

LFC Requester:

Connor Jorgensen

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO

AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov and email to billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov*(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)***SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION***{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}*Date Prepared: Jan. 24, 2026

Check all that apply:

Bill Number: SB 83Original Correction Amendment Substitute Sponsor: Sen. Pete CamposShort Accelerating ResilienceTitle: Innovations Drylands

Agency Name

and Code

University of New Mexico-952

Number:

Person Writing

Lenaya MontoyaPhone: 5754187595Email lenayamontoya@unm.edu**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT****APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
	\$1,937.00	Nonrecurring	General Fund

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		

(Parenthesis () indicate revenue decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total						

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis:

SB 83 provides a \$1,937,000 dollar appropriation for fiscal year 27 to the board of regents of the University of New Mexico for UNM's Accelerating Resilience Innovations in Drylands Institute (ARID) to be used in cooperation with UNM's Natural Heritage NM program for the following purposes:

- to continue developing a technologically advanced statewide ecological monitoring network with modeling and artificial intelligence solutions to diagnose and predict vulnerabilities in New Mexico's ecosystems, including fire risk;
- to develop resilience strategies for the sustainable management of air, land and water;
- to continue programs that foster cooperation between the university of New Mexico and kindergarten through twelfth grade students enrolled in the science, technology, engineering and math programs; and
- to enhance tribal engagement with research at the university of New Mexico.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The UNM ARID Institute accelerates community-driven, science-based solutions that strengthen resilience in dryland regions facing rapid environmental change. ARID partners directly with communities in New Mexico to co-design research that delivers practical, lasting impact.

New Mexico partners have identified specific information gaps that impede the development of management actions and policies to address critical issues surrounding improving air quality and human health, maintaining thriving ecosystems, and building resilience while engaging communities and Indigenous peoples.

ARID is uniquely poised to fill these gaps through its novel transdisciplinary research and its ability to educate and train the next generation of science leaders and to collect and manage data in a reliable, consistent format.

Specific efforts supported by SB-83 include:

- Air quality monitoring to understand health risks and impacts to communities
- Accurately identifying, monitoring, and quantifying methane leaks at scales too small to identify by satellite
- Quantifying the impact of wildfire and forest management practices on the carbon and water resources of forested ecosystems and working directly with communities and stakeholders to improve effective watershed management practices.
- Evaluating Rio Grande bosque health for science, education and stewardship of this iconic system. Data and analyses are used by government agencies to make informed decisions about managing the forest and river.
- Tribal engagement in research design and implementation

- Data integration into decision-support tools that can directly inform decision-making

This bill would support development of these important new datasets for inclusion in the UNM Natural Heritage New Mexico statewide EnviroData-NM database, enabling advanced web development technologies (including AI) that integrate datasets, provide user-friendly analytical synthesis tools, and foster communication among stakeholders.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The single-year nature of this funding will require extra attention to get it rapidly deployed to UNM and to its intended programs. Additionally, one time funding may provide for difficulty in achieving long-term goals for both programs, such as Tribal engagement, which requires sustained support. The ARID Institute does have some committed funding from UNM to manage the funds and assist with continuity between years but does not have enough for sustained support. UNM will continue to support the ARID Institute and their goal of creating a research and public service project line in UNM's budget. UNM has tried in the past to advance this initiative through HED and LFC, but they have been unsuccessful so far.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The appropriation states that “any unexpended balance” shall revert at the end of FY 27, but it does not mention encumbered money. If the ARID Institute or Natural Heritage NM happen to have encumbered funding at the end of FY 27, they may face reversion of some of the funding. We kindly suggest that the phrasing be changed to state “any unexpended *or unencumbered* balance”.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

ALTERNATIVES

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

AMENDMENTS