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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/01/13

SPONSOR Cisneros LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE NMSU Soil & Water Conservation Districts SB 151

ANALYST Hartzler-Toon

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY13	FY14		
	\$250.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates Appropriation in General Appropriation Act, New Mexico State University, New Mexico Department of Agriculture
 Relates to SB 295, Rio Grande Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 151 appropriates \$250 thousand from the general fund to the New Mexico State University for the purpose of matching federal funds for the soil and water conservation districts to provide water conservation and natural resource restoration technical assistance, or any other technical assistance, pursuant to an agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS).

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$250 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY14 shall revert to the general fund.

The NMDA administers general fund appropriations for the state's soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs). In FY13, SWCDs received a \$400 thousand increase in general fund support

for a total of \$1.36 million in general fund revenues. Of this \$1.36 million, \$380 thousand is set aside for the technical service program's federal matching requirement. The NMDA/USDA NRCS agreement calls for the state's funding of \$380 thousand to be matched with \$500 thousand in federal funds.

The NMDA indicates that, should the state increase funding for the technical service program matching requirement, additional federal funds would come to the state. The additional funds would allow programs to expand into other areas of assistance, including acequia and dam rehabilitation projects.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The NMDA notes that the technical service program provides landowners with technical and contract assistance for the implementation of conservation, restoration, and irrigation efficiency projects among others. There are approximately 23 technical service staff assistance to 22 SWCDs. Specifically, "the annual benefit from the implementation of the federal Farm Bill programs in New Mexico, of which the technical service program is one, is estimated at over \$22 million."

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The SWCDs performance measures are reported along with the NMDA's annual measures.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

The SWCDs currently receive general fund appropriations through the NMDA's appropriation in the General Appropriation Act.

THT/bm