



United States Geological Survey Workforce Planning Desk Guide

Prepared by: Strategic Initiatives Team
Office of Human Resources
US Geological Survey

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Introduction

Workforce planning (WFP) ensures that “the right people with the right skills are in the right place at the right time.” Most organizations do some form of workforce planning, although in most cases the approach is a very basic look at supply and demand. This approach has only short-term value, and organizations need an approach that looks strategically to the future. Workforce planning goes beyond a simple supply and demand “staffing plan,” or a funding versus cost analysis, and identifies human resource needs based on internal and external factors and the impacts each has upon the other.

A strategic approach to workforce planning is a comprehensive process that provides managers with a framework for planning current and future staffing decisions based on organizational mission, strategic plans and objectives, budgetary resources and a set of desired workforce skills and competencies. It takes a long-term view of organizational needs and how those needs may change based on internal and external factors. This process is simple in outline but depends on a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the organization’s work, workforce and strategic direction.

Workforce planning is a management responsibility, and the process requires strong management leadership in providing clearly articulated vision, mission, strategic direction and objectives, and cooperative supportive efforts of staff in a variety of functional areas. All organizational levels, from the cost centers to headquarters, are responsible for supporting and ensuring that effective workforce plans are prepared, implemented, monitored and evaluated.

Many organizations, both public and private, have developed models for workforce planning. Aside from variations in terminology, the processes are usually very similar. All rely on an analysis of the present workforce (Supply); an identification of the future workforce needed (Demand); a comparison of the present workforce to future needs to identify gaps; the preparation of a strategy to address those gaps and build the needed future workforce (Action Planning); and an evaluation process to assure that the workforce direction remains valid and objectives are being met.

WFP should be rigorous and comprehensive, but no more complex than the needs of the organization dictate.

Managers at all levels within the USGS, both in the science mission components and support activities, have a critical and central role in developing workforce plans, coordinating strategies incorporated in the plans, and implementing actions to accomplish the objectives and goals of workforce strategies. Managers are already engaged in aspects of workforce planning, both formal and informal.

This USGS Workforce Planning Desk Guide simply takes existing activities and places them in the clearer context of the larger workforce planning picture. This guide is a tool to facilitate a consistent methodology and approach to workforce planning across the bureau. It is a reference tool that provides a consistent, systematic approach to workforce planning for managers and others who participate in the workforce planning process, including HR practitioners, budget analysts, program/management analysts and administrative officers who have roles in assisting managers to develop plans and achieve their workforce planning goals.

Integrating workforce planning into an annual review process eliminates redundancy and directly links workforce planning to program reviews.

Science center and cost center workforce plans are a valuable resource during the development of higher echelon plans (such as Area, Mission, and Bureau level plans), since they provide the information that is coordinated and synthesized into broader, higher level, and more strategic WFP documents. The process of synthesis and strategy development at each level of the organization allows for senior managers to engage in identifying strengths and opportunities across the workforce landscape that can be leveraged against weaknesses and threats. Center-level plans inform the plans of higher organizational echelons, even as those center plans are driven by the vision and strategic direction contained in strategic plans, such as the USGS Science Strategy and the work of the Science Strategy Planning Teams.

Workforce planning is an opportunity for every level of the organization to be involved and inform the organizational decision-making process.

The Workforce Planning Process

The USGS Workforce Planning Model consists of five steps. The model is supported by a guided inquiry approach. At each step, there are questions – located in [Appendix B Guided Inquiry](#) – to provoke thought, collaboration, and further analysis. The guided inquiry approach is meant to be both iterative and interactive: iterative, because the answer to one question may lead a manager to ask another question; and interactive, because managers need to engage their staff and other stakeholders to fully explore a set of questions. This is a process that enables organizational learning. The questions on the guided inquiry document are not meant to be simply answered as listed, but create a usable, robust and valid workforce plan – a comprehensive, dynamic strategy rather than a report.

The USGS Workforce Planning Model



Step One – Set Strategic Direction

Define Vision for the Future

Regardless of how complex or simple, WFP will require input from a variety of functional areas and levels such as program managers, human resources, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), budget and finance, unions, etc. Ideally, leaders should identify a multidisciplinary team to conduct WFP. Begin by considering the following:

- ✓ Clearly understand why you are doing WFP
- ✓ Explore the internal and external factors that impact the organization
- ✓ Define the vision and future goals of the organization
- ✓ Describe the ideal workforce to fulfill the future vision and goals
- ✓ Identify the short term (1-2 year) and long term (3-5 year) goals for the organization
- ✓ Determining major planning issues, external influences, trends and anticipated changes in budgets
- ✓ Begin with a set of assumptions that establishes the initial scope of WFP within your organization
- ✓ Maintain a manageable scope that can be accomplished within a reasonable time period



