

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a classification certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the Government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under the conditions and time limits specified in title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, sections 511.605, 511.613, and 511.614, as cited in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Since this decision changes the grade of the appealed position, it is to be effective no earlier than the date of the decision and not later than the beginning of the fourth pay period after the date of the decision. The servicing personnel office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

Decision sent to:

[appellant]

[Associate Regional Director for Administration]

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Introduction

On March 14, 2002, the Washington Oversight Division of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) accepted a position classification appeal from [appellant], who is employed as a Supervisory Park Ranger, GS-025-13, in the [division] at [park], [region], National Park Service (NPS), Department of the Interior, in [city and State]. The appellant requested that his position be classified at the GS-14 level. This appeal was accepted and decided under the provisions of section 5112 of title 5, United States Code.

The appellant had appealed the classification of his position to the National Park Service, but that appeal was denied by decision dated August 30, 2001.

An on-site position audit was conducted by a Washington Oversight Division representative on September 3, 2002, and an interview with the appellant's supervisor, [name], on October 7, 2002. This appeal was decided by considering the audit findings and all information of record furnished by the appellant and his agency, including his official position description, [number], and other material submitted in the agency administrative report on June 13, 2002.

Position Information

The appellant is the chief of the [division] for [park], and is responsible for all matters relating to the preservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural resources of the park, including planning, environmental management, compliance, and historic preservation.

Series Determination

The appellant's position is properly assigned to the Park Ranger Series, GS-025, which covers work involved in the conservation and use of Federal park resources. Neither the appellant nor the agency disagrees.

Title Determination

The authorized title for supervisory positions in this series is Supervisory Park Ranger. Neither the appellant nor the agency disagrees.

Grade Determination

The position was evaluated by application of the criteria contained in the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG), which is a cross-series guide used to determine the grade level of supervisory positions in the General Schedule. The GSSG has six evaluation factors, each with several factor level definitions and corresponding point values. Positions are evaluated by crediting the points designated for the highest level met under each factor, and converting the total to a grade by using the grade conversion table provided in the guide.

The appellant contests the bureau's evaluation of factors 5 and 6. We concur with the bureau's evaluation of factors 1, 2, 3, and 4, but disagree with their evaluation of factors 5 and 6.

Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect

The bureau credited Level 1-3 under this factor for both elements.

Scope

This element addresses the complexity and breadth of the program or program segment directed (below the agency level, this is the direct mission-related or line work of the organization); or the work directed, products produced, or services delivered (this pertains to administrative or other support-type functions). The geographic and organizational coverage of the program (or program segment) *within the agency structure* is included under this element.

At Level 1-2, the program segment or work directed is administrative, technical, complex clerical, or comparable in nature. The services provided have limited geographic coverage and support most of the activities comprising a typical agency field office, an area office, a small to medium military installation, or comparable activities within agency program segments. The illustrations provided in the guide at this level include:

- Providing an administrative or support service (e.g., budget, staffing, supply, maintenance, protective, library, or payroll services) to a small military base, a typical national park, or a moderately-sized nondefense agency field office. In this situation, the services provided directly impact other functions throughout the organizations supported and/or a small population of visitors or users.
- In a field office providing services to the general public, furnishing a portion of such services, often on a case basis, to a small population of clients. The size of the population serviced by the field office is the equivalent of all citizens or businesses in a portion of a small city.

The first illustration depicts internally focused support work, i.e., where the work supervised constitutes services that are provided to support or facilitate the direct mission-related work of the organization itself. The second illustration depicts a program segment, where the work supervised actually constitutes the essential purpose of the agency. The appellant supervises a program segment, in that resource management is one of the basic line functions of the bureau. Therefore, the first illustration, although it references a national park as an organizational setting, is not applicable to his position. The second illustration, although more applicable since it relates to line functions, is exceeded because its scope is limited to “a small population of clients” of the organization.

