[](http://www.usgs.gov/)

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**USGS Recruitment Process for Research Positions**

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***Background***

As directed in the Presidential memorandum of May 11, 2010, “Improving the Federal Recruitment and Hiring Process,” the use of essay-style questions when submitting initial application materials for Federal jobs must be eliminated by November 1, 2010. The following describes the options available for filling research positions that have traditionally required the use of essay-style questions as part of the initial application.

During the pre-employment consultation, the HR Specialist will discuss the two options that are available with the hiring manager. The hiring manager may choose the traditional method of asking applicants to submit narrative responses to the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) required by the position but this will occur after the vacancy announcement closes and the initial qualification determination is made by the servicing HR Specialist. Complete application packages including the KSA responses will be rated by one or more subject matter experts.

The hiring manager may choose to use the alternative method which entails developing self assessment questions specific to the research position that applicants are asked to respond to during the application process. Each response to a self assessment question will have an associated point value that the system will use in calculating an overall score for the applicant.

The following outlines the process associated with each of the available options.

***OPTION 1: Traditional Method – Use of KSAs and Crediting Plan***

When the decision is made to use the traditional method, the HR Specialist/Assistant will create the vacancy announcement by copying from the appropriate template in the Hiring Management System (HMS), i.e., Research DEU 2 Level Template, Research DEU 3 Level Template, or Research Merit Promotion Template. These templates contain the following language specific to this option.

Vacancy Announcement Language

**KSA Response Time:** The templates include language telling applicants that if they meet the basic qualification and eligibility requirements of the position, they will be contacted via email and given 10 calendar days in which to submit their responses to the KSAs. In order to give the greatest flexibility, the hiring manager has the option of allowing a shorter response time (no less than 5 calendar days) for receipt of applicant responses to the KSAs. The servicing HR Specialist should discuss this with the hiring manager during the pre-recruitment consultation and modify the language in the announcement accordingly.

**Basis of Rating Language:** The information listed below will be found in the “Evaluations” block under the “Qualification and Evaluations” tab of the vacancy announcement.

Merit Promotion Announcement:

**Basis of Rating:** If you meet the basic qualification and eligibility requirements of this position, you will be contacted via email after the vacancy announcement closes and given **(INSERT # DAYS (5-10) HERE)** calendar days to submit narrative responses that address the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform the duties of this position. You may be rated and ranked based on the information you provide in your resume as well as the responses you submit to the required KSAs.

The knowledge, skills, and abilities required for this position are as follows:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Delegated Examining Announcement: Select the language appropriate for the number of quality categories specific to the position being filled.

When using 3-Level Quality Categories:

**Basis of Rating:** Category rating will be used in the ranking and selection process for this position. The quality categories are Best Qualified, Well Qualified, and Qualified. If you meet the basic qualification and eligibility requirements of this position, you will be contacted via email after the vacancy announcement closes and given **(INSERT # DAYS (5-10) HERE)** calendar days to submit narrative responses that address the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform the duties of this position. You will be rated and ranked based on the information you provide in your resume as well as the responses you submit to the required KSAs. Veterans’ preference rules for category rating will be applied.

When using 2-Level Quality Categories:

**Basis of Rating:** Category rating will be used in the ranking and selection process for this position. The quality categories are Best Qualified and Qualified. If you meet the basic qualification and eligibility requirements of this position, you will be contacted via email after the vacancy announcement closes and given **(INSERT # DAYS (5-10) HERE)** calendar days to submit narrative responses that address the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform the duties of this position. You will be rated and ranked based on the information you provide in your resume as well as the responses you submit to the required KSAs. Veterans’ preference rules for category rating will be applied.

The knowledge, skills, and abilities required for this position are as follows:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

**Promotion Potential Remark:** The promotion process for permanent research positions is different from that of non-research; therefore, the remark that’s included in the “Other Information” block under the “Benefits and Information” tab addressing promotion potential must be replaced with the following for permanent positions:

“The full performance level for a Research position is GS-15; however, promotion eligibility is dependent upon the scientific contributions of the incumbent as evaluated by a peer panel.”

If a research position is advertised as a term appointment the promotion potential remark differs because individuals appointed to research positions on a term basis are not subject to the peer panel review process in order to be promoted. The following remark will be used when advertising research positions on a term basis:

“Identification of promotion potential in this announcement does not constitute a commitment or an obligation on the part of management to promote the employee selected at some future date. Promotion will depend upon administrative approval and the continuing need for and performance of higher-level duties.”

**“What to Expect Next” Remark:**

“If you meet the basic qualification and eligibility requirements of this position, you will be contacted via email after the vacancy announcement closes and given a period of time to submit narrative responses that address the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform the duties of the position. Then, if you are rated as one of the most highly qualified candidates, you will be referred to the hiring manager for further consideration and possible interview. We expect to make a selection within 45-60 days of the closing date of this announcement. You will be notified via email of the outcome. You can also go to "My Account" within USAJOBS to review your “Application Status.”

After the Vacancy Announcement Closes

**Qualification Review:** Once the vacancy announcement closes, the HR Specialist will review the applications and transcripts as quickly as possible to ensure that applicants meet the basic qualification requirements of the position. Applicants that meet these requirements will be contacted by the servicing HR Specialist via email and asked to submit narrative responses that address the KSAs required to perform the duties of the position. Applicants will be given a minimum of 5 calendar days and a maximum of 10 calendar days (depending on the outcome of the pre-recruitment consultation with the hiring manager) to submit their narrative responses to the HR Specialist via email or fax.