Organize and Mobilize Strategic Partners

Now that you have identified the parameters for the project, begin assembling a team of professionals that will participate in the workforce study, including key stakeholders. Team members should include expertise in:

- Strategic Planning
- Budget and Financial Management
- Human Resource Programs (including Equal Employment Opportunity)
- Management Analysis
- Science/Program Areas (e.g. subject matter experts)

Strategic planning provides organizational direction and measurable program goals and objectives. The *budget* process plans for the funding to achieve these objectives. *Human resources management* provides tools for competency and skills identification, recruitment, retention, and training of employees to meet current and future workforce priorities. *EEO* facilitates an understanding of the relationship between goals and objectives of the organization and EEO policies and diversity strategies. *Management Analysis* provides assistance with the analysis processes involved in examining, prioritizing, and making decisions among competing requirements and resources.

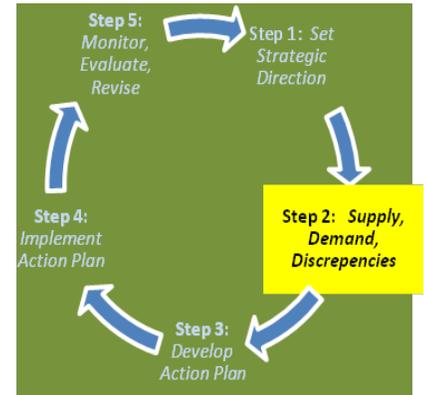
Engage and collaborate with key stakeholders from the beginning of the planning process, including employees from representative occupational groups, supporting human resource specialists, administrative officers, and external partners. Clarify roles, responsibilities, time-line of project, and milestones, and get commitment from each team member, and their supervisors if necessary.

Step Two – Supply, Demand, and Discrepancies

2A Analyze Supply

Understand the scope of the study in terms of information that will help develop a full workforce plan. Begin by identifying the scope of data and scope of the organization as outlined below:

- ✓ Decide the focus — the entire organization, sub-unit, specific occupation or functional area.
- ✓ Identify baseline human resources and financial data, as well as annual and projected budgets that will be used for the analysis.
- ✓ Assess the total workforce mix including permanent and/or temporary employees, contractors, volunteers, etc. Look for organizational de-layering and/or restructuring opportunities. Also look for opportunities to leverage with other internal organizations, in-sourcing, details, cross-training, or outsourcing. It is recommended that, if feasible, all “workers” be considered in the planning to create a *multi-sector* approach including all positions required to accomplish the work, whether permanent, temporary or term, contractor or volunteer. Multi-sector workforce planning is the holistic look at what it will take to accomplish the work.
- ✓ Examine EEO/diversity and cultural issues in the current state of the organization.



You will need a variety of information and data in order to conduct a comprehensive workforce plan that will determine future work as well as the projected workforce needed. In order to paint the picture of the future, you should begin by examining:

- Planning documents (DOI strategic plans, USGS Science Strategy, etc.)
- Current budget and sources of funding
- Current workforce demographics ([link to USGS Workforce Planning Data Guide](#))

Addressing each of these issues will assist you in defining the current state of your workforce.

2B Analyze Demand

In this stage, consider the workforce that will be needed to accomplish future functional requirements and carry out the mission of the organization. To assist in analyzing the data you have collected in Step 2A-Analyze Supply, answer the following three groups of questions using the information you have collected. This examination of the data will allow you to determine the future needs of the organization.

1. What changes are anticipated over the next 3 to 5 years regarding:

- Mission, base functions, strategic goals and objectives, operational goals, etc.
- Budget, including anticipated increases or decreases in reimbursable funding, trends and patterns
- Impacts of internal and external environment (legislative changes, Departmental initiatives, social and economic trends)
- Planned permanent full-time employee reductions or increases (by specific occupational series or skills, how many, etc.)
- National trends in the labor force
- Changing skills and competencies needed
- New technology or innovations
- Changes in organizational structures
- Multisector initiatives, contractors, partnerships, volunteers
- Contract costs and policy changes related to commercial activities
- Partnering with other federal agencies, state agencies, colleges and universities, etc.
- Opportunities to leverage resources with other internal organizations
- Use of retirees, volunteers (where permitted)
- Duration of the projects and programs

2. How will these changes affect:

- Volume, type and location of work to be performed
- Organizational structure and design. Is there an opportunity to delayer?
- Work performed through contract
- Mix of skills
- Supervisor/manager to employee/contractor/volunteer ratios
- Increasing/decreasing/mix of workforce staffing levels (Full Time Permanent and non-FTP)