At Level 1-3, the work directed is technical, administrative, protective, investigative, or professional in nature. Coverage of the work typically encompasses a major metropolitan area, a State, or a small region of several States; or, when most of an area’s taxpayers or businesses are covered, coverage comparable to a small city. The following is an illustration provided in the guide at this level:

- In providing services directly to the general public, furnishing a significant portion of the agency's line program to a moderate-sized population of clients. The size of the population serviced is the equivalent of a group of citizens and/or businesses in several rural counties, a small city, or a portion of a larger metropolitan area. The serviced population may be concentrated in one specific geographic area or involve a significant portion of a multistate population.

The scope of the appellant's position matches Level 1-3. First, in terms of the complexity of the work directed, the General Schedule work directed by the appellant is either professional or technical rather than "administrative, technical, or complex clerical." In terms of the breadth of the program directed, although the position would superficially appear to meet no higher than Level 1-2, the nature of the park unit covered by the work more closely aligns with Level 1-3. Level 1-2 involves "limited geographic coverage" consistent with a "typical agency field office" or "typical national park." The concentration of [identifying information] within [park] is unique within the National Park System, including [identifying information], encompassing a "major metropolitan area" as described at Level 1-3. Given that the purpose of the element "scope" as defined in the GSSG is to measure geographic and organizational coverage *as it affects "the general complexity and breadth" of the program directed*, the actual geographic area covered (in terms of acreage or square miles) is not in and of itself a determinant of program scope as that term is intended in the guide. The scope of the appellant's work *within the agency structure* is comparable to the second illustration under Level 1-3, in that the appellant's division provides a significant portion of the agency's line program to a substantial population of park visitors and users within a specific metropolitan area.

Effect

This element addresses the impact of the work on the mission and programs of the customers, the activity, the agency, other agencies, the general public, or others.

At Level 1-2, the services support and significantly affect installation level, area office level, or field office level operations; or provide services to a moderate, local, or limited population of clients or users comparable to a major portion of a small city or rural county.

At Level 1-3, the services directly and significantly impact a wide range of agency activities, the work of other agencies, the operations of outside interests, or the general public.

The Level 1-2 criteria address two different scenarios, i.e., positions involved in the provision of support services internal to an organization (where effect is on installation level, area office level, or field office level operations), and positions involved in the delivery of externally-oriented, line functions within a designated geographic area (where effect is on a moderate, local, or limited population of clients or users). As such, Level 1-2 is clearly exceeded, considering that the "population of clients or users," in this case the visitors to the park unit, far exceeds the small to moderate local population described at that level.

In terms of Level 1-3, the appellant's organization does not *directly and significantly* impact a wide range of agency activities or the work of other agencies. It does have this degree of impact,

however, on the operations of outside interests and the general public. Considering the mission of the appellant's division, i.e., natural and cultural resource management for [park], there is direct and significant interaction with the public and outside organizations, including constituency groups, planning commissions, and Congressional staff. Given the visitation levels to the park sites and the consideration that these are premier tourist attractions nationwide and worldwide, impact extends beyond the local interests typical of Level 1-2 to the broader general public.

Level 1-3 is credited.

550 points

Factor 2, Organizational Setting

This factor considers the organizational situation of the supervisory position in relation to higher levels of management.

The bureau credited Level 2-3 under this factor.

The appellant reports to the Assistant Park Superintendent (GS-15), a position which is both documented and functions as a full deputy to the Superintendent (SES). Therefore, the appellant's position is credited as reporting directly to the Superintendent.

Level 2-3 is credited.

350 points

Factor 3, Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised

This factor covers the delegated supervisory and managerial authorities that are exercised on a recurring basis. The bureau credited Level 3-3 under this factor, citing both paragraphs a and b.

