



Working for the Great Outdoors

Accountant

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The Work Environment

Do you have a keen interest in the field of accounting or financial management? Do you also have an appreciation for natural resources? Would the idea of working in accounting and financial management for a public land management agency combine your professional and personal passions? If so, a career as an accountant with the Forest Service may be of interest to you.

With an operating budget totaling nearly \$4 billion annually, accounting and financial management in the Forest Service is a large and complex workload. Enhanced technologies, systems and changing developments add opportunities to the challenge. The majority of the Forest Service accounting staff works from the Albuquerque Service Center (ASC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This central work environment strengthens our ability to meet the mission needs, yet adds the potential opportunity for travel to other Forest Service work locations to work on diverse projects.

Operating on the Job

Fiscal integrity is an important component of the Forest Service mission, "Caring for the Land and Serving People." As an accountant, you'll work with foresters, engineers, biologists, recreation specialists, archeologists and other professionals to ensure appropriate financial management objectives are met. Accountants may be involved in many aspects of the Forest Service mission:

- Providing financial advice that will help the Forest Service make natural resource management decisions
- Executing budgets based on Congressional appropriations
- Providing advice and counsel on Federal Appropriation Law
- Advising program managers on the implementation and administration of Federal Accounting Standards
- Preparation, interpretation and analysis of financial statements and other reports
- Cost analysis of financial aspects of wildland fire management
- Conducting financial management reviews
- Accounting for Timber sales
- Field audits of ski areas, resorts, outfitters and guides, and other commercial users of National Forest Lands
- Electronic accounting systems support, maintenance and training

**Career
Paths and
Requirements**

Accountants are hired at many different grade levels. Recent college graduates 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 further development and advancement!

To begin a career as an Accountant, you must have a degree in accounting or a degree in a related field such as business administration, finance, or public administration that included or was supplemented by 24 semester hours in accounting. The 24 hours may include up to 6 hours of credit in business law. (The term “accounting” means accounting and/or auditing in this standard. Similarly, “accountant” should be interpreted, generally, as “accountant and/or auditor.”)

Combination of education and experience – at least 4 years of experience in accounting, or an equivalent combination of accounting experience, college-level education, and training that provided professional accounting knowledge. The applicant’s background must also include one of the following: (1) 24 semester hours in accounting or auditing courses of appropriate type and quality. This can include up to 6 hours of business law; (2) A certificate as Certified Public Accountant or a Certified Internal Auditor, obtained through written examination; or (3) Completion of the requirements for a degree that included substantial course work in accounting or auditing, e.g., 15 semester hours, but that does not fully satisfy the 24 semester-hour requirements in the paragraph above, provided that (a) the applicant has successfully worked at the full performance level in accounting, auditing, or a related field, e.g., valuation engineering or financial institution examining; (b) a panel of at least two higher level professional accountants or auditors has determined that the applicant has demonstrated a good knowledge of accounting and of related and underlying fields that equal in breadth, depth, currency, and level of advancement that which is normally associated with successful completion of the 4-year course of study described in the paragraph above; and (c) except for literal nonconformance to the requirement of 24 hours in accounting, the applicant’s education, training, and experience fully meet the specified requirements.



These qualification requirements have been summarized for convenience. Full details are available at www.USAJobs.gov or the www.opm.gov subject index under “Qualifications.”

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