3. What is the planned organizational outlook for the future and how do you plan to meet those goals? Examine the workforce by analyzing:

- Skills and competencies needed by the organization by occupational series and level of expertise, by number of employees needed at each level, and within what timeframe (expert/professional, mid-level, trainee, student)
- Number and types of teams

- Number of supervisors/non-supervisors required for each level or team
- Number of employees by type of appointment (permanent, temporary or term) and work schedule (full time, part time, or intermittent)
- Diversity data reports (available from Office of Equal Opportunity)
- Diversity objectives
- Hiring initiatives and flexibilities
- Employee developmental needs (training)
- Positive education requirements
- Certifications, licenses

This information will be needed when you determine your gap and analyze strategies to address those gaps.

2C Analyze Gap (Discrepancies)

There are various methods to analyze gaps, also referred to as discrepancies, between the current state (supply) and future state (demand) of the workforce. The two main approaches to analysis are quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative approach looks at supply and demand data, while other the qualitative approach examines the workforce and discrepancies from a more strategic or thematic approach. Both are important approaches to use in achieving a comprehensive strategic workforce plan.

The example below describes a method to analyze gaps in **occupational series** from a quantitative perspective.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
Occupational Series or Series Groups	Current Workforce	Short Term Expected Losses (0-3 years)	Current Workforce Less Short Term Expected Losses (B-C)	Short Term Expected Hires (0-3 years)	Short Term Future Workforce (3 years out) (D+E)	Long Term Workforce Needs (4-5 years)	5 Year Future Workforce Gap or Surplus (F-G)	
Wildlife Biologist	50	10	40	3	43	60	(17)	
Enter data								Negative value () reflects shortage Positive value reflects surplus
Calculated								

A. Occupational Series or Series Groups <i>NOTE: Data inputted into Column A is determined based on the level of analysis the organization chooses to perform – specific Occupational Series (i.e. Wildlife Biologist 486) or Series Groups (i.e. Professional Science Series, Technical Science Series).</i>
B. Current workforce - number of employees in that Occupational Series or Series Group
C. Short Term Expected Losses (0-3 years) –number of employees the organization expects to lose in the next 0-3 years due to any type of attrition
D. Current Workforce Less Short Term Expected Losses –number of current workforce minus short term expected losses
E. Short Term Expected Hires(0-3 years) – number of employees the organization anticipates hiring for the Occupational Series or Series Group within the next 0-3 years
F. Short Term Future Workforce (3 years out)– addition of current workforce less short term expected losses plus short term expected hires (0-3 years)
G. Long Term Workforce Needs (4-5 years) – number of employees the organization forecasts it needs for the Occupational Series or Series Group in the next 4-5 years
H. 5 year future workforce gap or surplus – subtraction of short term future workforce from long term workforce needs . A negative () workforce gap value reflects the number of ADDITIONAL future employees needed. A positive value, or surplus, means an expected surplus-to-needs situation of employees.

The completion of the [Gap Analysis Form](#) will reveal the gaps in meeting future workforce requirements based on the current workforce. A negative () workforce gap value reflects the number of future employees needed. A positive value, or surplus, means an expected surplus-to-needs situation. Once the gap or surplus between future needs (demand) and current workforce (supply) is identified, prioritize the most significant gaps that have the greatest impact on the achieving the strategic direction of the organization. This analysis and prioritization leads to the development of an action plan to address the gaps.

While the above example demonstrates a gap analysis for occupational series, the same table could be modified and used to analyze gaps for **series groups**, i.e. Science – Professional, Science – Technical, Non-Science - Administrative

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Occupational Series or Series Groups	Current Workforce	Short Term Expected Losses (0-3 years)	Current Workforce Less Short Term Expected Losses (B-C)	Short Term Expected Hires (0-3 years)	Short Term Future Workforce (3 years out) (D+E)	Long Term Workforce Needs (4-5 years)	5 Year Future Workforce Gap or Surplus (F-G)
Science – Professional	100	20	80	10	90	80	10

Deciding which dimension to analyze the workforce –occupational series and/or series groups – needs to be made case-by-case, based on the level of analysis that makes sense for the organization.

Gaps can also be examined through the perspective of skills via a skill gap analysis. For example, a large occupational series with many specialties may want to look at whether current employees have the skills within their occupational series required to meet future functional and mission requirements. A sample skill gap analysis is found in [Appendix F](#).

The following steps provide an overview of how to conduct a skills analysis.

