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Department of Transformation and Shared Services

Governor Asa Hutchinson

Secretary Amy Fecher

Director Kay Barnhill

March 17, 2020

Senator David Wallace, Co-Chairperson
Representative Jim Wooten, Co-Chairperson
Uniform Personnel Classification and
Compensation Plan Subcommittee
Arkansas Legislative Council
State Capitol Building, Room 315
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Co-Chairs:

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submits a request from the Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry for your review.

Arkansas Department of Agriculture is requesting renewal of a previously approved certification compensation differential for incumbents obtaining a commercial driver's license (CDL) in the classification listed below:

<u>CLASSIFICATION TITLE</u>	<u>CLASS CODE</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>RANGE</u>
Natural Resources Program Technician	B101C	GS04	\$29,046 - \$42,116

JUSTIFICATION

Agriculture makes this request to address recruitment and retention issues in this classification located at the Baucum Nursey in North Little Rock. The division has experienced a 57.14% turnover rate for this classification during the past fiscal year.

The primary function of this facility is to grow, test, and sell forest tree seedlings. The seedlings are lifted, packed, and transported to various cooler locations for reforestation throughout the state of Arkansas. This certification will allow the department to recruit and retain qualified staff with a CDL, which is essential for testing and transporting seedlings to landowners within the state.

Office of Personnel Management

1509 West 7th Street, Suite 201 * Little Rock, AR 72201 * 501.682.1823

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Agriculture plans to authorize a 5% certification differential for CDL's and estimates the total cost of implementing this certification differential is \$4,368 annually. The department attests funding is available to accommodate this request.

The Office of Personnel Management has reviewed this request and recommends approval of this certification differential during FY20.

Your approval of this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Kay Barnhill, Director
Office of Personnel Management



Secretary, Transformation & Shared Services

03/08/2020
Date

KB/jd:1-2



Asa Hutchinson
Governor

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

1 Natural Resources Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205
agriculture.arkansas.gov
(501) 225-1598



Wes Ward
Secretary of Agriculture

February 10, 2020

Kay Barnhill, Director
Department of Transformation and Shared Services
Office of Personnel Management
1509 West Seventh Street, Suite 201
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-3278

Dear Ms. Barnhill,

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is requesting a five percent certification differential pay increase for the following Natural Resources Program Technician positions at our Forestry Division's Baucum Nursery.

- 22088412-Natural Resources Program Technician, B101C, GS04
- 22094666- Natural Resources Program Technician, B101C, GS04
- 22088519- Natural Resources Program Technician, B101C, GS04-currently vacant

Current pay for nursery technicians is \$13.96 per hour. A five percent increase is 70 cents per hour (\$14.66) or an annual increase of \$1,456 per technician for a total of \$4,368 for three positions.

Hiring and keeping technicians at the nursery has been difficult; 11 technicians have been hired to fill the three positions over the past five years. The Department is optimistic that offering a five percent certification differential pay increase for attaining a class A CDL will help with hiring and retention.

Your consideration of this request is appreciated. Please let me know if additional information is needed.

Respectfully,

Wes Ward
Secretary of Agriculture
State of Arkansas