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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Stewart DATE TYPED: 02/28/03 HB HJM 5/aHGUAC

SHORT TITLE: State Property Landscaping SB _____

ANALYST: Geisler

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY03	FY04	FY03	FY04		
			See Narrative	Recurring	GF/OSF

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

General Services Department (GSD)
Office of the State Engineer (OSE)
State Highway and Transportation Department

SUMMARY

Synopsis of HGUAC Amendment

The House Government and Urban Affairs Committee amendment of House Joint Memorial 5 adds the State Highway and Transportation Department and the governing boards of the post-secondary institutions to the group requested to cooperate in the feasibility study of installing water-wise native vegetation on state property.

Synopsis of Original Bill

House Joint Memorial 5 requests that the General Services Department (GSD) and the Office of the State Engineer (OSE) cooperate in assessing the feasibility of installing water-wise native vegetation on all state property.

Significant Issues

The assessment of all state property would require the evaluation of existing landscaping, and cost estimates of removal and the installation of new landscaping. Engineering costs for this type of assessment could be significant. The OSE has been encouraging state facility managers

to replace water-intensive landscape for numerous years. GSD has begun using water-wise plantings and water-conservation devices for landscaping where possible in renovation projects. The OSE has held regular meetings on conservation strategies with Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (ENMRD) and has encouraged state maintenance personnel to attend relevant training sessions. The change to xeriscaping has happened to some degree but at a slow pace. Facility managers generally support the idea but don't have funding for implementation.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill would require the OSE & GSD spend more time assessing conservation of state property. It would most likely require hiring a consultant to evaluate property sites and make cost estimates for landscape conversions. OSE estimates this could cost at the least \$30.0. Implementation of landscaping plans will be a considerable cost to convert traditional landscaping, and will require adequate training of staff for proper irrigation and maintenance. Over time as more water-wise landscaping is installed, there would be some savings in the cost of water.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

GSD does not have a landscape architect or similar professional on staff, but the staff time necessary to do the initial work with OSE could be accommodated. OSE estimates it would take 1 FTE plus contract support to work on the study and assessment.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Section 15-3-12.1 NMSA 1978 was enacted in 1995. It requires use of water conservation devices in construction of new state buildings. The Building Services Division (BSD) and Property Control Division (PCD) require use of water-wise irrigation, flow-limiting faucets and other devices when new buildings are constructed or renovation projects require disturbing landscaping. However, this provision does not address the properties in HJM 5, which includes all buildings, not just new or renovated properties.

In addition to the legislative and judicial branches, the following executive branch agencies are not under GSD jurisdiction: Museums (Office of Cultural Affairs), National Guard, Highway and Transportation Department, State Fair, Game & Fish Department, Commissioner of Public Lands, State Parks Division of EMNRD, institutions of higher learning, and public schools. As written, HJM 5 would not include these property owners in the discussion, and GSD has no jurisdiction over their property.

A follow-up study may be required to formulate a specific campus-by-campus plan with costs implications for removal of existing landscape, in addition to the cost of installing new water-wise plantings and the estimated cost of water that could be saved.

GGG/lis