- 1) Identify the job skills required for future positions in the organization.
- 2) Determine whether current employees possess the skills required by the identified positions. This determination is commonly achieved by surveying employees and/or supervisors.
- 3) Analyze the difference (if any) between current employee skills and future organizational needs. The results of the skills analysis will establish the focus of recruiting and training efforts.

Step Three – Develop Action Plan

In the prior step, the gap analysis identified areas where the organization may either have a workforce or skills shortage (gap) or over supply (surplus). In this step, the organization develops an action plan by prioritizing the most critical gaps and determining strategies and specific action items to address gaps. Strategies are broad categorical statements, whereas action items are specific approaches and steps that have measurable objectives. Action items should identify specific person(s) responsible for implementing the action items and when the item will be accomplished.

Examples of strategies to consider for addressing gaps include:

Strategy: Address surplus positions

Review the list of surplus positions available from the Gap Analysis. Review the skills associated with each of those surplus positions. Determine if positions can transition into the gaps to be filled. To do this, consider:

- Are these skills directly transferable to fill the gaps?
- Can any of gaps be filled by retraining surplus employees?
- Can surplus positions be easily reclassified to the positions needed?

Strategy: Use a variety of incentives/mechanisms to recruit new skills and retain needed employees.

Action items associated with this strategy can include, for example:

- Develop a formal mentoring program for incumbents of targeted position groups.
- Institute voluntary rotational assignments.
- Use volunteers, where permitted, to attract community and employment interest.
- Partner with another component or agency to expand employee development.
- Expand outreach through job fairs, advertising, websites, employee referrals, etc.
- Expand use of work-life programs (e.g., alternative work schedules, flexi-place, part-time employment, child care facilities and subsidies).

Strategy: Implement Retention Strategies

If turnover is an issue, explore what high-performing employees want and need to stay with your organization and apply their capabilities to accomplishing your mission.

- Develop an infrastructure to provide constant feedback between these critical employees and their supervisors/managers.
- Develop a means of providing incentives and/or working conditions designed to retain high performing employees.
- Identify ways to make the workplace a rewarding environment that keeps employees engaged by using positive feedback, encouraging innovation, and recognizing work contributions. Look at employee survey results to find areas needing improvement, and develop strategies to make improvement.

Strategy: Partner with academic institutions with high minority enrollments

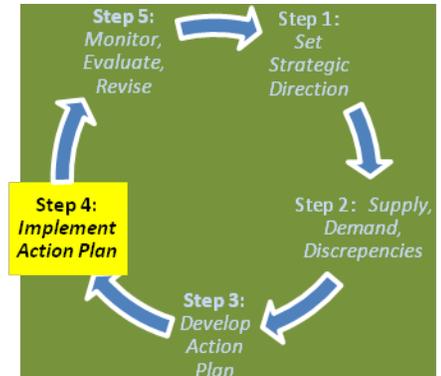
In planning to fill expected gaps, organizations can establish memoranda of understanding with member institutions of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO), the American Indian Higher Education Consortium and/or other organizations/institutions as a means to develop a minority pool of candidates.

Step Four – Implement Action Plan

Once the strategic direction has been established (Step 1), the workforce realities have been identified (Step 2) and the action plan developed (Step 3), the plan can be implemented.

Management, Leadership and Support

Successful workforce planning requires the commitment and leadership of management. Senior managers must not only lead the planning process, they must assure that workforce plans are aligned with strategic direction, and must hold subordinate managers accountable for carrying out the workforce planning strategies identified in Step 3.



Include workforce planning analysis as supporting documentation in budget justifications, organizational restructuring requests, and hiring requests.

Step Five – Monitor, Evaluate, Revise

Review of Outcomes

WFP is a “living” process, which requires proactive monitoring and adjustments as environmental factors change. The entire WFP process, and specifically the strategies and action items, should serve as a roadmap for managers to ensure the right people with the right skills are in the right locations at the right time in order to achieve the organization’s short-term goals and long-term plans. The outcomes should be continuously evaluated to determine progress in addressing the gaps and, specifically, where adjustments to the strategies and action items are needed. Managers are encouraged to schedule formal workforce planning sessions as necessary, at least annually, to ensure progress with project plan action items and avoid delays in accomplishing objectives.

Assess Accomplishment and Effectiveness of Outcomes

There are many different methods of obtaining feedback concerning the achievement of accomplishments and the effectiveness of outcomes. This information can be obtained via meetings, surveys, focus groups, review of accomplishment reports, etc. Regardless of the method, you should *ask the following*:

- Were the actions and strategies completed?
- Did the action plan meet the objectives?
- Did the action plan accomplish what was actually needed (were the objectives the right ones)?
- If not, have the organization’s strategies on which the plan is based changed? Were

there other factors preventing achievement of the goal?

