



Office of the Water Engineer

Job Description: Water Resource Specialist

Job Title	Water Resource Specialist
Date	2024-01-30
Job Level(s) Being Hired	Level I (entry), Level II (experienced), Level III (senior)
Immediate Supervisor	Water Engineer
Position Type	Full-Time
Classification	Exempt from FLSA
Schedule	Flex, focused on Mon-Thu 8:30-5:30
Duty Station	Office of the Water Engineer Primary: Ronan, Montana Occasional Remote Work Possible
Pay	\$26.00 to \$32.00/hour depending on experience/education with possible pay boost for specific skillsets
Requirements	Must be able and authorized to work in the United States
	Must hold a valid driver's license
	Must pass a background check

Who We Are:

The Office of the Water Engineer (OE) is a group of resource professionals coalesced around the mission of providing consistent, fair, and informed water administration and enforcement on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Our office is unique; we are not a Tribal, State, or Federal Office but a standalone entity created by the Water Compact as authorized by Tribal, State, and Federal laws. We operate under the direction of the Flathead Reservation Water Management Board (FRWMB or Board). OE staff must be self-reliant, capable of independent completion of complex tasks, and prepared to make quality decisions that stand up to the rigor of review. As a team, we rely on each other to manage workload, public services, safety, and work-life-balance while getting things done. The OE needs people who enjoy solving unique problems, can produce quality work, thrive on technical and logistical challenges, consistently completes the job, and cultivate comradery in the workplace. We are public servants to an amazing community in need of help with their water management issues and we take pride in providing quality services.

OE Job Descriptions are generalized for recruitment purposes; successful candidates will receive a more detailed “position description” that is specific to their individual assignments, skillsets, pay rate, work schedule, and other position elements.

Job Overview:

The Water Resource Specialist is responsible for performing a broad variety of duties associated with managing water resources within the Flathead Indian Reservation under the direction of the Water Engineer, Board and the Unitary Administration and Management Ordinance (“Ordinance”) of the Water Compact between the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (Tribes), the State of Montana, and the Federal Government. The Specialist works closely with the Office of the Engineer’s staff, the Tribes’ water resources staff, the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Water Resource Division, the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP), and the citizens and water uses on the Flathead Indian Reservation (FIR). The Specialist serves as a trusted expert for the public trust and is expected to provide thoughtful, informed, and accurate information and recommendations. The Specialist routinely writes technical documents, directly interacts with the public and partners, analyses technical information, discovers historic documents that inform work, reviews and improves digital and physical map products, and thinks on their feet to solve range of complex problems, not all of which relate directly to water.

Essential Duties, Responsibilities, and Expectations:

These essential duties are not inclusive of all the duties that may be assigned.

A. WATER RIGHT ANALYSIS AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORDINANCE
60%

1. Implements the Ordinance, analyzes and makes recommendations regarding the use, availability, and management of water resources.
2. Processes a wide variety of water right applications under the Ordinance and evaluates the accuracy and extent of the applicants request.

3. Prepares maps using Geographic Information System (GIS) and other mapping technology;
4. Prepares technical reports, memorandums, and letters tailored to specific situations reflecting analysis of water use applications;
5. Evaluates validity of proposed, existing, and historical water rights;
6. Reviews and researches technical literature, county records, historic water right documents, legal records, deeds, trust documents, articles of incorporation, and other information needed to resolve water use applications and issues;
7. Participates in water right database administration and development.
8. Consults with the Water Engineer, staff hydrologists, staff legal counsel and other resource professionals to gain information needed to resolve technical and legal issues relating to historical, existing, and proposed new water uses;
9. Provides information regarding policies, positions and viewpoints to stakeholders, Tribal, state, and local entities such as conservation districts, local planning boards, and student groups;
10. Assists the OE with developing policies, forms, procedures, and work processes needed for start-up and implementation of the Ordinance;
11. Provides technical review of OE reports and written products;

