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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Sapient ORIGINAL DATE 02/25/15
LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____
SHORT TITLE Rio Grande Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring System SB 582
ANALYST Gudgel

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY15	FY16		
	\$150.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)
Office of State Engineer (OSE)
Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 582 appropriates \$150 thousand from the general fund to the Public Education Department for the Las Cruces Public School District to support existing bosque ecosystem monitoring program efforts on the Rio Grande, including river and bosque water and natural resource monitoring.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$150 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY16 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The University of New Mexico has a bosque ecosystem monitoring program (BEMP) that was founded in 1996. Official monitoring started with three sites (Alameda, Rio Grande Nature Center and Los Lunas) in 1997. Since 1996 BEMP has collaborated with K-12 students from

across New Mexico and their teachers in a citizen science effort to track long-term change in the Middle Rio Grande riparian forest, or *bosque*. BEMP currently has 30 sites and over 1 million data points collected each year.

Currently, BEMP has a program that is based out of Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park (MVBSP) in Las Cruces. The program currently partners with Audobon New Mexico, Las Cruces High School, New Mexico State University STEM office, and Las Cruces Public Schools.

EMNRD notes the bill supports projects at MVBSP and other state parks along the Rio Grande. Education is an important part of the mission of State Parks, and the State Park Outdoor Classroom Program provides educational programming, transportation grants and teacher trainings statewide. Currently, State Parks has a contract with Bosque School in Albuquerque to oversee important portions of the State Parks Outdoor Classroom Program to include BEMP monitoring sites and programs. Bosque School administers State Parks Kids n' Parks transportation grants statewide as well as programming in parks to provide meaningful, curriculum-based outdoor experiences. As part of that partnership with Bosque School, there is a BEMP monitoring site at MVBSP that is utilized by Las Cruces Public Schools. The partnership between BEMP and State Parks has supported a BEMP employee at MVBSP from 2013 to 2015 who provides outdoor classroom programming and BEMP activities for Las Cruces students and teachers.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

PED notes administration of the fund should minimally impact the department.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Office of State Engineer Analysis

The river and its associated bosque and riverside levees are the foundation for providing flood protection to residents living in the Rio Grande valley, serve as the primary means of delivering water for multiple uses by the majority of New Mexicans, and, in some instances, serve as a wildlife corridor along the Rio Grande. Providing education opportunities for New Mexico students to learn about the river and associated bosque ecosystem and related water management and natural resource issues can help to inform New Mexicans of the resource and its multiple purposes, and aid in future generations understanding its value. Data collected by the program can be useful to natural resource and research agencies.

RSG/bb