- Are the estimates and assumptions of the supply and demand still valid?
- Have the conditions changed such that the strategies need to be revisited?
- Is there a need to modify the action items?

Address Need for Adjustments to Strategies and Action Items

After the above analysis has been conducted, take steps to remedy any problems in implementing action items. *Examples include:*

- Change timeframes for implementation of action items as warranted by business requirements.
- Adjust content of action items. Action items may be deleted because they are no longer valid and/or feasible (e.g. budget, reorganization, etc.).
- Hold persons responsible for action items accountable.

Communicate Changes

Changes to the action items should be communicated to leadership and employees in a timely manner to allow for questions and clarification. Similarly, achievement of action items could be shared in your organization’s annual accomplishment report, website, employee meetings, etc..



Appendix A - Workforce Planning Risk Assessment

Purpose: Completing this in Step 1 – Set Strategic Direction will support development of workforce planning strategies in Step 3 – Develop Action Plan. Some of the factors require subjective judgment, which should be based on past trends; discussions with staff, cooperators/partners and other key stakeholders; and knowledge of internal/external environmental factors.

Rate the following factors utilizing the risk rating matrix (below) to plot the impact on your organization. Record the results by placing an **X** in the appropriate column within the table on the following pages. Include a brief description of the mitigation strategy for any risk rated SIGNIFICANT or higher.

Risk Rating Matrix

IMPACT
(Weighted)

Extreme (5.0)	<i>Moderate</i> (.500)	<i>Significant</i> (1.500)	<i>Severe</i> (2.750)	<i>Severe</i> (4.000)	<i>Severe</i> (4.950)
Very High (3.75)	<i>Moderate</i> (.375)	<i>Significant</i> (1.125)	<i>High</i> (2.063)	<i>Severe</i> (3.000)	<i>Severe</i> (4.74)
High (2.51)	<i>Moderate</i> (.251)	<i>Significant</i> (.753)	<i>Significant</i> (1.381)	<i>High</i> (2.018)	<i>High</i> (2.485)
Medium (1.25)	<i>Low</i> (.125)	<i>Moderate</i> (.375)	<i>Significant</i> (.688)	<i>Significant</i> (1.000)	<i>Significant</i> (1.238)
Low (.05)	<i>Low</i> (.05)	<i>Low</i> (.150)	<i>Moderate</i> (.275)	<i>Moderate</i> (.400)	<i>Moderate</i> (.495)
	Rare (10%)	Unlikely (30%)	Moderate Likely (55%)	Likely (80%)	Almost Certain (99%)

Severe	> 2.51
High	1.501 – 2.510
Significant	.501 – 1.500
Moderate	.251 - .500
Low	< .251

LIKELIHOOD

		Risk (Use Matrix)					
Q	Factors associated with ability to sustain current workforce	Low	Moderate	Significant	High	Severe	Mitigation Strategy
1	<p>Stability of Reimbursable funds. (Include the CWP fed match)</p> <p>Consider each of your top 3 non-appropriated funding sources (X1, X2, X3) as a percentage of total funds. (Include COOP match) Evaluate impact / likelihood for each.</p> <p>Impact: Use these categories. >20% Extreme 15-19% Very High 10-14% High 5-9% Medium <5% Low</p> <p>Likelihood: How likely is losing the funding of each of these top three non-appropriated funding sources in 2 years or less? (Rare, Unlikely, Moderate Likely, Likely, Almost Certain)</p> <p>Plot Risk for X1, X2, and X3 using the color-coded matrix above.</p>						
2	<p>Stability of Appropriated funds. (Do not include the CWP)</p> <p>List each of your top 3 appropriated funding sources (X1, X2, X3) as a percentage of total funds. Evaluate impact / likelihood for each. (Do not include CWP.)</p> <p>Impact: Use these categories. >20% Extreme 15-19% Very High 10-14% High 5-9% Medium <5% Low</p> <p>Likelihood: Funds are expected to significantly decrease from current levels in 2 years or less (rare, unlikely, moderate likely, likely, almost certain).</p> <p>Plot Risk for X1, X2, and X3 using the color-coded matrix above.</p>						

2.1	Perform similar analysis for each program				Risk (use matrix)					
	Funding Source	% of Gross Funds	Impact (See #2 above)	Likelihood (See #2 above)	Low	Moderate	Significant	High	Severe	Mitigation Strategy
	Ecosystems									
	Status and Trends									
	Fisheries: Aquatic & Endangered Resources									
	Wildlife: Terrestrial & Endangered Resources									
	Terrestrial, Freshwater & Marine Environments									
	Invasive Species									
	Cooperative Research Units									
	Climate and Land Use Change									
	National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center/DOI Climate Science Centers									
	Research and Development									
	Carbon Sequestration									
	Science Support for DOI Bureaus									

