

Peer-Review Objectives for ARS Research and Service Scientist Positions

(The following objectives are to be incorporated into the “Fully Successful” standard of the “Conceives, Plans and Conducts Research” performance element for all Category 1 Scientists and into a similar performance element for Category 4 Scientists (as applicable), Agency-wide)

Laboratory/Center/Institute Directors

Advice and guidance provided to Research Leaders and Lead Scientists in the development of Prospectuses and Project Plans scheduled for peer review are scientifically sound and relevant. Prospectuses and Project Plans reviewed adhere to the format prescribed by OSQR and are of good quality, scientifically and grammatically. Prospectuses and Plans outline research objectives which are consistent with guidance from the National Program Staff, the pertinent National Program Action Plan, and Agency priorities; comply with any Area specific requirements; and are prepared within deadlines set by the Area Office, NPS, and OSQR. Prospectuses and Project Plans are developed cooperatively with Research Leaders, research scientists, the Area Office, and NPS during all phases of project development and preparation for the peer review process. Responses to peer review recommendations adequately address reviewers' concerns by reflecting recommended changes in the Project Plans or by appropriate and constructive justification as to why recommendations were not made. Project Plans are successfully reviewed and certified for implementation. Unit research is performed as outlined in the approved Project Plans. Continuous oversight of research projects is provided in order to ensure the quality of the research being conducted, and to ensure appropriate management procedures are used to promptly address deficiencies.

Research Leaders/Lead Scientists:

(Objectives apply to both Research Leaders and Lead Scientists, unless otherwise noted.)

Prospectuses and Project Plans developed for the required peer review are submitted within scheduled deadlines set by the Area Office, NPS and OSQR. Development of Prospectuses and Project Plans is accomplished by soliciting input from scientific staff on the research team and other scientists internal and external to the Agency. Project Plans are organized according to OSQR formatting guidelines and are coherent, scientifically sound and accurate, and grammatically correct. Project plans also reflect research objectives and procedures that are consistent with the guidance provided by the National Program Staff, the pertinent National Program Action Plans, Agency priorities and Area specific requirements. Prospectuses and Project Plans are developed cooperatively with research scientists, Laboratory/Center/Institute Directors, Area Office, and NPS in all phases of project development and preparation for the peer review process. Responses to peer review recommendations adequately address reviewers' concerns by reflecting recommended changes in the Project Plans or by appropriate and constructive justification as to why recommendations were not made. Project plans are successfully reviewed and certified for implementation. Research Leaders: Unit research is performed as outlined in the approved Project Plans. Continuous oversight of research projects is provided in order to ensure the quality and appropriateness of the research being conducted, and to ensure appropriate management procedures are used to promptly address deficiencies. Non-RL Lead Scientists: Research conducted by all personnel assigned to the project is monitored and progress reports are provided to the Research Leader, as required, to ensure research is performed as outlined in Project Plan. Continuous oversight of research projects is

provided in order to ensure that the research being conducted is appropriate to the approved Project Plan and is of high quality.

Scientists (when not Research Leaders/Lead Scientists):

Expert contributions toward the development of Prospectus and Project Plan for the required peer review reflect coherently written objectives and procedures relevant to his/her facet of the Project Plan. Contributions are scientifically sound and accurate, grammatically correct, and are prepared within set deadlines. Prospectuses and Project Plans are developed cooperatively with staff assigned to project, Lead Scientist, Research Leader and as necessary, Laboratory/Center/Institute Director, Area Office, NPS, in all phases of project development and preparation for the peer review process. Responses to peer review recommendations adequately address reviewers' concerns by making recommended changes in the Project Plans or by appropriate and constructive justification as to why recommendations were not made. Research is performed as outlined in the approved Project Plan. Research progress reports are provided to the Lead Scientist, as required.