**KSA Responses:** The HR Specialist will ensure that applicant responses are attached to the application packages to be forwarded to the subject-matter-expert(s) (SME) for rating along with all of the other panel documents, i.e., rating sheets, crediting plan, instructions. If an applicant fails to submit narrative responses to the KSAs, then only their resume is forwarded to the SME(s) – a candidate cannot be disqualified for failing to submit KSA narrative responses.

**SME Ratings:** Once the SME(s) completes their review and rating of the basically qualified applicants, they will forward their rating sheets to the servicing HR Specialist. The scores assigned by the SME are transmuted by the HR Specialist using the transmutation tables located in Appendix J of the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook.

**Merit Promotion** – Once the SME scores are transmuted, the HR Specialist will work with the Hiring Manager to determine a best qualified cut-off score. Applicants that meet or exceed the established cut-off score are referred in alphabetical order to the Hiring Manager for consideration.

**Delegated Examining** – Once the SME scores are transmuted, the HR Specialist will place the applicants into the appropriate quality category established by the Hiring Manager at the beginning of the recruitment process. Those candidates in the highest quality category will be referred to the Hiring Manger for consideration following veterans’ preference rules.

Email Template

The following template will be used when contacting qualified applicants requesting narrative responses to the KSAs required to perform the duties of the position. The emails should be sent through the Hiring Management email function for tracking purposes.

USGS Vacancy Announcement #:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position Title, Series and Grade:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for applying for the above listed position with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). As previously explained in the vacancy announcement, applicants that meet the basic qualification and eligibility requirements will be contacted via email after the vacancy announcement closes and given a short period of time to submit narrative responses that address the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform the duties of this position.

It has been determined that you meet the basic qualification requirements for the position; therefore, we are requesting that you submit narrative responses to the knowledge, skills, and abilities described below. Your responses must be received via email ([spec@usgs.gov](mailto:spec@usgs.gov)) or fax (000-000-0000) no later than midnight (INSERT TIME ZONE) Time (INSERT DATE). Please reference the vacancy announcement number shown above when submitting your narrative responses.

When submitting your responses include experience/education in and out of Federal service that gave you the specific knowledge, skills, and/or abilities to perform the work. You should also include the objectives of your work, and evidence of your success such as accomplishments, awards received, etc.

The knowledge, skills, and abilities required for this position are as follows:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Thank you for your interest in employment with the USGS. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

(INSERT HR SPEC NAME)

Human Resources Specialist

(703) 648-0000

***OPTION 2: Alternative Method – Use of Multiple Choice Questions/Responses***

When the decision is made to use the alternative method, the HR Specialist/Assistant will create the vacancy announcement by copying from the appropriate template in the HMS, i.e., merit promotion, DEU, temporary, term, etc.

Vacancy Announcement Language

The standard remarks contained in each of the templates should suffice except for the promotion potential remark.

**Promotion Potential Remark:** The promotion process for permanent research positions is different from that of non-research; therefore, the remark that’s included in the “Other Information” block under the “Benefits and Information” tab addressing promotion potential must be replaced with the following for permanent positions:

“The full performance level for a Research position is GS-15; however, promotion eligibility is dependent upon the scientific contributions of the incumbent as evaluated by a peer panel.”

If a research position is advertised as a term appointment the promotion potential remark differs because individuals appointed to research positions on a term basis are not subject to the peer panel review process in order to be promoted. The following remark will be used when advertising research positions on a term basis:

“Identification of promotion potential in this announcement does not constitute a commitment or an obligation on the part of management to promote the employee selected at some future date. Promotion will depend upon administrative approval and the continuing need for and performance of higher-level duties.”

Developing Vacancy Questions

The most important aspect of using this option is to develop vacancy questions that adequately assess applicants so that the most highly qualified candidates rate at the top of the best qualified list. Responses to the assessment questions will likely be customized the majority of the time. When coaching the hiring manager through this process you can liken it to that of developing KSAs and a crediting plan but now the KSAs are turned into questions or task statements and the benchmarks in a crediting plan are turned into question responses. Try to steer them away from using qualifiers and instead use real examples of the work expected to be performed at that particular level.

**For example,** below is a standard KSA (along with crediting plan benchmarks) used in research vacancies for the Cooperative Research Units and how it was turned into a multiple choice question:

**KSA:** Ability to participate in graduate-level, academic instruction and research programs.

Superior (5 points): Candidate demonstrates evidence of having supervised at least five researchers and/or technicians on three or more research projects and having taught two or more university science courses.

Good (3 points): Candidate demonstrates evidence of having supervised more than one researcher or technician on at least two research projects and having taught or co-taught one university science course.

Acceptable (1 point): Candidate demonstrates evidence of having supervised at least one technician or researcher on a field research project and having taught or co-taught one university science course.

**Multiple Choice Question:** Choose the one answer which best describes your academic teaching experience in fisheries and stream ecology or closely related topics.

1. I have developed and taught at the university level, one or more of the following courses, or similar courses which could be expected to contain similar topics: Fish Ecology, Stream Ecology, Watershed Management, Restoration Ecology, Community Ecology, etc.
2. As a graduate assistant or post doctoral researcher, I have delivered lectures and taught laboratory sessions related to fisheries and stream ecology, or similar topics, to university audiences.
3. As a graduate assistant or post doctoral researcher, I helped set up labs, grade papers, and otherwise assist faculty members in the delivery of courses on fisheries and stream ecology or closely related topics.
4. I have guest lectured at the university level at least one course related to fisheries and stream ecology or closely related topics.
5. I have no university teaching experience.

