

Landscape Architect (GS-11)

Major Duties

A Landscape Architect designs and plans many different kinds of construction. Projects can include ski areas, wildlife viewing areas, campgrounds, landscape plantings, and many others. Typical duties include;

- Assisting in feasibility studies, land use planning, site selection
- Designing new development projects and supervising construction
- Participating with other Forest Service experts (Hydrologist, Geologist, Foresters, Soil Scientists, etc.) on special projects
- Writing and speaking to the public to make presentations to community planning agencies or government officials.

Being a Landscape Architect requires developing skills and knowledge in graphic communication, drafting and sketching, conceptualizing, aesthetic design, written and oral communication and program management. Forest Service Landscape Architects often work outside, hiking in rough country or traveling to project locations.

A person at this level may also supervise other employees. This can require monitoring employee performance, conducting performance appraisals, developing budgets, coordinating staff efforts, etc.

A Typical Day

Mary is a Landscape Architect working with Mt. Hood National Forest headquarters in Portland, Oregon.

Mary has spent the last three months working with other Forest Service professionals to design a model for a new Visitor Center development. The center will contain many different exhibits describing the area and the creatures that live in the area (along with descriptions about recreation opportunities and how the area is being maintained for future generations).

Mary has just completed the design for the Visitors Center site including the location for the building itself, and plans to spend most of the day in meetings with the development team going over details of the design.

Later in the day Mary plans to meet with a Geologist to talk about designing exhibit cases for various geological displays that will be created. Mary enjoys her job because she gets to work with different specialists on many interesting projects.

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Knowledge and Education

A college degree in Landscape Architecture from an accredited school is required for those interested in this career. College courses in Landscape Architecture include

- Landscape Design
- Plant Materials
- History of Landscape Architecture
- Land Use Planning
- Art and Graphics
- Landscape Construction
- Grading and Drainage
- Surveying
- Computer Graphics

Career Path

Jobs that lead to becoming a professional Landscape Architect (GS-11)

- **Student Trainee** – A person in this job is usually a student from a college or university and is gaining the experience by working with experienced landscape architects in the Forest Service. This position helps with land topographic surveys and prepares completed drawings of sites or simple recreation facility designs.
- **Landscape Architect (GS-5, 7, and 9)** – there are lower level positions leading to the fully professional level landscape Architect (GS-11). Employees in these jobs participate in many on-the-job training activities to increase their basic knowledge of landscape architecture as practices in the Forest Service. Job duties include;
 - Preparing drafts of technical reports
 - Preparing drafts of specifications and construction costs estimates
 - Designing simple recreation facilities
 - Preparing drawings of selected recreation facilities and site plans