	Land Remote Sensing									
	Geographic Analysis and Monitoring									
	Energy, Minerals, and Environmental Health									
	Mineral Resources									
	Energy Resources									
	Contaminant Biology									
	Toxic Substances Hydrology									
	Natural Hazards									
	Earthquake Hazards									
	Volcano Hazards									
	Landslide Hazards									
	Global Seismographic Network									
	Geomagnetism									
	Coastal and Marine Geology									
	Water Resources									
	Groundwater Resources									
	National Water Quality Assessment									

2.1 cont'	Perform similar analysis for each program				Risk (use matrix)					
	Funding Source	% of Gross Funds	Impact (See #2 above)	Likelihood (See #2 above)	Low	Moderate	Significant	High	Severe	Mitigation Strategy
	National Streamflow Information Program									
	Hydrologic Research and Development									
	Hydrologic Networks and Analysis									
	Cooperative Water Program									
	Water Resources Research Act Program									
	Core Science Systems									
	Biological Information Management and Delivery									
	National Geological & Geophysical Data Preservation Program									
	National Cooperative Geologic Mapping									
	National Geospatial Program									
	National Land Imaging									

3	<p>Labor Costs. What range (within 5%) of % labor costs to gross funding do you feel comfortable? _____</p>						
	Use the Risk Categories noted in each question	Low	Moderate	Significant	High	Severe	Mitigation Strategy
3.1	<p>Labor Cost Risk.</p> <p><i>Risk: Using the range you provided in #3, how does your actual salary to gross ratio compare?</i></p> <p><i>Exceeds upper end of range by >10% Severe</i> <i>Exceeds upper end of range by 7-9% High</i> <i>Exceeds upper end of range by 4-6% Significant</i> <i>Exceeds upper end of range by 1-3% Moderate</i> <i>Within the range = Low</i></p>						
4	<p>Workforce Flexibility.</p> <p><i>Impact: Permanent workforce (including SCEPS) salary cost to gross funding:</i></p> <p><i>Exceeds 51% = Extreme</i> <i>48% - 51% = High</i> <i>< 48% = Low</i></p> <p><i>Likelihood: Permanent workforce salary will exceed 51% of gross funding within next 2 years.</i></p>						
5	<p>Retention of Key Staff. How will key staff turnover affect your organization's ability to deliver science?</p> <p><i>Are there groups of staff in high risk turnover groups? E.g.:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Those whose skills or relationships are key to delivery of science.</i> <i>b. Key staff approaching retirement</i> <p><i>Consider what succession strategy you have developed for key relationships and skills.</i></p> <p>Note: Subjective judgment – Rank Low to Severe:</p>						

	<i>Use Matrix as a guide</i>						
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		Risk					
		Low	Moderate	Significant	High	Severe	Mitigation Strategy
6	<p>Recruitment. How readily available is the applicant pool to fill mission critical occupations?</p> <p><i>Is it difficult to fill technical positions with qualified applicants?</i></p> <p><i>Is there a lot of local competition for the best?</i></p> <p><i>Are there local recruiting sources that provide top applicants?</i></p> <p><i>Can new ways of working or skill-mix changes aid recruitment?</i></p> <p><i>Can recruitment efforts be redirected?</i></p> <p><i>How successful are SCEP conversions?</i></p> <p>Note: Subjective judgment – Rank Low to Severe: Use Matrix as a guide</p>						
7	<p>Workforce Deployment. Will the current workforce need to be re-tooled to efficiently meet program objectives?</p> <p><i>Can the workforce be arrayed differently to better facilitate workforce coverage?</i></p> <p><i>Is the staff arrayed in a manner that most effectively matches workload patterns?</i></p> <p><i>Can workforce productivity be improved?</i></p> <p>Impact: <i>Impact of not re-tooling</i></p> <p>Likelihood: <i>Likelihood that re-tooling will be need within next 18 months.</i></p>						

<i>Note: Subjective judgment – Rank Low to Severe: Use Matrix as a guide</i>						
Risk						
	Low	Moderate	Significant	High	Severe	Mitigation Strategy
8	<p>Succession (Leadership). REX Only</p> <p><i>Impact:</i></p> <p><i>No succession plan – Extreme</i></p> <p><i>Candidate pool <50% positions - Very High</i></p> <p><i>Candidates in pipeline(ready 3-5 yrs) - High</i></p> <p><i>Candidate pool ready (1-3 yrs) - Medium</i></p> <p><i>Candidate pool ready now - Low</i></p> <p><i>Likelihood: Likelihood identified positions will need to be recruited for in next 1-3 years.</i></p>					

Overall Risk Rating = _____ (Please note: Your overall rating is not meant to be an average, rather the rating should be a holistic judgment of all the answers).