When advertising a position at multiple grades, the question responses must have distinguishing factors between the levels just like in a staggered crediting plan. There are different ways to approach this, for example using different questions and/or responses for each grade level; or using the same questions but include an additional response only asked at the higher and lower grade levels. Attachment 1 contains examples of questions and their responses used in the research positions advertised during the pilot phase.

**Example of Question Used for GS-12/13 with Different Responses:** Which best describes your level of knowledge in petroleum geology and related fields (such as sedimentary basin analysis, analysis of depositional environments, basin physical stratigraphy and sedimentology, structural geology, and/or geochemistry), through formal education, work experience or training, that may be used in research projects in the field of petroleum resource evaluation?

**Responses for GS-12:**

1. I have successfully completed three or more general and advanced courses in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, in addition to petroleum research experience and at least one first author peer-reviewed publication (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
2. I have successfully completed at least one course in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, and at least one co-authored peer-reviewed publication (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
3. I have successfully completed at least one course in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, but do not have any co-authored peer-reviewed publications in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
4. I have no knowledge or experience as described above.

**Responses for GS-13:**

1. I have successfully completed three or more general and advanced courses in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, in addition to petroleum research experience and two or more first author peer-reviewed publications (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
2. I have successfully completed three or more general and advanced courses in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, in addition to petroleum research experience and at least one first author peer-reviewed publication (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
3. I have successfully completed at least one course in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, and at least one co-authored peer-reviewed publication (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
4. I have no knowledge or experience as described above.

**Example of Question for GS-12/13 with Extra Response at Higher/Lower Grade:** Choose the one answer that best describes your familiarity and experience in evaluating and interpreting reservoir geology and production data, seismic data, well log data, and/or other geological, geophysical, and/or geochemical data in relation to assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or related resources (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration).

**Responses for GS-12:**

1. Working as a member of a team, I am proficient in the evaluation and interpretation of two or more of these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources, and require minimal supervision or guidance in my work.
2. I have experience in the evaluation and interpretation of at least one these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources, working under the direction of a project supervisor.
3. I have received academic instruction related to one or more of these types of data but have had little or no formal experience in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources.
4. I have had no academic instruction or experience related to any of these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources.

**GS-13 Reponses:**

1. As the lead investigator in projects using two or more of these types of data, I am considered to be an expert in the evaluation and interpretation of complex types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or the assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources. I provide guidance to other team members.
2. Working as a member of a team, I am proficient in the evaluation and interpretation of two or more of these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources, and require minimal supervision or guidance in my work.
3. I have experience in the evaluation and interpretation of at least one these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources, working under the direction of a project supervisor.
4. I have had no academic instruction or experience related to any of these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources.

Role of Subject Matter Expert(s)

The hiring manager still has the option of using subject-matter-experts (SMEs) just as in the traditional method but they will play a different roll in the alternative method. Instead of rating applications, the SMEs can assist the hiring manager with developing the vacancy questions and responses as well as serving on an interview panel.

***Attachment 1***

|  |
| --- |
| US Geological Survey |
| Department - PACIFIC HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE |
| Announcement Number: PAC-2011-0307 |

**VACANCY INFORMATION**

**Research Geophysicist/Geologist/Physical Scientist/Space Scientist,**

**GS-1313/1350/1301/1330-13/14/15**

**Astrogeology Science Center, Flagstaff, AZ**

**Vacancy Assessment Questions**

**Grade: 13**  
  
**\* [90788]** 5. GS-13 Number of senior-authored peer-reviewed papers published in geology, geophysics or other physical sciences (including remote sensing) related to the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies. Note: "in press" is acceptable but "submitted" or "in revision" manuscripts should not be included. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-1
* 2. 2-5
* 3. 5-10
* 4. >10

**\* [90791]** 6. GS-13 Number of peer-reviewed papers published with the applicant as a co-author in geosciences, remote sensing, or planetary science. Note: "in press" is acceptable but "submitted" or "in revision" manuscripts should not be included. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-2
* 2. 3-10
* 3. 11-20
* 4. >20

**\* [90794]** 7. GS-13 Number of oral/poster presentations made at national or international professional meetings discussing an aspect of geology, geophysics or other physical sciences (including remote sensing) related to the surface or interior of planetary bodies (the Earth is a planet). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-1
* 2. 2-5
* 3. 6-10
* 4. >10

**\* [90797]** 8. GS-13 Number of grants funded with the applicant as the Principal Investigator through the NASA Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences (ROSES) solicitation process. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0
* 2. 1
* 3. 2-5
* 4. >5

**[90800]** 9. Have you received funds from additional programs (not restricted to NASA ROSES) as a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator?

* 1. Yes
* 2. No

**\* [90508]** 10. GS-13 Conducts scientific research in geology, geophysics or other physical sciences related to the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies in areas such as, but not limited to geologic mapping; cryogenic, glacial, or periglacial processes; tectonics and rock mechanics; thermophysical properties of planetary surfaces; eolian processes; volcanology; geochemistry and petrology; or stratigraphy. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have not performed this research or have only performed this work under close supervision.
* 2. I conduct independent research or am a significant contributor to a research team. I am responsible for all phases of an area of research.
* 3. I have demonstrated leadership in conception and formulation of productive research ideas. My work is recognized as significant and has had impact in my field on a national scale.
* 4. I have demonstrated the ability to sustain a productive research program with multiple successes. My work is recognized as significant and is regularly referenced by others.

