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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Burt ORIGINAL DATE 3/3/17
 LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Endangered Species Coordination SB 481

ANALYST Armstrong

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY17	FY18	FY19	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		See narrative			Recurring	Game Protection Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Response Received From

Department of Game and Fish (DGF)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 481 (SB481), the Endangered Species Conservation and Coordination Act, directs the DGF director to:

- collect and analyze economic impact and social data on species listed or proposed to be listed under the federal Endangered Species Act;
- assist local and regional governmental entities to identify and implement cost-effective strategies to mitigate impacts and recover endangered species;
- direct a species research program that includes working groups on science, economic impacts, and scoring for research proposals;
- develop and manage a webpage to provide data related to listed and potentially listed species; and
- appoint a technical advisory committee for each research project.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

According to DGF analysis, SB481 would require a significant amount of resources be dedicated to coordinate the advisory and working groups, and to prioritize and publish research. Further, economic research is not reimbursable from federal grant funds currently available to the

department. Funding economic research would thus require reprioritizing existing budget to these tasks. This reprioritization would result in less wildlife related research and a loss of federal revenue normally received through reimbursement of wildlife research project costs.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DGF provided the following analysis:

Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act specifically precludes the use of economic impact or social data in listing determinations. Therefore, provision of economic impact or social data to the fish and wildlife service pursuant to this bill would not have any effect on the listing decision.

The Department does not currently have technical expertise in economic impacts or collection/analysis of social data; however, the Department does have existing programs and functions that address some of what is contained in the bill, for example: the Biota Information System of New Mexico (BISONM) website provides information on listed and candidate species; Share With Wildlife and the State Wildlife Grant Program provide mechanisms for prioritizing and funding innovative research/mitigation for listed species; and the Ecological and Environmental Planning Division within the Department provides technical guidance related to mitigation and habitat improvement

The bill requires technical advisory panels for each species research project undertaken. Given the number of species listed or proposed to be listed, the director could be asked to manage a large number of these advisory panels which could become problematic when taken with the mandate to create and manage separate working groups for each project/species.

The working groups are all appointed by the director and provide input to the director. Generally, the State Game Commission is responsible for prioritizing and budgeting the work of the Agency. The bill appears to cede Commission authority to the director and may be in direct conflict with 17-1-14 NMSA General Powers and Duties of State Game Commission.

JA/sb