Level II & III Specialist duties, responsibilities, and expectations also include:

12. Performs independent field investigations;
13. Provides technical and investigative assistance to Engineer and Board attorneys regarding objections and water quantification issues for new applications;
14. Conducts comprehensive analyses of all water uses in basins being considered for groundwater and surface water closures and provides technical water availability information. Monitors activities related to groundwater management areas, Tribal water rights, state-based water rights, and federal reserved water rights;
15. Determines if elements of a water right application have been met and may then modify, remark, condition, or deny the water right;
16. Appears as an expert witness providing testimony, expert opinions, and supporting evidence in contested-case hearings.
17. Attends public meetings as needed on a variety of water resource issues. Analyzes hydrologic data and information to determine if water rights of a prior appropriator will be adversely affected and if the proposed means of diversion, construction, and operation are

adequate; and

18. Analyzes the applicant's justification and calculations for the requested flow rate and volume to determine if the amount of water requested is reasonable.

B. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, COMPLAINTS, AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

25%

1. Supports, sometimes independently, opening, operating, and closing the OE for all phases of general office operations including greeting and direct interface with the public, either at the office or at remote meetings;
2. Researches water use information, well log information and land ownership records specific to individual requests from the public;
3. Provides precise information and interpretations using a variety of sources including the Ordinance, county clerk and recorder records, county assessor tax records, and other records.
4. Compiles research information to develop reports and create GIS maps for the general public, attorneys, water users, and consultants. The Specialist must often present information that is contrary to the opinions of others and may face debate and confrontation. Considerable economic investment and land use decisions may be based on the accuracy of the information provided by the Specialist.

C. OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED

15%

1. Performs a variety of other professional and technical duties in support of the Office of the Engineer and the Board. This includes activities such as attending training and educational programs, meetings, and conferences;
2. Representing the Board to local groups and communities; and reviewing and commenting on administrative and technical policies and procedures;
3. Completes administrative functions including providing input on OE annual work plans, and other related duties as assigned;

Level II & III Specialist duties, responsibilities, and expectations include:

4. May be delegated authority to issue some water rights; and
5. May serve as acting Engineer as requested.

Direction Received:

The Water Resource Specialist receives direction from the Water Engineer who

makes general and broad assignments. The incumbent is expected to use technical experience and education to complete assignments in a timely and professional manner.

Due to the “start up nature” of the FRWMB compact implementation, the incumbent is expected to discuss precedent setting situations with the Water Engineer, prior to implementation.

The Water Resource Specialist will resolve most situations using expertise and experience.

Working Relationships:

Incumbent works with other professionals as an official representative of the FRWMB and the Water Engineer. Most contact is giving directions, offering clarification and advice to applicants and customers. Will work directly with complex situations and complicated water rights applications. Is expected to communicate professionally and clearly so that processes are understood and transparent to the public.

Will interface with State, Tribal and Federal staff as part of a team in support of full compact implementation.

Minimum Qualifications (Education and Experience):

Level I (entry) typically starting at \$26.00/hour

The required knowledge and skills are typically acquired through a combination of education equivalent to a bachelor's degree in natural resource management or the natural sciences, plus a one year or more of experience with water resources or equivalent.

Level II (experienced) typically starting at \$29.00/hour

In addition to the basic education requirement stated above for a Level I Water Resource Specialist, applicants must meet one of the following to qualify for the Level II:

Two years of progressively higher-level graduate education (36 semester hours, 54 quarter hours or the equivalent) leading to a master's degree in a field related to hydrology, earth science, geology, civil engineering, agricultural engineering, or water resources, with some emphasis in water resources or agricultural land

management is required.

**OR one year of appropriate professional experience in water resources that is equivalent to a Level I Water Resource Specialist.

Level III (senior) typically starting at \$32.00/hour

In addition to the basic education requirement stated above for a Level II Water Resource Specialist, applicants must meet the following to qualify for the Level III: two years of appropriate professional experience in water resources that is equivalent to a Level II Water Resource Specialist.

