



United States Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions
December 2001
Article No. 27-05

Standard: [Forestry, GS-460 \(January 1980\)](#)
Factor: Factor 5, Scope and Effect
Issue: Fully meeting the criteria of Level 5-4

Identification of the Classification Issue

This article is included based on an agency's request to highlight our analysis of Scope and Effect in the Forestry standard. The appellant's position was classified as Forester, GS-460-11. The appellant worked in the Supervisor's office of a national forest and served as the contracting officer for all forest timber sales. He was responsible for pre-award, award, administration, termination, and contract dispute resolution functions. He believed his position met Level 5-4 of the GS-460 standard.

Resolution

OPM found that, although the appellant furnished advisory services to top forest management, his position did not meet the other aspects of Level 5-4. At that level, the scope of the work extends to a number of locations within a broad geographic area, or affects the continued existence of a resource unique to a geographic area. OPM concluded that the term "broad geographic area" applies to a second-level unit or responsibility for at least a state. The appellant's position was located in a first-level unit as that term is defined in the GS-460 standard; i.e., he was directly responsible for program execution and had personal dealings with timber purchasers and their representatives. The fact that he worked in the Supervisor's office and directed the work of employees engaged in timber sales at the district level within the forest was not equivalent to working in a second-level or comparable unit. OPM pointed out that first- and second-level forest units are not analogous to supervisory levels, but rather are distinguished by the nature of the work performed. In regard to the remaining Level 5-4 criteria, the appellant applied established methods to resolve contracting problems rather than developing new or vastly improved techniques. The direct impact of his work was on the forest's timber sales program

rather than on the Forest Service's programs or activities. Because Level 5-4 was not fully met, OPM awarded Level 5-3.

Link to [C-0460-11-01](#)