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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/12/2007

SPONSOR Leavell LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE NM Tech Cave & Karst Research Institute SB 762

ANALYST McOlash

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$36.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 762 appropriates \$36,000 from the General Fund to the NM Tech Regents for expenditure in FY 2008 for Tech's National Cave and Karst Research Institute to restore previous cuts and provide the appropriate matching funds as required by the U.S. National Park Service.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$36,000 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the General Fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY 2008 shall revert to the General Fund.

### SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute in Carlsbad, NM was created by an Act of Congress in 1998 to further the research, education, and wise management of cave/karst formations throughout the United States and around the world. While the National Park Service

was designated as the lead agency for establishing the organization, the Institute is a diverse entity comprised of a broad base of partners including the City of Carlsbad, and NM Tech.

The National Cave and Karst Research Institute serves as a research center to determine influences of and relationships to petroleum and water extraction. Karsts are small pocket formations that are expanding and will eventually become large caves. Caves and karsts serve as experimental settings in which research staff at NM Tech conduct testing to better understand the roles of oil and water and interdependence upon each other and formations beneath the ground's surface.

This request was submitted by NM Tech to HED for review of additional funds to the base funding in the amount of \$35,600 in FY08. The Department's funding recommendation for FY08 is a continuance of FY07 recurring funding in the amount of \$429,300 with no additional funding at this time.

**CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP OR RELATIONSHIP**

SB 2/HB 7 (General Appropriation Acts) appropriate \$429,300 for Cave and Karst research.

**OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

The word "karst" refers to a type of terrain, usually formed on carbonate rock (limestone and dolomite) where groundwater has solutionally enlarged openings to form a subsurface drainage system. A mild carbonic acid produced from carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, particularly the soil atmosphere, is primarily responsible for the solvent power of groundwater on carbonate rocks.

BM/csd