

## Becoming a Conservation Officer

The field of wildlife law enforcement demands a strong personal commitment and self motivation. Officers are responsible for a variety of different tasks with little direct supervision. Officers work long hours and in remote places. They also give public presentations, teach hunter education and perform wildlife management duties. Salaries and benefits are competitive, and the state of New Mexico's retirement packages are some of the most attractive in the nation.

## Qualifications and Requirements

Conservation officers must meet physical performance standards required by the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy (listed inside) and pass psychological and medical screening exams and comprehensive background investigations.

The educational requirement includes a bachelor's degree in preferred disciplines, such as Wildlife Management or Science, Fisheries Management or Science, Biology, Animal Science, Forestry, Forestry Management, Range Management or Science, Agricultural Science, Environmental Science, Wildlife Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, Ecology, Natural Resource Management or Science, or Zoology.

## How to Apply

Open positions are advertised at the New Mexico State Personnel Office website, [www.spo.state.nm.us/](http://www.spo.state.nm.us/). Online position announcements include the procedures and forms necessary to apply. Open positions are usually posted for approximately three weeks, during which time applications must be submitted.

## Contact Information

For more information about exciting and rewarding career opportunities with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish please visit online, e-mail or telephone.



**New Mexico Department of Game and Fish**  
*Conserving New Mexico's Wildlife for Future Generations*

**dgf-fieldops@state.nm.us**  
**(505) 476-8066**

One Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507  
P.O. Box 25112, Santa Fe, NM 87504

**[www.wildlife.state.nm.us](http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us)**



**Operation Game Thief**  
Report poachers: 1-800-432-4263.



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

# Become a Conservation Officer

*Conserving New Mexico's Wildlife for Future Generations*





## Choose a Career and Make a Difference!

*The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) stewards and protects an incredible and diverse wildlife heritage in a state that encompasses six of seven North American life zones, ranging from desert to alpine habitats. And to fulfill this mission, the professional wildlife conservation officer is essential.*

*Conservation officers have become much more than the game wardens of years ago. Yes, conservation officers still enforce laws that help preserve, maintain and protect wildlife—but today, the conservation officer has become a highly-skilled and multi-talented wildlife professional.*

*Whether monitoring wildlife for surveys, recommending hunting-season methods and practices, serving as a public-relations spokesperson, or mitigating damage from wildlife–human encounters . . . the conservation officer is the representative and resource in the local community and district, the on-the-ground professional to whom everyone turns for wildlife issues and management.*

*This is why we encourage individuals with the knowledge, skills and abilities uniquely suited to this rewarding career to consider becoming a conservation officer with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.*

## Conservation Officer Training

New recruits are assigned a training officer for one year (approximately)—during which time they may check anglers, fly big-game surveys or ride horseback in a wilderness area to trap bighorn sheep. Recruits attend the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy for 16 weeks and the NMDGF Recruit School for up to four weeks. Recruits are taught wildlife laws and regulations, crime scene analysis, search warrants, firearms, officer survival, interviews, interrogation and other official duties. Wildlife capture techniques, survey methods and field activities are also part of the curriculum. Recruits are certified as Hunter Education Instructors and often teach in local communities. Upon completion of all required training, the new officer will be assigned to a district.

## Pay and Benefits

The beginning annual salary range for a Conservation Officer is \$37,024–\$43,103. New recruits begin at \$17.03/hour (\$35,422 annually). Officers who successfully complete training and are assigned to a district are paid \$19.51/hour (\$40,581 annually).

A comprehensive benefits package includes paid vacation, sick leave and a generous retirement plan. Group life, health, dental, vision, long-term health care and legal insurance plans are also available.

The normal work week is 40 hours and often includes irregular hours and weekends. The State Personnel Office website provides details on state employee benefits, salaries and other hiring information at [www.state.nm.us/spo](http://www.state.nm.us/spo). New Mexico offers a 25 year retirement plan. The Public Employee Retirement Association also provides specific details at [www.pera.state.nm.us](http://www.pera.state.nm.us).

## Entrance Fitness Standards

Prior to entering a Basic Police Officer Training (BPOT) program each student must demonstrate a minimum fitness level as measured by the following battery of four tests.

**Aerobic Power: 1½ mile run**  
15 minutes, 54 seconds.

**Anaerobic Power: 300 meter run**  
71 seconds.

**Muscular Endurance: Sit-ups**  
One-minute minimum number of sit-ups: 27 repetitions.

**Upper Body Strength**  
One-minute minimum number of push-ups: 15 repetitions.

## Exit Fitness Standards

Prior to receiving certification students must meet or exceed these standards for the following battery of four tests.

**Aerobic Power: 1½ mile run**  
13 minutes, 58 seconds.

**Anaerobic Power: 300 meter run**  
58.9 seconds.

**Muscular Endurance: Sit-ups**  
One-minute minimum number of sit-ups: 37 repetitions.

**Upper Body Strength: Push-ups**  
One-minute minimum number of push-ups: 35 repetitions