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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/19/08

SPONSOR Tripp LAST UPDATED _____ HB 155

SHORT TITLE NM Tech Decision-Makers Conferences SB _____

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$75.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)

No Response

New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology (NMIMT)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 155 appropriates \$75.0 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology for the Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources to conduct the decision-makers field conferences.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$75.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund.

HED states that this request was not submitted by New Mexico Institute of Mining to the New Mexico Higher Education Department for review and is not included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY09.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The HED states that the primary objective of the conference is to offer decision makers a firsthand outdoor learning experience concerning vital earth science issues. Over the past six years the following topics have been covered:

- Water and water shed issues in Santa Fe and the Los Alamos areas
- New Mexico energy issues
- New Mexico Mining issues
- Water issues along the Pecos River and the middle Rio Grande

The 2009 conference is scheduled to cover geological hazards in the Albuquerque area as well as water and natural resource issues, climate change and border issues.

According to EMNRD, since 2001, the New Mexico Bureau of Geology & Mineral Resources has been conducting annual, three-day field conferences for influential New Mexico decision makers - legislators, government agency directors, appointed and elected commissioners, educators, citizen advocates and business leaders. The primary objective for the conferences is to present decision makers with the opportunity to learn first-hand about current issues, problems and solutions concerning vital earth science and hydrologic issues in New Mexico. Each conference is focused on a particular topic that is relevant and timely for decision makers. For example, in 2005, the focus of the conference was on mining issues in New Mexico. Attendees traveled to various mine sites around the state and interacted with businesses and community leaders. They were given informative presentations by scientist and policy experts, who made credible, well-balanced, succinct presentations. The goal is to inform decision makers and not lobby them for any particular position.

EMNRD states further that the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) assists the Bureau of Geology as needed in coordinating logistics, finding speakers and offering technical expertise when the topic is within EMNRD's purview. Each conference has been met with overwhelming support and accolades from all sectors as being an excellent opportunity for decision makers to learn about how they can influence positive outcomes to sometimes difficult and pressing issues facing New Mexico. The Bureau obtains funding from a variety of public and private sources for the conferences.

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