others' workload taking into consideration shifting priorities, limited resources, and impacts of decisions.
- Ability to select, direct and motivate individuals the incumbent may or may not supervise and monitor and evaluate their performance fairly and consistently (i.e., contractors, Fireline personnel, clients, and staff).
- Ability to apply and enforce legislation, regulations, collective agreements, policies, and procedures related to forest stewardship and wildland fire management.
- Ability to prepare, provide and obtain clear, concise, and complete oral and written information of a complex or technical nature at a level appropriate to the audience in a timely manner.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with a variety of groups or individuals (such as other agencies, communities, resource industries,) to meet program objectives, complete projects, or influence outcomes.
- Ability to plan, prepare and deliver effective information and training sessions to a variety of audiences, typically of 5 to 25 people.
- Ability to use computer applications (such as databases, electronic mail, spreadsheets, and word processing) to enter and retrieve data and create and edit a variety of effective correspondence and reports.
- Ability to anticipate, identify, clarify, and assess critical issues and urgent situations quickly and to develop and implement appropriate and timely courses of action.
- Ability to conduct sensitive and fact-finding interviews to gather pertinent facts, determine issues in dispute, draw conclusions and make recommendations.
- Ability to deliver effective impromptu presentation on controversial subject matter to potential unreceptive, critical, hostile audiences (i.e., media, interest groups).
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion, and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

**Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:**

A University Degree in natural resources with two years relevant experience or Technical School graduation from a recognized program in a related field including resource management and three years relevant experience. Work experience must include fire suppression, control, and command, supervision of field and/or fire crews, wilderness and



forest navigation using maps and aerial photographs, and a forest surveys and forest sample plot data collection.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

This is a law enforcement position with a requirement to wear a uniform.

A bona fide requirement of the job is passing the annual work simulation fitness standards for ECC field officers. Current certification at the Command Level in the Incident Command System or equivalent is required.

A valid Firearms Possession and Acquisition License, valid Class 5 Driver's License and valid passport are also required.

### **Position Security (check one)**

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

### **French language (check one if applicable)**

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

- ☐ French preferred

### **Indigenous language: Select language**

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred