

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current and previously issued FIRs are available on the NM Legislative Website (www.nmlegis.gov) and may also be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/21/19

SPONSOR Dow/Armstrong, G **LAST UPDATED** _____ **HB** 258

SHORT TITLE Gila Forest Restoration Projects **SB** _____

ANALYST Valenzuela

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY19	FY20		
	\$300.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 258 appropriates \$300 thousand from the general fund to the Grant County and Sierra County Soil and Water Conservation Districts at New Mexico State University for the purpose of completing forest restoration work in the Gila National Forest. The work may be through mechanical treatment or prescribed fires and may be completed on acreage that has been cleared through the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

HB258 provides a nonrecurring appropriation for one-time forest restoration projects. The bill is silent on a split of the appropriation between the Grant County SWCD and the Sierra County SWCD. The boundaries of the Gila National Forest within each county and the approved NEPA acreage would define available acreage for restoration work.

The annual operating budget for Soil and Water Conservation Districts resides within the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) budget. The funding to NMDA is included within New Mexico State University as a special line item called a Research and Public Service Projects (RPSPs). In FY19, NMDA received \$11.3 million, of which \$1.5 million was dedicated for SWCD programs.

SWCD used the \$1.5 million budget on the following programs:

New Mexico Department of Agriculture: Soil & Water Conservation Districts Funding

	<u>FY2015</u>	<u>FY2016</u>	<u>FY2017</u>	<u>FY2018</u>	<u>FY2019 (est.)</u>
SWCD - TSP Matching	\$ 578,665	\$ 575,195	\$ 536,381	\$ 531,015	\$ 531,015
SWCD Districts	685,890	681,775	635,770	629,410	629,410
Water Quality	123,420	122,680	114,400	113,255	113,255
Socorro SWCD	34,625	34,420	32,100	31,780	31,780
Salt Cedar Removal	140,150	139,310	129,910	128,611	128,611
East Torrance SWCD	54,650	54,325	50,660	50,150	50,150
Hope Community Ditch Fund	<u>41,135</u>	<u>40,880</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	\$ 1,658,535	\$ 1,648,585	\$ 1,499,221	\$ 1,484,221	\$ 1,484,221

Source: NMDA

The appropriation of \$300 thousand contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY20 shall revert to the general fund.

MFV/al