

## Who we are:

Transportation is so basic that many of us overlook its overwhelming importance in our daily lives. Practically everything used in our homes, offices, or schools across Tennessee – from furniture to food items to clothing – requires a large and complex transportation network. The Tennessee Department of Transportation provides citizens of Tennessee and travelers with one of the best transportation systems in the country. TDOT is a multimodal agency with responsibilities in building and maintaining roads, aviation, public transit, waterways, railroads, cycling and walking. Our involvement ranges from airport improvements to funding transit buses to planning for river ports. The Department of Transportation has approximately 3,500 employees with four statewide region facilities in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, and Jackson. TDOT Aeronautics is located near the John C. Tune Airport in Nashville, TN.



### **Ecology Technical Specialist**

Environmental Division – Technical Studies Section, Ecology

Nashville, TN

\$60,600 - \$70,680 annually

### **Job Overview**

The Ecology Technical Specialist works in a team setting, providing support and expertise to the Ecology Team, Technical Studies Section, Project Teams, and the Department. This position will assist the Ecology Senior Technical Specialist by providing the Project Teams with technically sound and timely ecology information and deliverables, while ensuring compliance with Federal and State requirements pertaining to identification, classification, assessment, documentation, and interagency consultation of natural resources for TDOT projects. This position will assist in implementing the Quality Management Program as part of the Environmental Division's activities.

The Ecology Technical Specialist role requires collaboration with TDOT Divisions, Project Teams, consultants, contractors, and external stakeholders. This position must effectively articulate technical concepts as part of a matrix organization. The Ecology Technical Specialist will assist with ensuring all Technical Studies Section deliverables are applicable and readily accessible to assist with timely, accurate, and efficient decision-making. This position requires critical thinking with a focus on problem-solving to make well-informed decisions that increase the safety, performance, sustainability, and efficient delivery of the Department's transportation system.

### **Essential Job Responsibilities of the Technical Specialist I, II, and III include:**

Assist with ensuring TDOT compliance with the Endangered Species Act, Executive Order 11990 Protection of Wetlands, the Clean Water Act, the Tennessee Water Quality Control Act, EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, and all other relevant state and federal laws and regulations governing ecological resources.

Review applicable TDOT projects to identify ecological resources. Perform desktop work, research, and field visits for the identification, classification, and documentation for interagency consultation for ecological resources for TDOT projects.

Assist with delineating streams and wetlands, collecting and processing data, mapping, identifying flora, fauna, and specialized habitats, and completing documentation required for the Environmental Boundary Report and for interagency consultation of ecological resources for TDOT projects.

Utilize available GIS data sets and online data sources provided by, but not limited to Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), Tennessee Wildlife

Resource Agency (TWRA), US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), US Fish and Wildlife (USFWS), US Geological Survey (USGS), and National Park Service (NPS) in the review of TDOT projects.

Provide the Permits, Mitigation, and Compliance Teams with the required ecology information required to prepare permit applications, such as assessments, surveys, analyses, delineations, and mitigation to assist in documenting compliance.

Serve as a resource for Project Teams as part of a matrix organization consistent with the Project Delivery Network (PDN) including research, fieldwork, documentation, and coordination related to ecology resources.

Remain current with applicable State and Federal Regulations that impact the deliverables developed by the Ecology Team. Implement discipline-specific policies and procedures.

Provide exceptional customer service to both internal and external customers by exercising effective listening skills, providing prompt responses, maintaining complete and accurate documentation, and communicating effectively.

Assist in ensuring ecology deliverables are consistent, predictable, and repeatable to provide for high levels of achievement, mitigation of risk, and an established track record of success.

**Additional Job Responsibilities for the Technical Specialist II and III include:**

Assist Project Teams as part of a matrix organization consistent with the Project Delivery Network (PDN). Assist in delivering all products and services as required and providing input at all applicable project milestones, including Project Kick-Off, Risk Workshops, Project Scoping Meetings, Field Reviews, and Plans, Specifications, and Estimates meetings. Assist project teams through collaboration to ensure the project schedule includes activities and durations related to ecology processes and procedures and to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to ecology resources.