**\* [90511]** 11. GS-13: Please indicate your leadership role in planetary science research: (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have disseminated my research in scientific publications,
* 2. I have at least one scientific publication with significant impact in my research area. I am requested to provide reviews of scientific manuscripts and/or proposals.
* 3. I am invited to serve on advisory and review committees and/or regularly provide reviews of scientific manuscripts and proposals.
* 4. I am a recognized expert in the field as evident from invitations to address national meetings, frequent requests to review manuscripts and proposals, and requests to serve on national committees.

**\* [90801]** 12. GS-13 Conducts remote sensing and data processing as applied to the study of the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies such as radar imaging; multi spectral and hyperspectral imaging in the infrared, visible, and ultraviolet; gamma ray and neutron spectroscopy; and cross comparison of diverse data sets. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I do not have such knowledge or have only performed standard data processing.
* 2. The remote sensing problems I have solved have been difficult to define or have required the use of advanced, but existing, methods.
* 3. The remote sensing problems I have solved are difficult to define and required highly complex, but existing methods.
* 4. The remote sensing problems I have solved do not have an existing approach and modification of existing techniques was required.

**\* [90804]** 13. GS-13 Number of space science missions (including Earth observing missions) in which the applicant was formally involved in the science or operations teams (i.e., has been competitively selected or given some formal title and whose name appears in lists of mission participants). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0
* 2. 1
* 3. >1

**\* [90807]** 14. Have you been informally involved in the testing, operations, or science teams of any additional space missions (e.g., as a graduate student or post-doctoral assistant)?

* 1. Yes
* 2. No

**Grade: 14**  
  
**\* [90789]** 5. GS-14 Number of senior-authored peer-reviewed papers published in geology, geophysics or other physical sciences (including remote sensing) related to the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies. Note: "in press" is acceptable but "submitted" or "in revision" manuscripts should not be included. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-5
* 2. 6-10
* 3. 11-20
* 4. >20

**\* [90792]** 6. GS-14 Number of peer-reviewed papers published with the applicant as a co-author in geosciences, remote sensing, or planetary science. Note: "in press" is acceptable but "submitted" or "in revision" manuscripts should not be included. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-5
* 2. 6-20
* 3. 21-40
* 4. >40

**\* [90795]** 7. GS-14 Number of oral/poster presentations made at national or international professional meetings discussing an aspect of geology, geophysics or other physical sciences (including remote sensing) related to the surface or interior of planetary bodies (the Earth is a planet). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-4
* 2. 5-9
* 3. 10-20
* 4. >20

**\* [90798]** 8. GS-14 Number of grants funded with the applicant as the Principal Investigator through the NASA Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences (ROSES) solicitation process. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-1
* 2. 2-5
* 3. 6-10
* 4. >11

**[90800]** 9. Have you received funds from additional programs (not restricted to NASA ROSES) as a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator?

* 1. Yes
* 2. No

**\* [90509]** 10. GS-14 Conducts scientific research in geology, geophysics or other physical sciences related to the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies in areas such as, but not limited to geologic mapping; cryogenic, glacial, or periglacial processes; tectonics and rock mechanics; thermophysical properties of planetary surfaces; eolian processes; volcanology; geochemistry and petrology; or stratigraphy. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I conduct independent research or am a significant contributor to a research team. I am responsible for all phases of an area of research.
* 2. I have demonstrated leadership in conception and formulation of productive research ideas. My work is recognized as significant and has had impact in my field on a national scale.
* 3. I have demonstrated the ability to sustain a productive research program with multiple successes. My work is recognized as significant and is regularly referenced by others.
* 4. I have a record of major scientific achievements that solve problems of great importance to science.

**\* [90512]** 11. GS-14: Please indicate your leadership role in planetary science research: (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have at least one scientific publication with significant impact in my research area. I am requested to provide reviews of scientific manuscripts and/or proposals.
* 2. I am invited to serve on advisory and review committees and/or regularly provide reviews of scientific manuscripts and proposals.
* 3. I am a recognized expert in the field as evident from invitations to address national meetings, frequent requests to review manuscripts and proposals, and requests to serve on national committees.
* 4. I am an active leader in my field as evidenced by numerous invited talks at national and international meetings, scientific honors, leadership in organizing meetings, invitations to review a diversity of manuscripts and proposals.

**\* [90802]** 12. GS-14 Conducts remote sensing and data processing as applied to the study of the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies such as radar imaging; multispectral and hyperspectral imaging in the infrared, visible, and ultraviolet; gamma ray and neutron spectroscopy; and cross comparison of diverse data sets. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. The remote sensing problems I have solved have been difficult to define or have required the use of advanced, but existing, methods.
* 2. The remote sensing problems I have solved are difficult to define and required highly complex, but existing, methods.
* 3. The remote sensing problems I have solved do not have an existing approach and modification of existing techniques was required.
* 4. The remote sensing problems I have solved are exceptionally difficult and required novel techniques.