Remarks:

Appendix B – Guided Inquiry

The purpose of guided inquiry questions is to help stimulate critical thinking for each step of the USGS Workforce Planning Model. Please use this document as a guide; it is not necessary to answer all the questions below. The questions align with the five steps of the USGS Workforce Planning Model.

Strategic Direction

Identify the expected program changes over the next 1-3 years (5 years if possible). What will drive these changes?

What is the short-term and long-term business plan/science strategy?

What challenges exist in the emerging science, economic and political environments?

What legislative, policy or regulatory changes may impact your organization?

What are your organizational strengths and challenges?

How well positioned is your organization to survive change (e.g. increase or loss of cooperators, budget, or program, etc.)?

What are your anticipated sources and the diversity of funding?

How constant do you expect funding to remain over the next 1, 3 and 5 years?

What are your key relationships and what could impact those relationships?

How does your business plan align with science strategy and direction?

Supply, Demand, Discrepancies

Supply

How well does the current workforce align/support your business plan/science strategy?

What workforce sectors (Federal, volunteers, emeritus, contractors, interns, etc.) are present within the current workforce and what is their contribution?

How many employees are at each organizational level, for example in Headquarters, Area, Center?

How flexible is your workforce? Does your organization make use of other than permanent appointments? Other than Full Time appointments? Job sharing?

What is the grade structure (distribution) for these series? Are you experiencing grade creep?

What is the current distribution of employee years of service?

What are the diversity statistics (e.g., race, gender, ethnicity, etc.) for this field?

Are volunteers utilized? If so, how sustainable is the volunteer workforce?

Do the skills of your current workforce meet current mission needs?

Demand

What are the characteristics of the desired end-state workforce within the next 3 - 5 years?

What new occupations and/or skills will be needed and at what level; why are they important? Are they available?

What new capabilities will be added or old capabilities not continued?

How could your organization leverage workforce capabilities with other USGS organizations to accomplish your mission?

How will jobs and workload change as a result of technological advancements; industry changes; and economic, social and political conditions? What are the consequences/results of these changes?

How could a multi-sector workforce, including contractors, non-permanent and other employee categories be utilized within the future workforce?

What will it take to keep the future workforce challenged and dedicated to the organization?

How many employees did you hire in the last FY? In the last 5 FY? What type (Permanent, Temporary, Term, or Student?) What is the grade distribution? Can you hire at lower grade levels? What are the years of service distribution (previous experience)?

How many employees separated in the last FY? In the last 5 FY? What type (Permanent, Temporary, Term, or Student?) What is the grade distribution? What are the years of service distribution (previous experience)? Are you experiencing brain drain? Are you trying to move to lower grades?

Comparing permanent employees against all employees, what is your turnover rate? Retention rate? Net hire ratio? Separation rate of resignations and involuntary separations? What percentage of your hires are permanent? Should you look at hiring more other than permanent appointments?

How many employees are currently eligible to retire; how many in each of the next five years? What are the historic rates of retirement? How long after eligibility are they retiring?

How many employees are projected to retire, compared with employees eligible to retire?

How will your organization's expected losses affect its ability to do its work?

Discrepancies

What differences exist between the current and future workforce, i.e. will there be a future surplus or shortage in a particular staffing level and/or skill?

How will those differences evolve over the next 3 - 5 years?

What are the anticipated changes between your current and future organizational structure?

Are there opportunities to use in-sourcing or out-sourcing to accomplish the work?

Develop Action Plan

What is your plan for bridging the gap between the current and future workforce in the next 3-5 years?

Will current positions need to be recruited and what will change in the future positions?

How will a pipeline be developed to identify and recruit highly qualified performers?

What is your strategy for recruiting a diverse group of candidates?

How will essential organizational knowledge and key personnel be retained within the workforce?

What types of incentives will be needed to retain key staff?

How will you ensure that all employees are receiving an opportunity to participate in career, professional and leadership development?

What developmental opportunities exist and how will they be utilized?

How will current employees be developed to meet future mission requirements, succession and individual success?

What will be implemented to improve performance and reward superior performance (both monetary and non-monetary)?

How will leadership/management engage employees?

Implement Action Plan

Who is responsible for implementing the identified strategies?

What are the milestones for implementation?

What are the expected outcomes of the strategies?

Who will be held accountable for each action?

Monitor, Evaluate, Revise

How should actions be monitored and reported?

