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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Bailey DATE TYPED: 03/06/01 HB _____
 SHORT TITLE: Cloud Seeding & Water Modification Program SB 513/aSCONC
 ANALYST: Chabot

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY01	FY02	FY01	FY02		
	\$ 150.0			Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates HB 665

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files
 Office of the State Engineer (SEO)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of the SCONC Amendment

The Senate Conservation Committee amendment specifies that the cloud seeding funded for this appropriation is for “the Lea county water users.”

Synopsis of Original Bill

This bill appropriates \$150.0 from the general fund to SEO for the purpose of supporting a cloud seeding and weather modification program in southeast New Mexico.

Significant Issues

According to SEO, southeastern New Mexico has experienced three years of continuous, severe drought which has impacted both agricultural and municipal water users in the region. The drought has also decreased surface runoff and flows in the Pecos River. Other weather modification projects have been in operation in Curry, Quay and Roosevelt counties for the past four years with “impressive results.” These results were not quantified in the SEO analysis. However, in testimony before the Interim Water and Natural Resources Committee, SEO representatives stated that in 1999 the rainfall in the target area was 38 percent higher compared to nine percent higher outside the target area. A similar program in the Colorado River Municipal Water District of west Texas yielded a 36 percent increase in rainfall during the seeding months.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

To obtain baseline data on weather modification programs, one output measure is recommended:

Output Estimated percent increase in rainfall resulting from the weather modification project in southeast New Mexico compared to seasonal averages:

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$150.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2002 shall revert to the general fund. To receive maximum benefit from the appropriation in this bill, SEO recommends a multi-year appropriation for fiscal years 2002 and 2003.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

This program would be administered by the existing staff of the Interstate Stream Commission.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1. How successful have cloud seeding and weather modification projects been in the past and what results are expected?
2. Should this program become a recurring expense in the SEO budget?

GAC/ar