**\* [90805]** 13. GS-14 Number of space science missions (including Earth observing missions) in which the applicant was formally involved in the science or operations teams (i.e., has been competitively selected or given some formal title and whose name appears in lists of mission participants). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-1
* 2. 2
* 3. 3
* 4. >3

**Grade: 15**  
  
**\* [90790]** 5. GS-15 Number of senior-authored peer-reviewed papers published in geology, geophysics or other physical sciences (including remote sensing) related to the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies. Note: "in press" is acceptable but "submitted" or "in revision" manuscripts should not be included. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-10
* 2. 11-20
* 3. 21-40
* 4. >40

**\* [90793]** 6. GS-15 Number of peer-reviewed papers published with the applicant as a co-author in geosciences, remote sensing, or planetary science. Note: "in press" is acceptable but "submitted" or "in revision" manuscripts should not be included. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-10
* 2. 11-40
* 3. 41-80
* 4. >80

**\* [90796]** 7. GS-15 Number of oral/poster presentations made at national or international professional meetings discussing an aspect of geology, geophysics or other physical sciences (including remote sensing) related to the surface or interior of planetary bodies (the Earth is a planet). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-9
* 2. 10-19
* 3. 20-40
* 4. >40

**\* [90799]** 8. GS-15 Number of grants funded with the applicant as the Principal Investigator through the NASA Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences (ROSES) solicitation process. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-2
* 2. 3-10
* 3. 11-20
* 4. >20

**[90800]** 9. Have you received funds from additional programs (not restricted to NASA ROSES) as a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator?

* 1. Yes
* 2. No

**\* [90510]** 10. GS-15 Conducts scientific research in geology, geophysics or other physical sciences related to the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies in areas such as, but not limited to geologic mapping; cryogenic, glacial, or periglacial processes; tectonics and rock mechanics; thermophysical properties of planetary surfaces; eolian processes; volcanology; geochemistry and petrology; or stratigraphy. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have demonstrated leadership in conception and formulation of productive research ideas. My work is recognized as significant and has had impact in my field on a national scale.
* 2. I have demonstrated the ability to sustain a productive research program with multiple successes. My work is recognized as significant and is regularly referenced by others.
* 3. I have a record of major scientific achievements that solve problems of great importance to science.
* 4. I have a record of major scientific achievements that have established a new area of inquiry within geoscience/planetary science. I have written key papers that have changed the direction of science in my discipline with significant effects beyond science (e.g., affecting government policy).

**\* [90513]** 11. GS-15: Please indicate your leadership role in planetary science research: (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I am invited to serve on advisory and review committees and/or regularly provide reviews of scientific manuscripts and proposals.
* 2. I am a recognized expert in the field as evident from invitations to address national meetings, frequent requests to review manuscripts and proposals, and requests to serve on national committees.
* 3. I am an active leader in my field as evidenced by numerous invited talks at national and international meetings, scientific honors, leadership in organizing meetings, invitations to review a diversity of manuscripts and proposals.
* 4. I am a key leader in science, as evidenced by frequent invitations to provide keynote or similar talks at international meetings, leadership in professional organizations, and an advisory role at the national level.

**\* [90803]** 12. GS-15 Conducts remote sensing and data processing as applied to the study of the surface or interior of the Earth or other planetary bodies such as radar imaging; multispectral and hyperspectral imaging in the infrared, visible, and ultraviolet; gamma ray and neutron spectroscopy; and cross comparison of diverse data sets. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. The remote sensing problems I have solved are difficult to define and required highly complex, but existing, methods.
* 2. The remote sensing problems I have solved do not have an existing approach and modification of existing techniques was required.
* 3. The remote sensing problems I have solved are exceptionally difficult and required novel techniques.
* 4. The remote sensing problems I have solved were never before attempted and entirely new techniques had to be developed from basic principles.

**\* [90806]** 13. GS-15 Number of space science missions (including Earth observing missions) in which the applicant was formally involved in the science or operations teams (i.e., has been competitively selected or given some formal title and whose name appears in lists of mission participants). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. 0-1
* 2. 2-3
* 3. 4-5
* 4. >5

|  |
| --- |
| US Geological Survey |
| Department - ATLANTIC HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE |
| Announcement Number: ATL-2011-0733 |

**VACANCY INFORMATION**

**Research Ecologist/Fish Biologist, GS-12**

**Missouri Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Center, Columbia, MO**

**Vacancy Assessment Questions**  
  
**All Grades**  
  
**\* [93691]** 2. Which best describes your level of knowledge (through formal education, work experience or training) that may be used in research projects evaluating landscape-level stressors effects on the distribution and abundance of fishes? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have had general and advanced courses through an accredited academic institution, but little or no formal research experience or peer-reviewed publications evaluating landscape-level stressors effects on the distribution and abundance of fishes.
* 2. I have had no formal training, research experience or peer-reviewed publications evaluating landscape-level stressors effects on the distribution and abundance of fishes, but have at least one publication related to other aspects of fisheries ecology and management.
* 3. I have had general and advanced courses through an accredited academic institution, and have conducted research and published (or in press) at least one paper or final report evaluating landscape-level stressors effects on the distribution and abundance of fishes.
* 4. I have had general and advanced courses through an accredited academic institution, and have conducted research and published (or in press) two or more papers evaluating landscape-level stressors effects on the distribution and abundance of fishes.
* 5. I have no knowledge or experience as described above.

