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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR <u>Ortez</u>	LAST UPDATED _____ ORIGINAL DATE <u>2/5/24</u>
SHORT TITLE <u>Citizen Science in State Agencies</u>	BILL NUMBER <u>House Memorial 34</u>
	ANALYST <u>Wan Smith</u>

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY24	FY25	FY26	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact	No fiscal impact			

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.
 *Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From
 Department of Game and Fish (DGF)
 Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)
 University of New Mexico (UNM)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Memorial 34

House Memorial 34 requests the formation of a working group of state agencies to develop and recommend actions to establish and expand the use of citizen science using the best available science and data collection practices. The memorial generally defines citizen science as a way for members of the public to participate in scientific research conducted by state agencies. The working group should be managed by the Wild Friends Program at the University of New Mexico (UNM) and include the State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department; the Environment Department; the State Land Office; the Department of Game and Fish; and other interested state agencies.

The memorial specifies the working group should develop a pilot project for the use of the Wild Friends Program as a template for state agencies. The working group is requested to submit a report to the appropriate interim legislative committee by October 31, 2024, detailing the group's recommendations, including infrastructure, funding needs, and strategies to advance the use of citizen science.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No fiscal implications associated with HM34 are anticipated.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Wild Friends Program is a civics and science education program at the UNM School of Law that works with students in grades 4-12 across New Mexico. Each year the students vote on a wildlife conservation topic, research the topic, and help draft legislation to address the needs identified. The students then travel to the State Capitol during the legislative session to advocate for the legislation. For the 2024 session, the students helped to draft this memorial, which asks for a state agency working group to explore the expanded use of citizen science by state agencies.

The student researchers of the Wild Friends Program emphasize the many potential statewide benefits of citizen participation in research and data collection, such as civic engagement and community education. The research team expects that citizen science programs will increase and encourage public participation in outdoor recreation opportunities, building community ties and raising the mental well-being of all New Mexicans. These programs may be especially beneficial to the state's youth, creating opportunities for young people to engage with state government and learn about careers in science and conservation.

CWS/al/hg