Level 3-3a involves exercising delegated managerial authority to set a series of annual, multiyear, or similar types of long-range work plans and schedules for in-service or contracted work; assuring implementation (by lower and subordinate units) of the goals and objectives for the program segment; determining goals and objectives that need additional emphasis; determining the best approach for resolving budget shortages; and planning for long-range staffing needs, including such matters as whether to contract out work. These positions are closely involved with high level program officials (or comparable agency level staff personnel) in the development of overall goals and objectives for the program segment.

The GSSG defines "managerial" as the authority vested in some positions which direct the work of an organizational unit, are held accountable for the success of specific line or staff functions, monitor and evaluate the progress of the organization toward meeting goals, and make adjustments in objectives, work plans, schedules, and commitment of resources. As described in 5 U.S.C. 5104, such positions may serve as head or assistant head of a major organization within a bureau, or direct a specialized program of marked difficulty, responsibility, and national significance. Thus, Level 3-3a is not intended to credit first-level operating positions (like the appellant's position) that are responsible primarily for planning and executing their own

localized program segments, but rather for positions at higher levels in the organizational hierarchy that direct broad programs carried out at subordinate levels.

To meet Level 3-3b, a position must exercise all or nearly all of the delegated authorities and responsibilities described at Level 3-2c and, in addition, at least eight of the 15 responsibilities listed at Level 3-3b. The bureau credited responsibilities 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, and 15. We found that the position fully meets Level 3-2c, which describes such typical supervisory duties as planning and assigning work, evaluating performance, interviewing job applicants, and effecting discipline. Under Level 3-3b, we did not credit responsibilities 9, 11, or 15, but did credit responsibilities 4 and 12. Our analysis of the responsibilities listed at Level 3-3b follows:

Responsibility 1 is credited. It involves serving as a second-level supervisor, i.e., using subordinate supervisors, leaders, team chiefs, group coordinators, committee chairs, or comparable personnel to direct, coordinate, or oversee work, or providing similar oversight of contractors. The appellant has two subordinate supervisors, a Preservation Worker Supervisor, WS-4701-8, who directs the entire subordinate Wage Grade staff of 17 employees, and a Maintenance Worker Supervisor, WS-4749-3, who directs a subgroup of nine maintenance workers and laborers.

Responsibility 2 is credited. It involves exercising significant responsibilities in dealing with officials of other units or organizations, or in advising management officials of higher rank. As the chief of resource management for a high profile and politically sensitive park unit, the appellant has a significant coordinative and advisory role, both internal and external.

Responsibility 3 is credited. It involves assuring reasonable equity (among units, groups, teams, projects, etc.) of performance standards and rating techniques developed by subordinates, or assuring comparable equity in the assessment by subordinates of the adequacy of contractor capabilities or completed work. The appellant does this in the capacity of first and second line supervisor over the Wage grade staff.

Responsibility 4 is credited. It involves directing a program or major program segment with significant resources (e.g., one at a multimillion dollar level of annual resources). The appellant exercises direct control over his division operating budget, which is \$1.4 million. However, in his role as contracting officer's technical representative for park-funded construction projects, he oversees contractor work to assure the projects are designed and built to park specifications and he authorizes contract fund release. These are multimillion dollar construction projects, such as [identifying information].

Responsibilities 5 and 6 are credited. They involve duties inherent to the second-level supervisory role, including making decisions on work problems presented by subordinate supervisors, evaluating subordinate supervisors, and serving as reviewing official on evaluations of nonsupervisory employees.

Responsibilities 7 and 8 are credited. They involve making or approving selections for nonsupervisory positions, and recommending selections for subordinate supervisory positions. The appellant makes final selections for the positions on his staff.

Responsibility 9 is not credited. It involves significant authority to hear and *resolve* group grievances or serious employee complaints. The appellant has the authority to hear and resolve only informal grievances.

Responsibility 10 is credited. It involves reviewing and approving serious disciplinary actions (e.g., suspensions) on nonsupervisory employees. The appellant has the authority to approve suspensions up to 14 days in duration.