**\* [93692]** 3. Which best describes your level of knowledge and experience in conducting research predicting species distributions, population status, aquatic system health or biotic integrity at the landscape scale to aid in developing conservation priorities for management agencies? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have had general and advanced courses through an accredited academic institution, but little or no formal research experience or publications to aid in developing conservation priorities at the landscape scale for management agencies.
* 2. I have had general and advanced courses through an accredited academic institution, and have conducted research and published (or in press) at least one peer reviewed paper or final report to aid in developing conservation priorities at the landscape scale for management agencies.
* 3. I have had general and advanced courses through an accredited academic institution, and have conducted research and published (or in press) two or more peer reviewed papers to aid in developing conservation priorities at the landscape scale for management agencies.
* 4. I have no knowledge or experience as described above.

**\* [93695]** 4. Which best describes your experience in communicating/working with federal and state agencies and non-government conservation organizations on issues related to fisheries and aquatic resources? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I am considered fully proficient in performing this task. I have excellent professional working relationships with entities of this type and regularly interact with them as a lead or co-investigator for a research project, committee or workgroup member that includes agencies or non-government organization personnel, or committee or workgroup member linked to a professional society.
* 2. I have performed these tasks as a regular part of my duties, primarily as a researcher on active or recently completed projects funded by a federal or state agency, or non government organization. I have performed them independently and normally without review of a supervisor or co-worker.
* 3. I have performed these tasks in my duties but my work was monitored by my supervisor to ensure compliance with proper procedures.
* 4. I have little or no experience in working and communicating with these entities.

**\* [93698]** 5. Choose the one answer that best describes your research experience in obtaining grants and contracts to support research activities related to fisheries and stream ecology. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. As sole or senior PI, I have written proposals for scientific investigations on fisheries and/or stream ecology to address natural resource management and/or policy needs, resulting in grants or contracts funding investigations at a landscape scale.
* 2. As a Co-PI, I have helped to write proposals for scientific investigations on fisheries and/or stream ecology to address natural resource management and policy needs, resulting in grants or contracts funding investigations at a landscape scale.
* 3. As PI or Co-PI, I have participated in the writing of research proposals to address natural resource needs, resulting in grants or contracts funding biological investigations of interest to natural resource managers.
* 4. As PI or Co-PI, I have participated in the writing of research proposals for scientific investigations on topics other than those directly related to natural resources, resulting in grants or contracts funding biological investigations of interest to natural resource managers.
* 5. I have participated in the writing of research proposals to address natural resource needs, but such proposals have not been funded to date or are pending.
* 6. I have no experience in writing research proposals for scientific investigations.

**\* [93693]** 6. Choose the one answer which best describes your academic teaching experience in fisheries and stream ecology or closely related topics. (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have developed and taught at the university level, one or more of the following courses, or similar courses which could be expected to contain similar topics: Fish Ecology, Stream Ecology, Watershed Management, Restoration Ecology, Community Ecology, etc.
* 2. As a graduate assistant or post doctoral researcher, I have delivered lectures and taught laboratory sessions related to fisheries and stream ecology, or similar topics, to university audiences.
* 3. As a graduate assistant or post doctoral researcher, I helped set up labs, grade papers, and otherwise assist faculty members in the delivery of courses on fisheries and stream ecology or closely related topics.
* 4. I have guest lectured at the university level at least one course related to fisheries and stream ecology or closely related topics.
* 5. I have no university teaching experience.

**\* [93694]** 7. Choose the one answer that best describes your familiarity and experience with field fisheries and ecological techniques (for example, electrofishing, motorboat operations, gill netting, seining, scuba diving, snorkeling, aquatic habitat measurements, etc.). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I am proficient in field techniques as demonstrated by having provided instruction and leadership to research field teams in the use of multiple field techniques. I was responsible for project personnel safety when using these techniques, as well as identifying the utility and limitations of these techniques.
* 2. I have training and practical field experience in various field techniques while working under the direction of field/project supervisor.
* 3. I have academic instruction in various field techniques but have little or no practical field experience in their use.
* 4. I have no experience as described above.

**\* [93696]** 8. Which level below best describes your ability to communicate scientific results as demonstrated by publications record (including co-authorship) in peer-reviewed journals dealing directly with fisheries biology, aquatic habitats, fisheries management, fisheries and aquatic ecology? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have completed more than 6 peer-reviewed publications in the last 3 years, including papers in press.
* 2. I have completed 4-5 peer-reviewed publications in the last 3 years, including papers in press.
* 3. I have completed 1-3 peer-reviewed publications in the last 3 years, including papers in press.
* 4. I have no peer-reviewed publications on the stated topics.

**\* [93697]** 9. Within the last 3 years, have you made oral or poster presentations at regional, national, or international meetings and conferences related to fisheries and aquatic issues? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I presented 5 or more oral or poster presentations as a lead or coauthor at regional, national, or international fisheries, ecological, or related meetings/conferences.
* 2. I have presented 2-4 or more oral or poster presentations as lead or coauthor at regional, national, or international fisheries, ecological, or related meetings/conferences.
* 3. I have presented 1 or more oral or poster presentations at regional, national, or international fisheries, ecological, or related meetings/conferences.
* 4. I have not presented oral or poster presentations at regional, national, or international fisheries, ecological, or related meetings/conferences.