For Level I, II, and III designations, alternate combinations of education and experience may also be considered at the discretion of the Water Engineer.

Competencies or Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge: The work requires extensive knowledge of water resource-related management theories, principles, concepts, and practices; field investigation methodologies; and negotiation, mediation, and conflict resolution techniques. Knowledge of the CSKT-Montana Compact and Ordinance or other reserved compacts recommended. Knowledge required of local water availability, water use practices, water measurement techniques and devices, irrigation methods and designs and land ownership records.

Skills: The position requires skill in effective communication with people of varied technical levels. Must be skilled in operation of computers, MS365, Word, Outlook, Excel, and Adobe. Must be skilled in project management, conducting legal research, and reading technical data and reports. The incumbent must be capable of becoming proficient in GIS application (ArcView) and accessing, analyzing, and manipulating data in a computer database environment.

Abilities: The position requires the ability to analyze and appraise facts, evidence, legal documents, and records to make defensible decisions. Must communicate effectively verbally and in writing. Demonstrated proficiency in adjusting to meet changing priorities while simultaneously working on multiple projects. Communicates objectively when providing information, advice, and guidance to technical and non-technical individuals and groups on complex and controversial issues. Initiative and motivation to act independently and take responsibility for evaluating and responding to challenging situations, problems, and opportunities. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with

coworkers, supervisor, the Board, state and Tribal agencies, local governments, and the public. Models high standards of honesty, integrity, trust, and openness. Knows and follows through with the correct standards of conduct and moral judgement. Communicates and demonstrates actions in a consistent manner. Respects others, regardless of individual capabilities, agendas, opinions, or needs. Focuses to achieve results. Actively participates and respects the ideas of others. Looks for alternative ways to work with others that will create better results and working relationships.

Physical Demands & Working Conditions:

[described demands are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.]

The incumbent works primarily in an office setting. Frequent and continuous physical activities required including: sitting, typing, writing, hearing, listening, talking, bending, stooping, and lifting up to 25 pounds. Occasional travel may be expected. This role is mostly protected from weather conditions or contaminants, but not necessarily from the occasional temperature fluctuation. Works frequently with computer hardware including set up of PCs, printers, modems, etc., and works at a computer terminal daily for extended periods of time. There is frequent exposure to stress associated with deadlines and changing priorities, and there is occasional exposure to hostility from the public. Water Resource Specialists sometimes perform field work in outdoor settings where exposure to weather and field challenges may occur.

Pay Boost for Specific Skillsets, Experience, and Education:

- Business management, budgeting, budget projections;
- Computer IT management and services including MS365 Domains, Website content management and editing, networks, and PC app installations/removals, PC and network security; and
- Water Measurement using flow meters, well probes, weirs, flumes, and other hydrologic devices.

To Apply:

Submit a letter of interest and resume to contact@frwmb.gov

Resumes should clarify if you are eligible to work in the United States and should also contain start and end dates (including the month and year), hours worked per week, level of experience and examples for each work experience and accomplishment that demonstrates you can perform the tasks at the level required for the position as stated in this Job Description.

The quality and format of submitted letters of interest and resumes will be factors in ranking selections.

Your experience needs to address every required qualification and/or pay boost skill sets for which you have experience or education.

You may be asked to provide certified college transcripts, 3-5 references, examples of your writing skills, proof of a valid driver's license.

You may be asked to provide your most recent supervisor's contact information and permission for the OE to call for a reference. Successful applicants will need to pass a background check and show proof of a valid driver's license.

Priority screening begins **March 1st, 2024, open until filled.**

The **Office of the Water Engineer and the Flathead Reservation Water Management Board** are Equal Opportunity Employer and do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, non- disqualifying physical or mental disability, national origin, veteran status or any other basis covered by appropriate law. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and business need.