Responsibility 11 is not credited. It involves making decisions on nonroutine, costly, or controversial training requests for employees of the unit. This type of training is not required in the appellant's division.

Responsibility 12 is credited. It involves determining whether contractor performed work meets standards of adequacy necessary for authorization of payment. The appellant performs this role for planning, design, and construction work funded by the park.

Responsibility 13 is credited. It involves approving expenses *comparable to* within-grades, extensive overtime, and employee travel. The appellant has approval authority for within-grade increases, career-ladder promotions, and travel to specialized training courses.

Responsibility 14 is credited. It involves recommending awards for nonsupervisory personnel and changes in position classification subject to higher-level approval. The appellant does this.

Responsibility 15 is not credited. It involves finding and implementing ways to eliminate or reduce significant bottlenecks and barriers to production, promote team building, or improve business practices (e.g., a large production or processing unit). This would apply to large organizations whose missions would be susceptible to the application of such methodological or structural improvements. The work supervised by the appellant does not lend itself to these types of management applications.

Since the position can be credited with 12 of the listed responsibilities, it meets Level 3-3b.

Level 3-3b is credited.

775 points

Factor 4, Personal Contacts

This is a two-part factor which assesses the nature and purpose of the personal contacts related to supervisory and managerial responsibilities. The nature of the contacts, credited under subfactor 4A, and the purpose of those contacts, credited under subfactor 4B, must be based on the same contacts.

Subfactor 4A, Nature of Contacts

This subfactor covers the organizational relationships, authority or influence level, setting, and difficulty of preparation associated with the personal contacts.

The bureau credited Level 4A-3 under this subfactor.

The appellant's contacts meet Level 4A-3, which describes frequent contacts with, for example, high ranking managers at bureau and major organization levels of the agency or comparable personnel in other Federal agencies; key staff of public interest groups with significant political influence or media coverage; journalists representing influential city newspapers; congressional committee staff assistants; contracting officials and high level technical staff of large industrial firms; and/or State and local government managers doing business with the agency. These contacts take place in meetings and conferences and often require extensive preparation of briefing materials or up-to-date familiarity with complex subject matter. The appellant has frequent contacts with bureau-level management, Congressional committee staff, staff of local and State planning bodies (such as the [planning commission], the Commission of Fine Arts, and the State Historic Preservation Officer), principals of design firms and construction contractors, and representatives of public interest and constituency groups. These contacts often take place in meetings where the appellant is an active participant in providing briefings or in coordinating activities.

Level 4A-4 is not met, which describes frequent contacts with executive level contracting and other officials of major defense contractors or national officers of employee organizations; regional or national officers of trade associations, public action groups, or professional organizations of national stature; key staff of congressional committees and principal assistants to senators and representatives; elected or appointed representatives of State and local governments; journalists of major metropolitan or national newspapers; and/or SES or Executive Level heads of bureaus and higher level organizations in other Federal agencies. This is not the normal level of contacts at which the appellant operates.

Level 4A-3 is credited.

75 points

Subfactor 4B, Purpose of Contacts

This subfactor covers the purpose of the personal contacts credited under subfactor 4A, including the advisory, representational, negotiating, and commitment making responsibilities.

The bureau credited Level 4B-3 under this subfactor.

The purpose of the appellant's contacts is consistent with Level 4B-3, where the purpose of the contacts is to justify, defend, or negotiate in representing the program segment or unit directed, in obtaining or committing resources, *and* in gaining compliance with policies, regulations, or contracts. These contacts usually involve active participation in conferences, meetings, and hearings involving problems or issues of considerable consequence or importance to the program managed. Corresponding examples of the appellant's work include presenting and defending planned memorials at open forums, justifying resource requests to higher-level management, and monitoring work performed by contractors.

