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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Moore DATE TYPED 1/27/2005 HB 273

SHORT TITLE Volunteer Operation of State Parks SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Aguilar

### APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	NFI		Indeterminate	Recurring	EMNRD Operating Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to House Bill 118

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 273 authorizes the State Parks Division (SPD) of the Energy, Mineral and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) to develop a program to recruit, train and accept the services of volunteers, sets forth a number of activities to which volunteers may participate and provides volunteer eligibility for certain reimbursements and protections.

#### Significant Issues

HB 273 provides that volunteers are not deemed to be state employees and will not be subject to provisions of the law relating to state employment. This bill further provides that volunteers may receive reimbursement for per diem and mileage, uniforms, supplies and material not to exceed the value of services rendered. As authorized by the SPD director.

This bill authorizes volunteers to use state vehicles and computers subject to applicable state rules and policies governing use by state employees and directs that volunteers using state vehicles will be treated as a state employee for purposes of insurability and tort claim liability.

State Parks Division notes volunteers are absolutely vital to the well being of New Mexico State Parks. They provide the equivalent of 54 full-time employees which adds nearly 20 percent to SPD's workforce. Volunteers provide support by staffing visitor centers, campgrounds, leading education programs, providing maintenance, and other types of labor. Volunteers must play an even larger role in the future if the state park system is to prosper and improve.

### **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

An increase in volunteer services will positively affect SPD's ability to meet performance measures for self-generated revenue and park visitation by increasing the workload within state parks without a salaried increase.

SPD notes the provisions contained in this bill authorizing SPD to offer reimbursement for per diem, mileage, materials, supplies and uniforms will assist in recruiting and retaining qualified individuals in what is now a very competitive market for volunteers who assist public land managers and may result in volunteers returning to state parks year after year.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

Implementing HB 273 will require additional support from the division. Current budgeting levels will be adequate to meet the need in FY06. Additional support may be necessary in the future as the impacts of the program are better defined.

The use of state vehicles by volunteers will need to be included in the General Services Department insurability and tort coverage.

**PA/lg**