**\* [93699]** 10. How proficient are you in the understanding and use of various analytical methods, software packages and programs to quantitatively analyze data and construct models relevant to fisheries and ecological problems? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I am fully proficient to the extent that others commonly consult with me for advice and guidance on analysis and modeling and the use of various software packages and programs designed for this purpose.
* 2. I am relatively proficient and operate with great independence in determining appropriate designs, analyses, and models appropriate to fisheries and aquatic ecology studies under my direction.
* 3. I have a working knowledge but often consult with others on key design and analysis decisions and in the use of programs and software packages.
* 4. I depend on others for statistical advice, model selection, and for the use of software and modeling programs.

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| US Geological Survey |
| Department - ATLANTIC HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE |
| Announcement Number: ATL-2012-0114 |

**VACANCY INFORMATION**

**Research Geologist, GS-12/13**

**Eastern Energy Resources Science Center, Reston, VA**

**Vacancy Assessment Questions**  
  
**Grade: 12**  
  
**\* [95188]** 3. Which best describes your level of knowledge in petroleum geology and related fields (such as sedimentary basin analysis, analysis of depositional environments, basin physical stratigraphy and sedimentology, structural geology, and/or geochemistry), through formal education, work experience or training, that may be used in research projects in the field of petroleum resource evaluation? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have successfully completed three or more general and advanced courses in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, in addition to petroleum research experience and at least one first author peer-reviewed publication (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
* 2. I have successfully completed at least one course in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, and at least one co-authored peer-reviewed publication (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
* 3. I have successfully completed at least one course in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, but do not have any co-authored peer-reviewed publications in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
* 4. I have no knowledge or experience as described above.

**\* [95189]** 4. Which best describes your level of knowledge and experience in conducting geologic assessments of the potential for undiscovered petroleum accumulations or related resources (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration)? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have been a lead investigator in a formal study focused on conducting geologic assessments of undiscovered petroleum accumulations or related resources and have three or more peer reviewed reports (at least one as first author) related to these geologic assessments (publications may be in press).
* 2. I have worked as a member of a team in a formal study focused on conducting geologic assessments of undiscovered petroleum accumulations or related resources and have more than one peer reviewed reports (as co-author) related to these geologic assessments (publications may be in press).
* 3. I have worked as a member of a team in a formal study focused on conducting geologic assessments of undiscovered petroleum accumulations or related resources and have at least one peer reviewed report (as co-author) related to these geologic assessments (publications may be in press).
* 4. I have not worked as a member of a team in a formal study focused on conducting geologic assessments.

**\* [95190]** 5. Choose the one answer that best describes your familiarity and experience in evaluating and interpreting reservoir geology and production data, seismic data, well log data, and/or other geological, geophysical, and/or geochemical data in relation to assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or related resources (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. Working as a member of a team, I am proficient in the evaluation and interpretation of two or more of these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources, and require minimal supervision or guidance in my work.
* 2. I have experience in the evaluation and interpretation of at least one these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources, working under the direction of a project supervisor.
* 3. I have received academic instruction related to one or more of these types of data but have had little or no formal experience in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources.
* 4. I have had no academic instruction or experience related to any of these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources.

**\* [95151]** 6. Which level below best describes your ability to communicate scientific results as demonstrated by publications record (including co-authorship) in peer-reviewed journals or other peer-reviewed reports dealing directly with evaluating and/or assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or other related resources in petroleum geology systems (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration)? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have completed 4-5 peer-reviewed reports in the last 3 years, including papers in press, dealing directly with evaluating and assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or other related resources in petroleum geology systems.
* 2. I have completed 1-3 peer-reviewed reports in the last 3 years, including papers in press, related to hydrocarbon or other resources in petroleum geology systems.
* 3. I have at least 1 peer-reviewed publication related to petroleum geology.
* 4. I have no peer-reviewed publications.

**\* [95192]** 7. Within the last 3 years, have you made oral or poster presentations at scientific meetings and conferences related to evaluating and/or assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or other related resources in petroleum geology systems (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration)? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. Yes, I have presented 2-4 oral or poster presentations, as lead author for at least 1 presentation, dealing directly with evaluating and assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or related resources at regional, national, or international meetings and/or conferences attended by industry, academia, government agencies, and/or other scientific organizations.
* 2. Yes, I have presented at least 1 oral or poster presentation, as the lead author, related to petroleum geology systems at meetings and/or conferences attended by industry, academia, government agencies, and/or other scientific organizations.
* 3. Yes, I have presented at least 1 oral or poster presentation, as a co-author, in fields related to petroleum geology at meetings and/or conferences attended by industry, academia, government agencies, and/or other scientific organizations.
* 4. No, I have not presented oral or poster presentations related to petroleum geology systems at technical meetings and/or conferences attended by industry, academia, government agencies, and/or other scientific organizations.

**\* [95193]** 8. How proficient are you in the use of software packages and programs to analyze geologic and/or geophysical data (such as seismic, well log, structural data) related to understanding petroleum geology systems and the evaluation and/or assessment of hydrocarbon resources or other related resources (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration)? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I am skilled in the use of these types of software packages and programs, requiring minimal guidance to determine the appropriate designs, methods for analysis, and models useful to evaluate the potential for hydrocarbons or other related resources.
* 2. I have a working knowledge of these types of software packages and programs, and have used these programs in studies of petroleum systems, but often consult with others on the method of approach for evaluation and assessment of hydrocarbon and other related resources.
* 3. I have a working knowledge of these types of software packages and programs, but have not used these programs in studies of petroleum systems.
* 4. I have no knowledge of these types of software packages and programs and depend on others for statistical advice and model selection.