How will you measure progress towards outcomes?

How will progress be communicated to stakeholders (e.g. leadership, employees, partners, etc)?

Appendix C – USGS Workforce Plan Template

In an effort to support a consistent approach to written workforce plans across USGS, please use this template as an outline to develop your workforce plan. The elements of the workforce plan align with the five steps of the USGS Workforce Planning Model.

1. Strategic Direction

- short-term goals (1-2 years)
- long-term goals (3-5 years)
- ideal workforce to achieve short-term and long-term goals
- internal drivers (i.e. technology and equipment, USGS strategic goals, USGS Science Strategy, budget projections.)
- external drivers (i.e. Departmental and/or Administrative initiatives, legislative and regulatory changes, economic and environmental factors, emerging science issues, customer demands, cooperator/partner program needs)

2. Supply, Demand , Discrepancies

2A Supply

- Base Program
- Missions covered by your organization
- Current budget and sources of funding for your organization
- Current workforce demographics
- Occupations in your organization
- Skills/expertise in your organization

2B Demand

- Historical data
- Occupations need to fulfill future workforce needs in the next 3-5 years
- Skills/expertise needed in your organization in the next 3-5 years

2C Discrepancies

- Gaps in occupations and skills/expertise

3. Develop Action Plan

Describe the strategies to address the gaps identified.

4. Implement Action Plan

Describe who, what, when, and how strategies will be implemented to include action steps, milestones, and resources needed.

5. Monitor, Evaluate, Revise

Describe how and when progress will be monitored

Appendix D – Action Plan

<p>Mission Challenges</p> <p>(Define the issue)</p>				
<p>Strategy</p> <p>(Define the broad category of planned action)</p>				
<p>Expected Outcome</p> <p>(What do you want as a result of the strategy?)</p>				
<p>Measure of Success</p> <p>(How will successful completion of strategy be measured?)</p>				
	<p>Action Items</p> <p>(What steps will be taken to achieve strategy?)</p>	<p>Person(s) Responsible</p> <p>(Who is accountable?)</p>	<p>“Complete By” Date</p> <p>(When will each step be completed?)</p>	<p>Resources Needed</p> <p>(What do you need to get it done?)</p>

Appendix E –Gap Analysis

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Occupational Series or Series Groups	Current Workforce	Short Term Expected Losses (0-3 years)	Current Workforce Less Short Term Expected Losses (B-C)	Short Term Expected Hires (0-3 years)	Short Term Future Workforce (3 years out) (D+E)	Long Term Workforce Needs (4-5 years)	5 Year Future Workforce Gap or Surplus (F-G)

Negative value () reflects shortage

Positive value reflects surplus

Enter data

Calculated

- A. Occupational Series or Series Groups *NOTE: Data inputted into Column A is determined based on the level of analysis the organization chooses to perform – specific Occupational Series (i.e. Wildlife Biologist 486) or Series Groups (i.e. Professional Science Series, Technical Science Series).*
- B. Current workforce - number of employees in that Occupational Series or Series Group
- C. Short Term Expected Losses (0-3 years) –number of employees the organization expects to lose in the next 0-3 years due to any type of attrition
- D. Current Workforce Less Short Term Expected Losses –number of current workforce minus short term expected losses
- E. Short Term Expected Hires(0-3 years) – number of employees the organization anticipates hiring for the Occupational Series or Series Group within the next 0-3 years
- F. Short Term Future Workforce (3 years out)– addition of current workforce less short term expected losses plus short term expected hires (0-3 years)
- G. Long Term Workforce Needs (4-5 years) – number of employees the organization forecasts it needs for the Occupational Series or Series Group in the next 4-5 years
- H. 5 year future workforce gap or surplus – subtraction of short term future workforce from long term workforce needs. A negative () workforce gap value reflects the number of ADDITIONAL future employees needed. A positive value, or surplus, means an expected surplus-to-needs situation of employees.

Appendix F – Skill Gap Analysis

A skill gap analysis allows an organization to determine if current employees have the skills to meet future workforce needs. First, the organization identifies the future skills needed in the organization. Then a determination is made whether current employees possess the skills needed. This determination is commonly achieved by surveying employees and/or supervisors. Finally, the organization analyzes the difference (if any) between current employee skills and future skills needs. From this point, it can be determined what actions are needed to ensure the organization has the skills to meet future workforce needs.

Skill Needed	Covered by Current Employees Yes or NO	Current Importance Importance Scale: 1-Low; 2-Moderate; 3-High	Future Importance Importance Scale: 1-Low; 2-Moderate; 3-High	Action Needed Options could include coaching, mentoring, job rotations, classroom training, certification