



Careers in the Coastal Fisheries Division

The Coastal Fisheries Division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is responsible for managing saltwater habitats to ensure sustainable populations of marine life. We oversee 367 miles of coastline in Texas and all the public saltwater out to 9 nautical miles. Our goal is to provide the best possible saltwater fishing while conducting research to support marine life management goals, conserving and restoring coastal habitats and ensuring adequate freshwater inputs to the state's bays and estuaries.



Why We Love it Here

- Have Texas' beautiful bays, estuaries and Gulf waters as our office
- Conduct vital cutting-edge research on marine ecosystems
- Work with world-class scientists
- Be an important part of the nation's longest-running marine fisheries sampling program

Division Activities

- Fisheries management and research
- Fish production
- Ecosystem and habitat assessment
- Collect, record, consolidate and analyze required data
- Fish kill investigation
- Laboratory research
- Prepare verbal and written responses for the public and division
- Outreach and information
- Scientific diving



All job vacancies are listed online at tpwd.texas.gov/jobs

Applications are accepted only for current vacancies.



Life's better outside.®

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Work Environment

Division staff are located in Austin, eight field offices on the coast and three fish hatcheries. This includes Sea Center Texas in Lake Jackson, which combines the world's largest red drum hatchery with an educational visitors' center. Field biologists and technicians spend much of their time away from the office conducting surveys and sampling out on the water. They typically work a 40-hour week, but the schedule isn't always 8 to 5. Sampling trips may involve longer hours. Some activities are conducted on holidays and weekends.



Preparing for a Career in Coastal Fisheries

Get comfortable on boats and with being out on the water. Practice observing the world around you and consider what it would be like to work outside on the coast in different conditions. Take high-school courses in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, computer science, English and communications. Visit a nearby college or university that offers courses in marine science like Texas A&M University or the University of Texas. Other valuable training includes boating and navigation skills.

CAREER CHOICES

Whether you are a biologist or a technician, all employees need the ability to summarize data, follow and understand instructions and work well with other people. A job in Coastal Fisheries can mean long hours and short deadlines but it also means beautiful sunrises and sunsets on the Texas coast.

FISH AND WILDLIFE TECHNICIANS

- Experience with boat and motor operation, maintenance and repair
- Experience with scientific sampling methods and data collection
- Experience on the water
- Communication skills – written and verbal
- Familiarity with marine species and habitats

BIOLOGISTS AND NATURAL RESOURCE SPECIALISTS

- Ability to write a scientific paper
- Training and experience with computers
- Training in statistical data collection and analysis and mathematics
- Training and experience in public speaking
- Ability to work with diverse groups of people
- Ability to weigh diverse input and make appropriate recommendations
- Knowledge of marine fish, fisheries and environments



EDUCATION

Biologist positions require at least a bachelor's degree in marine science, biology or a related field. However, most persons applying for these positions at TPWD have a master's. Keep this in mind when planning your educational goals.

Although some colleges and universities offer undergraduate programs in marine science, many fisheries professionals obtain degrees in other disciplines such as human dimensions, hydrology, ecology or environmental science. Courses in writing and public speaking, social studies and the humanities are also important. Fisheries professionals must understand not only the scientific basis of a fishery, but also how to communicate their understanding to the public. College algebra and statistics are also recommended courses; these subjects continue to grow in importance as we analyze the relationships between fishes, their habitats, and human populations. Graduate education typically involves specialized study in a selected area of expertise.

Technician positions require a high-school diploma or GED and familiarity with boat and motor repair, auto repair, operating on water, and marine organisms and habitats.

EXPERIENCE

Volunteering at a saltwater hatchery, field offices, or a TPWD outreach event is one way to gain experience in fisheries work. Please visit tpwd.texas.gov/volunteer.

Sea Center Texas has one of the most versatile and active volunteer groups in the TPWD system. Each month, about 100 volunteers donate their time to act as Sea Center Texas ambassadors, guiding tours, greeting visitors, and providing "expert" knowledge at special events. For more information, visit tpwd.texas.gov/fishing/sea-center-texas/volunteer-opportunities.

A summer job or internship is another way to gain valuable experience and increase chances of future employment. TPWD's Student Internship Program is for students who are enrolled in an accredited college or university and meet minimum requirements. Coastal Fisheries interns can work in our field offices on the coast, at Austin headquarters or at Sea Center Texas. To find out what's available in a given year, visit the jobs section of our website: tpwd.texas.gov/jobs/internship.phtml.