**Grade: 13**  
  
**\* [95148]** 3. Which best describes your level of knowledge in petroleum geology and related fields (such as sedimentary basin analysis, analysis of depositional environments, basin physical stratigraphy and sedimentology, structural geology, and/or geochemistry), through formal education, work experience or training, that may be used in research projects in the field of petroleum resource evaluation? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have successfully completed three or more general and advanced courses in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, in addition to petroleum research experience and two or more first author peer-reviewed publications (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
* 2. I have successfully completed three or more general and advanced courses in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, in addition to petroleum research experience and at least one first author peer-reviewed publication (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
* 3. I have successfully completed at least one course in the fields listed above through an accredited academic institution, and at least one co-authored peer-reviewed publication (or in press) in the field of petroleum resource evaluation.
* 4. I have no knowledge or experience as described above.

**\* [95149]** 4. Which best describes your level of knowledge and experience in conducting geologic assessments of the potential for undiscovered petroleum accumulations or related resources (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration)? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have been a lead investigator in a formal study focused on conducting geologic assessments of undiscovered petroleum accumulations or related resources and have three or more peer reviewed reports (including at least two as first author) related to these geologic assessments (publications may be in press).
* 2. I have been a lead investigator in a formal study focused on conducting geologic assessments of undiscovered petroleum accumulations or related resources and have three or more peer reviewed reports (at least one as first author) related to these geologic assessments (publications may be in press).
* 3. I have worked as a member of a team in a formal study focused on conducting geologic assessments of undiscovered petroleum accumulations or related resources and have more than one peer reviewed reports (as co-author) related to these geologic assessments (publications may be in press).
* 4. I have not worked as a member of a team in a formal study focused on conducting geologic assessments.

**\* [95150]** 5. Choose the one answer that best describes your familiarity and experience in evaluating and interpreting reservoir geology and production data, seismic data, well log data, and/or other geological, geophysical, and/or geochemical data in relation to assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or related resources (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration). (Please circle one answer)

* 1. As the lead investigator in projects using two or more of these types of data, I am considered to be an expert in the evaluation and interpretation of complex types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or the assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources. I provide guidance to other team members.
* 2. Working as a member of a team, I am proficient in the evaluation and interpretation of two or more of these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources, and require minimal supervision or guidance in my work.
* 3. I have experience in the evaluation and interpretation of at least one these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources, working under the direction of a project supervisor.
* 4. I have had no academic instruction or experience related to any of these types of data in relation to petroleum geology systems and/or assessment of the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbon or related resources.

**\* [95191]** 6. Which level below best describes your ability to communicate scientific results as demonstrated by publications record (including co-authorship) in peer-reviewed journals or other peer-reviewed reports dealing directly with evaluating and/or assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or other related resources in petroleum geology systems (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration)? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I have completed 6 or more peer-reviewed reports in the last 3 years, including papers in press, dealing directly with evaluating and assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or related resources in petroleum geology systems.
* 2. I have completed 4-5 peer-reviewed reports in the last 3 years, including papers in press, dealing directly with evaluating and assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or other related resources in petroleum geology systems.
* 3. I have completed 1-3 peer-reviewed reports in the last 3 years, including papers in press, related to hydrocarbon or other resources in petroleum geology systems.
* 4. I have no peer-reviewed publications.

**\* [95152]** 7. Within the last 3 years, have you made oral or poster presentations at scientific meetings and conferences related to evaluating and/or assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or other related resources in petroleum geology systems (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration)? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. Yes, I have presented 5 or more oral or poster presentations, as a lead author for at least 2 presentations, dealing directly with evaluating and assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or related resources at regional, national, and/or international research meetings and/or conferences attended by industry, academia, government agencies, and/or other scientific organizations.
* 2. Yes, I have presented 2-4 oral or poster presentations, as lead author for at least 1 presentation, dealing directly with evaluating and assessing the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or related resources at regional, national, or international meetings and/or conferences attended by industry, academia, government agencies, and/or other scientific organizations.
* 3. Yes, I have presented at least 1 oral or poster presentation, as the lead author, related to petroleum geology systems at meetings and/or conferences attended by industry, academia, government agencies, and/or other scientific organizations.
* 4. No, I have not presented oral or poster presentations related to petroleum geology systems at technical meetings and/or conferences attended by industry, academia, government agencies, and/or other scientific organizations.

**\* [95168]** 8. How proficient are you in the use of software packages and programs to analyze geologic and/or geophysical data (such as seismic, well log, structural data) related to understanding petroleum geology systems and the evaluation and/or assessment of hydrocarbon resources or other related resources (such as assessing the potential for carbon sequestration)? (Please circle one answer)

* 1. I am fully proficient in the use of these types of software packages and programs, to the extent that others commonly consult with me for advice and guidance on analysis and modeling and specific uses of various software packages and programs to evaluate the potential for undiscovered hydrocarbons or other related resources.
* 2. I am skilled in the use of these types of software packages and programs, requiring minimal guidance to determine the appropriate designs, methods for analysis, and models useful to evaluate the potential for hydrocarbons or other related resources.
* 3. I have a working knowledge of these types of software packages and programs, and have used these programs in studies of petroleum systems, but often consult with others on the method of approach for evaluation and assessment of hydrocarbon and other related resources.
* 4. I have no knowledge of these types of software packages and programs and depend on others for statistical advice and model selection.