Review and interpret roadway design plans and assist in developing avoidance, minimization, or mitigation of adverse effects measures to ecological resources within a project's Area of Potential Effect.

Consult with TDEC, TWRA, USACE, USDA, USFWS, and other applicable agencies associated with ecological resources. For consultations related to project designs, coordinate with the Project Manager and the Project Team to ensure accurate and complete communication of current avoidance and minimization efforts, parameters associated with current designs, and any related design changes or required mitigation measures that may need to be investigated as a result of agency coordination.

Assist in the oversight of external partners by serving on selection committees for ecology services, including assisting with scope of work development, attending project-specific marketing meetings, assisting with determining scoring criteria, assisting with project information sessions, when applicable, serving as a scorer as part of the consultant acquisition process, and attending de-briefs for consultants where usable feedback must be provided.

Assist the Ecology Team Lead in the management of external partners, including the negotiation of contracts, review of consultant invoicing, management of contract tasks, and completion of consultant grading.

**Additional Job Responsibilities for the TDOT Technical Specialist III include:**

Provide mentoring to TDOT staff, consultants, and local agencies with respect to the Ecology Team.

Participate in the Project Teams as part of a matrix organization consistent with the Project Delivery Network (PDN), delivering all products and services as required and providing input at all applicable project milestones including Project

Kick Off, Risk Workshops, Project Scoping Meetings, Field Reviews, and Plans, Specifications, and Estimates meetings. Ensure the project schedule includes activities and appropriate durations related to ecology processes and procedures. Coordinate with external stakeholders, including regulatory agencies, and assist the Project Teams by providing expertise for avoidance, minimization, or mitigation of adverse effects measures to identified ecology resources.

Assist with ensuring successful strategic partnerships with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and local agencies to effectively implement TDOT's vision statewide.

Coordinate with the Ecology Senior Technical Specialist and the TDOT Technical Training Director and assist in the development and presentation of Ecology training and technical guidance that addresses acquired knowledge, risk management, technical design elements, and emerging technologies related to transportation for the purpose of improving team performance, creating a stronger understanding of the transportation industry, inspiring new ideas, and developing skills.

Perform quality assurance reviews of materials related to the Ecology Section. Ensure Ecology Section deliverables are in alignment with TDOT performance objectives.

### **Qualifications**

#### **TDOT Technical Specialist I**

- Bachelor's Degree in Natural or Environmental Sciences (e.g., Ecology, Biology, Fisheries, Wildlife, Botany, Zoology, Environmental Science with a Biology focus) or a related field

#### **TDOT Technical Specialist II**

- Bachelor's Degree in Natural or Environmental Sciences (e.g., Ecology, Biology, Fisheries, Wildlife, Botany, Zoology, Environmental Science with a Biology focus) or a related field
- 1 year of demonstrated competency in an environmental field

#### **TDOT Technical Specialist III**

- Bachelor's Degree in Natural or Environmental Sciences (e.g., Ecology, Biology, Fisheries, Wildlife, Botany, Zoology, Environmental Science with a Biology focus) or a related field
- 2 years of demonstrated competency in an environmental field

**The Tennessee Department of Transportation reserves the sole right in determining the level of position based on the applicant's work experience, education, skill level, and all other appropriate factors, including business needs. Within 6 months of hire, employees must demonstrate successful mastery of corresponding work competencies and skill blocks of the Technical Specialist Competency Program for the level of worker for which they were hired. If skills and competencies are not met during that period, the employee can be demoted to the level of worker for which he/she is qualified.**

### **Ideal Candidate**

This position is a career path series within TDOT. The Ecology Technical Specialist I, II, or III demonstrates a combination of technical expertise, technical writing, analytical skills, and effective communication abilities. They are aware of the challenges that come with coordinating with numerous stakeholders and have developed effective techniques to obtain the necessary input and support to complete transportation projects efficiently. The Technical

Specialist is highly organized, critical thinker that ensures all information is handled efficiently, promoting efficient workflows, and eliminating redundancies.