



## Working in the Great Outdoors

### **RANGELAND MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST**

If you have an interest in the ecology and management of grassland, shrub lands and arid land watersheds, and how grazing animals (both wildlife and domestic livestock) affect natural ecosystems, read on! If you would like to provide scientific, technical leadership to multiple use management of public resources; if you like to work with people and have a love of the outdoors and grand vistas, a career as a rangeland management specialist in the Forest Service may be for you.

#### **The Work Environment**

From grasslands to prairies, scrublands, forests, savannas, wetlands, steppe, desert, semi – desert, tundra and alpine ecologic communities and biomes, rangelands constitute about 47 percent of the world's land area and almost two-thirds of the lands administered by the Forest Service. Rangelands serve a great variety of uses necessary to maintain and enhance the nation's quality of life. Among them are habitat for many species of plants and animals, forage for wildlife species and permitted livestock, water for wildlife, agricultural, human and other uses, a broad spectrum of outdoor recreational activities, open space, and natural beauty. Sound management of the nation's rangelands, based on ecological principles, is required to gain the full measure of benefits and values that these resources offer. Rangeland ecology and conservation management requires a sound knowledge of botanical, animal, soil and ecological sciences as well as knowledge of the people who use them.

#### **Operating on the Job**

Managing millions of acres of forests and rangelands, Forest Service rangeland management specialists are called upon to assist in the management of important habitat resources. These activities include:

- Conducting vegetation, soil, hydrologic condition and trend surveys and analysis
- Development of coordinated resource management plans, including grazing management
- Administration of grazing permits
- Identification and development of rangeland improvement projects
- Development and implementation of rangeland soil and vegetation restoration
- Conducting a successful invasive and noxious weed abatement and eradication program
- Planning and implementing sensitive riparian and wetland habitat management.
- Conducting botanical surveys for sensitive plant species
- Assisting other specialists in the development and evaluation of other multiple public land management activities

Forest Service Rangeland Management Specialists typically work with a variety of natural resource management personnel including: ecologists, botanists, soil scientists, foresters, hydrologists, wildlife biologists and others. In addition, they

work in partnership with ranchers, grazing associations, and conservation groups, other agencies, and members of the community on rangeland management and conservation issues.

## Career Paths and Requirements

rangeland management specialists are hired at many different grade levels. Recent college graduates with a bachelors degree may be hired at the GS-5 or GS-7 grade level. They spend their first year or two in training and developmental positions, and then may be promoted to the GS-9 grade level. Others with advanced degrees and experience may be hired at higher grade levels, and there is substantial opportunity for advancement!

To begin a career as a Rangeland management specialist in the Forest Service, you must meet the following requirements:

Have a 4-year degree in Rangeland Management/Ecology, or in a related field that includes a total of at least 42 semester hours in a combination of the plant, animal and soil sciences and natural resources management as follows:

- Rangeland Management. At least 18 semester hours of course work in rangeland management, including courses in such areas as basic principles of rangeland management; wildland hydrology, botany; arid land ecology; synecology, vegetation inventories and studies; and rangeland planning.
- Directly related plant, animal, wildlife and soil sciences. At least 15 semester hours of directly related courses in each of three scientific areas: botanical, animal and soil sciences. Courses in such areas as herbivory; and soil morphology or soil classification are acceptable.
- Related resource management studies. At least 9 semester hours of coursework in related resource management subjects, including courses in such areas as wildlife management; watershed management; natural resource or forestry; agronomy; forages; agricultural economics; and outdoor recreation management.

Have a combination of education and experience with at least 42 semester hours of course work in a combination of the plant, animal and soil sciences and natural resources management, as shown above, plus appropriate experience or additional education.



*These qualification requirements have been summarized for convenience. Full details are available at [www.USAJobs.gov](http://www.USAJobs.gov) or the [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov) subject index under "Qualifications."*

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