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The most recent FIR version (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) is available on the Legislative Website. The Adobe PDF version includes all attachments, whereas the HTML version does not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

| SPONSOR:    | Nuñez                 | DATE TYPED: | 02/20/03 | HB         | 683 |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|----------|------------|-----|
| SHORT TITLE | E: Amend Watershed Di | strict Act  |          | SB         |     |
|             |                       | ANALY       | ST:      | Valenzuela |     |

## **APPROPRIATION**

| Appropriation Contained |      | Estimated Additional Impact |      | Recurring<br>or Non-Rec | Fund<br>Affected |
|-------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|-------------------------|------------------|
| FY03                    | FY04 | FY03                        | FY04 |                         |                  |
|                         |      |                             | NFI  |                         |                  |

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Responses Received From
Department of Finance and Administration
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)
Office of the State Engineer
Department of Agriculture (NMDA)

#### **SUMMARY**

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 683 amends the Watershed District Act by clarifying several provisions pertaining to the election process for such districts. The bill shifts the burden of proof regarding the validity of petition signatures to the sponsors of the petition. HB 683 allows the board to appointment new members, when there are two or more vacancies. The bill eliminates the requirement to be a landowner to vote in soil and water conservation district (SWCD) mill levy and member elections. The bill transfers the responsibility for certification of election results to the state Department of Agriculture, and allows board members of soil and water conservation districts to receive mileage and per diem for official meetings.

## Significant Issues

In 1997, the soil and water conservation districts were transferred from the EMNRD Forestry Division to the Department of Agriculture (NMDA). The effect of the bill is to transfer the responsibilities for SWCD and election oversight to NMDA.

# House Bill 683 -- Page 2

Watershed districts are generally small geographic areas, and are often created for a specific purpose, such as flood control, within a watershed. Owners of land within a watershed district bear the expense and are the primary benefactors of a watershed district.

## MFV/sb