Level 4B-4 is not met, where the purpose is to influence, motivate, or persuade persons or groups to accept opinions or take actions related to advancing the fundamental goals and objectives of

the program or segments directed, or involving the commitment or distribution of major resources, when intense opposition or resistance is encountered due to significant organizational or philosophical conflict, competing objectives, major resource limitations or reductions, or comparable issues. If this level of controversy were to arise regarding any of the major activities planned or undertaken by the park, it would be dealt with primarily by staff at higher levels in the organization, such as the regional or national offices.

Level 4B-3 is credited.

100 points

Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed

This factor measures the difficulty and complexity of the basic work most typical of the organization directed, as well as other line, staff, or contracted work for which the supervisor has technical or oversight responsibility. It involves determining the highest grade of basic (mission-oriented) nonsupervisory work performed that constitutes 25 percent or more of the workload of the organization. Among the types of work excluded from consideration are work for which the supervisor does not have the minimum supervisory and managerial authorities defined under Factor 3 (including such basic administrative supervisory functions as approving leave and evaluating performance), and lower-level support work that primarily facilitates the basic work of the unit.

The bureau credited Level 5-5 under this factor, identifying GS-9 as the base level work of the division. The appellant argues that a base level of GS-11 should be credited.

The staff years of nonsupervisory work under the appellant's direction (based on fiscal year 2002 funded positions) are listed below:

<u>Staff Years</u>	<u>Corresponding Positions</u>
1	Architect (Historical), GS-808-13
1	General Engineer, GS-801-13 (on detail)
1	Natural Resource Management Specialist, GS-401-11
1	Natural Resource Management Specialist (GIS), GS-025-11
1	Exhibits Specialist (Restoration), GS-1010-12
1	Cultural Resource Management Specialist, GS-1001-9
1	Biological Science Technician, GS-404-7
1	Mason, WG-3603-10
2	Preservation Workers, WG-4701-9
2	Masonry Workers, WG-3603-8
2	Preservation Workers, WG-4701-7
5	Maintenance Workers, WG-4749-5
3	Laborers, WG-3502-3

The bureau evaluation excluded the GS-401-11 position from base level consideration based on the premise that the appellant cannot technically supervise the work. This issue has been addressed previously in the OPM Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions,

Number 15. Basically, the lack of full technical qualifications in a given occupation does not preclude exercising technical direction over work in that occupation. In this case, the position description for the GS-401 employee describes a degree of technical supervision typical for work at that level, i.e., where the supervisor establishes goals and resources available; confers with the employee on the work to be done, the deadlines, and any concerns or controversies that arise; and reviews the work for results. This level of supervision does not require full technical skills in the occupation to actually perform the work but rather an understanding of how the work is done, what is required to do it, what end products are expected, and the implications or consequences of particular actions. Therefore, this position is included in the base level determination.

The regional office evaluation excluded from consideration the GS-801-13 position because the employee is on detail from a unit at the regional office, his supervisor of record is the head of that unit, and the supervisor of record was credited with supervising this position under the GSSG. The concern apparently is that this would constitute double-crediting of the same employee in two separate organizations. However, the intent of the GSSG under this factor is to recognize *workload* supervised, not positions or employees, regardless of how this workload is accomplished (e.g., by contractors, volunteers, or other temporary workers). In this case, crediting this position has no implications for the classification of the other supervisory position, since the detailed employee's workload in his organization of record remains and is now being accomplished through other means. This GS-13 employee has been detailed to the appellant's division since June 2001 to serve as the park's project coordinator for the [project] permit, with the detail expected to continue through 2004. Prior to this, a GS-13 architect was detailed to the division for about a year to act in a similar capacity. Other upcoming construction projects will likewise require that arrangements be made for project coordinators. Therefore, although this role is occupied by employees temporarily detailed to the division, the workload demand is ongoing. In addition, we verified with the detailed employee's supervisor of record, [name], that for the period of the detail, he is exercising neither technical nor administrative supervision over the employee, and that this role has been assumed entirely by the appellant. Therefore, this position is also included in the base level determination.

