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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Lord LAST UPDATED 1/25/24
ORIGINAL DATE _____
BILL
SHORT TITLE Raising Quail without a Permit NUMBER House Bill 59
ANALYST Wan Smith

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY24	FY25	FY26	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Department of Game and Fish	No fiscal impact	Indeterminate but minimal	Indeterminate but minimal		Recurring	Other state funds
Total						

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)

Agency Analysis was Solicited but Not Received From
Department of Agriculture

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 59

House Bill 59 amends Section 17-2-3 NMSA 1978 to remove domestic quail from the list of protected wildlife species. The bill also adds language to allow quail to be raised without a permit.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns, or May 15, 2024, if enacted.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The Department of Game and Fish (DGF) reports that HB59 would have indeterminate costs to the agency for investigating whether an individual quail is wild or domestic to determine if it were legally harvested; attempting to eradicate escaped and hybrid quail; and managing diseases

transmitted from domestic to wild quail.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

If HB59 were enacted, DGF is concerned that the escape or intentional release of domestic quail from their captive facility could negatively impact wild quail populations and the ecosystem. For example, domestic quail could establish resident feral populations and become an invasive species that potentially outcompetes native quail, thus causing a decline in native quail populations locally or statewide. DGF also believes there is a high probability that escaped domestic quail would hybridize with native quail species, which would similarly harm the native populations. According to the agency, domestic and hybrid species consistently outcompete native species for food, habitat, and other resources. Furthermore, DGF reports that there would be a risk of disease transmission from domestic to wild quail, which could lead to wild quail die-offs. Declining wild quail populations would reduce the hunting opportunities for this species.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

DGF states it is unclear what entity has regulatory authority over domestic quail, which would make it challenging to control domestic or hybrid populations and implement management activities. Enforcing hunting regulations would also become difficult because it could be impossible to determine whether quail was shot in the wild or in a private facility.

CWS/al/hg