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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/04/10

SPONSOR Ulibarri LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Study Increasing Hunting Permits SB SM 16

ANALYST Wilson

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY10	FY11	FY12	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
Total		\$1.0-2.0			Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Game and Fish (DGF)
Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Memorial 16 requests the State Game Commission (commission) and DGF to study methods and programs that will increase the number of hunting licenses issued for New Mexico residents while considering the importance of habitat conservation. The memorial also asks the Commission and DGF to conduct the study in active collaboration with the Indian nations, tribes and pueblos in New Mexico.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

While DGF did not include funding to contract for an external study to accomplish the aims of this memorial, there are activities that the DGF is planning during the next fiscal year that will provide information relevant to this memorial.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DGA notes that the language in this memorial is reflective of comments from the public and the aim of the agency when setting methods to allocate hunt opportunity. Recent and upcoming efforts include the formation and meetings of a License Opportunities Review Team and the process to formulate big game rules. The goals expressed in this memorial are consistent with the Commission direction expressed at their last meeting. The commission had earlier adopted a

House Memorial 16 - Page 2

rule that will require some hunters to wait a year to apply for certain hunts if they had successfully drawn the prior year. Public input indicated that this was not the solution desired by most hunters, so that rule was changed before it took effect. While this rule may not have been the ultimate solution, the DGF is committed to looking for ways to increase opportunity.

As mentioned in the memorial, the implementation of the State-Tribal Collaboration Act (STCA), passed by the legislature and enacted by the governor provides opportunities for the agency. The STCA calls for the kind of collaboration contemplated in the memorial. The upcoming adoption of rules for big game hunting will provide an opportunity to engage in discussions with tribes and nations in order to effectively manage and conserve wildlife in order to provide for increased hunting opportunities in areas where the state has jurisdiction.

The OIA provided the following:

SM 16 notes the importance of hunting as an economic development and wildlife management tool in New Mexico. Yet SM 16 also notes that the DGF receives hundreds of hunting applications each year in excess of the supply of annual permits. SM 16 requests that the commission and the DGF look for ways to increase the number of allotted permits for New Mexico residents in a manner that improves the process for drawing permits and balances the need to preserve New Mexico wildlife and habitat.

SM 16 asks for this study to be conducted in collaboration with the 22 tribes and pueblos of New Mexico. Many tribes in New Mexico have valuable wildlife and habitat resources that they manage, utilize and promote for their people and through commercial hunting and management enterprises. Involving the tribes and pueblos through the state-tribal collaboration process as will ensure that their concerns and needs as significant stakeholders are considered within the study's overall recommendations to increase hunting in New Mexico.

It is also important to note that there are statutory factors that influence the allocation of hunting opportunities in New Mexico. Two examples are §17-3-16, which sets the percentage of licenses allocated to New Mexico residents and hunters from out of state, and §17-3-14.1, which mandates the DGF to issue elk hunting authorizations for hunting on private land. These and other statutory requirements provide a framework that the DGF works within when making decisions related to hunting opportunity.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

DGF will be working with the public and the commission over the next several months developing new hunting rules for big game and other species that will apply to the 2011 and 2012 hunt years. This process will provide opportunities to gather information, to collaborate with tribal entities and to engage in discussions with the license-buying public. This will help DGF address this memorial.

DW/mew