

LFC Requester:

Jorgensen

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS  
2024 REGULAR SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO:

Analysis.nmlegis.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}

Check all that apply:

Original  Amendment   
Correction  Substitute

Date Jan 19, 2024

Bill No: HB130

Sponsor: Chatfield

Agency Name and Code NMED 667  
Number:

Person Writing John Rhoderick

Short Title: Cloud Seeding Pilot Program

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**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT**

**APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

| Appropriation |        | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|---------------|--------|---------------------------|---------------|
| FY24          | FY25   |                           |               |
|               | 1,980. | Nonrecurring              |               |

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

| Estimated Revenue |      |      | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|-------------------|------|------|---------------------------|---------------|
| FY24              | FY25 | FY26 |                           |               |
|                   |      |      |                           |               |
|                   |      |      |                           |               |
|                   |      |      |                           |               |

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to:

**SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

## **BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis: HB 130 appropriates \$1,980,000 to New Mexico State University for expenditure in fiscal years 2025 thru 2027 for the Department of Agriculture to develop and administer a cloud seeding weather modification pilot project. The pilot would be administered by the New Mexico Department of Agriculture and Roosevelt Soil and Water Conservation District.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

This is a new pilot project that could have potential impacts to ground and surface water resources. Although this project is not regulated under the NM Water Quality Act, to ensure protection of water sources NMED requests the opportunity to consult with and review proposed activities in the project to assess any potential water quality impacts or monitoring provisions. Previous cloud seeding activities in northern New Mexico have raised concerns about the potential negative impacts of chemicals used in cloud seeding on surface water, groundwater, wildlife, and humans due to precipitation of chemicals to the ground surface as well as the introduction of chemicals into the air during the seeding process.

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

Cloud seeding activities require a permit from the Interstate Stream Commission under the New Mexico Weather Control Act.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

Various salts, such as silver iodide and potassium iodide, and even solid carbon dioxide, may be utilized as the nuclei for the cloud seeding and promote cloud formation. However, silver and potassium may pose risks to aquatic ecosystems, change soil chemistry, or contaminate groundwater. In addition, carbon dioxide is known to acidify surface waters. NMED is concerned there may be impacts to ground and surface water quality as a result of the seeded rain. HB130 needs to address the permitting requirements already existing under Interstate Stream Commission rules. HB130 needs to require consultation with New Mexico Environment Department prior to and throughout the duration of the pilot project to assess potential impacts to groundwater or surface water quality.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

None

## **ALTERNATIVES**

None

## **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

The cloud seeding pilot project will not occur.

## **AMENDMENTS**

Add under Section 2, new subsection B:

“B. Consult with the New Mexico Environment Department prior to and periodically throughout the duration of the weather modification pilot project to monitor water quality and assess any impacts to groundwater or surface water quality.”