We excluded from base level consideration the five WG-4749-5 Maintenance Worker positions and the three WG-3502-3 Laborer positions. These eight employees work in a unit headed by a Maintenance Worker Supervisor, WS-4749-3. The purpose of this unit is to clean [identifying information] under park jurisdiction. This is auxiliary to the mission of the division, which is to provide for the *preservation* of the park's natural and cultural resources. The other Wage Grade positions in the division are directly involved in these preservation activities, e.g., masonry repair and specialized preservation maintenance treatments. In contrast, the Maintenance Workers and Laborers perform basic cleaning, trash and snow removal, and the loading and transportation of equipment and supplies in support of the preservation team. These lower-graded functions occupy virtually none of the appellant's attention and are removed from him by two layers of Wage Grade supervision. They were formerly assigned to the park's Maintenance Division but were moved to the appellant's division to provide basic support services to the specialized Wage Grade preservation work. They are not directly related to the primary functional responsibilities of the division, nor do they constitute any aspect of the knowledge requirements associated with

the appellant's position. Therefore, these lower-graded Wage Grade positions are treated as support positions that are properly excluded from consideration under this factor.

We also excluded from consideration the GS-1010-12 Exhibits Specialist position and the projected GS-11 full performance level of the GS-1001-9 Cultural Resource Management Specialist position. The former position has been advertised several times but not filled due to recruitment difficulties. Because it is a new position and is not currently under active recruitment, we regard it as projected rather than actual workload. In the latter position, the GS-11 career ladder is not established and therefore is a projected grade not verifiable through review of the position description.

Given a total of approximately 13 staff years of creditable nonsupervisory work in the unit, the grade identified as the base level would have to constitute approximately 3.25 staff years to meet the 25 percent requirement. Based on the current grade structure, there are 4 staff years of nonsupervisory work at GS-11 and above in the division, or about 30 percent of the total nonsupervisory work of the division. (None of the Wage Grade work would exceed a GS-9 General Schedule equivalency.) This percentage will rise considerably if the GS-12 Exhibits Specialist position is filled and the GS-1001-9 position is upgraded to GS-11.

Level 5-6 is credited.

800 points

Factor 6, Other Conditions

This factor measures the extent to which various conditions contribute to the difficulty and complexity of carrying out supervisory duties, authorities, and responsibilities. The *difficulty* of work is measured primarily by the grade level of work credited under factor 5. *Complexity* is measured by the level of coordination required.

The bureau credited Level 6-3 under this factor, corresponding to the GS-9 base level assignment under factor 5. The appellant believes that Level 6-4 should be credited.

At Level 6-4, supervision requires substantial coordination and integration of a number of major work projects or program segments of professional, scientific, technical, or administrative work comparable in difficulty to the GS-11 level. Such coordination may involve, for example, integrating internal and external program issues affecting the immediate organization; integrating the work of a team or group and/or ensuring compatibility and consistency of policy interpretation and application; and recommending resources to devote to particular projects or to allocate among program segments.

The difficulty and complexity of the work supervised by the appellant both meet Level 6-4, in that GS-11 represents the base level of the work and the appellant is responsible for integrating internal and external aspects of memorial planning, design, and construction work; integrating the work of subordinates involved in various aspects of preservation activities; and recommending resource allocation among different functions.

Level 6-4 is credited.

1120 points

Summary

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Points</u>
Program Scope and Effect	1-3	550
Organizational Setting	2-3	350
Supervisory/Managerial Authority	3-3b	775
Personal Contacts		
Nature of Contacts	4A-3	75
Purpose of Contacts	4B-3	100
Difficulty of Work Directed	5-6	800
Other Conditions	6-4	<u>1120</u>
Total		3770

The total of 3770 points falls within the GS-14 range (3605-4050) on the grade conversion table provided in the GSSG.

Decision

The appealed position is properly classified as Supervisory Park Ranger, GS-025-14.