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SENATE BILL

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2022

INTRODUCED BY

DISCUSSION DRAFT

FOR THE WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO NATURAL RESOURCES; ENACTING THE NEW MEXICO
REFORESTATION CENTER ACT; DIRECTING THE FORESTRY DIVISION OF
THE ENERGY, MINERALS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT TO ENTER
INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AT NEW MEXICO
HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY, THE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION AT
NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO TO CREATE THE NEW MEXICO
REFORESTATION CENTER TO ADDRESS THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
ON THE STATE'S FORESTS AND ADDRESS THE STATE'S REFORESTATION
NEEDS; CREATING A BOARD; DIRECTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
DEDICATED ACCOUNT FOR FUNDING; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. [NEW MATERIAL] SHORT TITLE.--This act may be
cited as the "New Mexico Reforestation Center Act".

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1 SECTION 2. [NEW MATERIAL] NEW MEXICO REFORESTATION

2 CENTER--AGREEMENT.--

3 A. The forestry division of the energy, minerals
4 and natural resources department shall enter into an agreement
5 with the department of forestry of New Mexico highlands
6 university, the agricultural experiment station of New Mexico
7 state university and the department of biology of the
8 university of New Mexico to create the "New Mexico
9 reforestation center".

10 B. The New Mexico reforestation center shall
11 address the impacts of climate change on the state's forests
12 and meet the state's current and future reforestation needs
13 through establishment of a seed bank program, a nursery program
14 and a planting program and shall develop and operate
15 comprehensive policies and projects for:

- 16 (1) seed collection;
17 (2) seed processing;
18 (3) seed storage;
19 (4) seed orchards;
20 (5) seedling production;
21 (6) seedling storage;
22 (7) seedling distribution;
23 (8) planting and monitoring;
24 (9) climate modeling and database management;

25 and

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1 (10) research, outreach, education and
2 training to support the seed bank, nursery and planting
3 programs.

4 C. The agreement shall specify the areas of
5 responsibilities for each party to the agreement, and
6 responsibility shall be divided among the parties based on
7 expertise and capabilities; provided that:

8 (1) New Mexico highlands university shall act
9 as the fiscal agent for the New Mexico reforestation center;

10 (2) a majority of the positions supporting the
11 nursery program and research efforts, including a regeneration
12 scientist, shall be housed in the agricultural experiment
13 station of New Mexico state university;

14 (3) academic, administrative support and
15 seasonal positions shall be housed in the department of
16 forestry of New Mexico highlands university;

17 (4) climate modeling and database management
18 shall be housed in the department of biology of the university
19 of New Mexico; and

20 (5) one full-time-equivalent position for a
21 planting and seed collection coordinator shall be housed in the
22 forestry division of the energy, minerals and natural resources
23 department.

24 SECTION 3. [NEW MATERIAL] NEW MEXICO REFORESTATION
25 BOARD--MEMBERS--DUTIES.--

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1 A. The "New Mexico reforestation board" is created.

2 B. The board consists of the following members:

3 (1) the state forester;

4 (2) the director of forestry of New Mexico
5 highlands university or the associate vice president of
6 academic affairs for forestry and the reforestation center of
7 New Mexico highlands university, appointed by the president of
8 New Mexico highlands university;

9 (3) the director of reforestation of New
10 Mexico state university;

11 (4) the director of the New Mexico forest and
12 watershed restoration institute at New Mexico highlands
13 university;

14 (5) a faculty member of the university of New
15 Mexico who is an expert in forest ecology and climate modeling,
16 appointed by the chair of the department of biology of the
17 university of New Mexico;

18 (6) one member at large representing New
19 Mexico state university, appointed by the board of regents of
20 New Mexico state university; and

21 (7) one member at large representing New
22 Mexico highlands university, appointed by the board of regents
23 of New Mexico highlands university.

24 C. A majority of the members of the board
25 constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

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1 D. The board shall elect from its membership the
2 chair of the board. Each member of the board shall serve as
3 chair on a rotating basis.

4 E. The powers and duties of the board shall be
5 specified in the agreement entered into pursuant to Section 2
6 of the New Mexico Reforestation Center Act; provided that the
7 board shall have responsibility for:

8 (1) strategic planning for the New Mexico
9 reforestation center; and

10 (2) fiscal decisions and the allocation of
11 funds for the New Mexico reforestation center.

12 **SECTION 4. [NEW MATERIAL] NEW MEXICO REFORESTATION CENTER**
13 **ACCOUNT.**--By July 1, 2022, the board of regents of New Mexico
14 highlands university shall establish a "New Mexico
15 reforestation center account" to receive appropriations from
16 the legislature, gifts, grants or donations and revenues and
17 receipts derived from the operations of the New Mexico
18 reforestation center. Money in the New Mexico reforestation
19 center account shall be used for the operations of the New
20 Mexico reforestation center, including salaries, as provided in
21 the agreement entered into pursuant to Section 2 of the New
22 Mexico Reforestation Center Act. Money in the account shall
23 not revert to any other fund or account at the end of a fiscal
24 year.

25 **SECTION 5. APPROPRIATION.**--Four million six hundred eight
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1 thousand one hundred dollars (\$4,608,100) is appropriated from
2 the general fund to the board of regents of New Mexico
3 highlands university for deposit in the New Mexico
4 reforestation center account and for expenditure in fiscal year
5 2023 and subsequent fiscal years for the first-year operational
6 expenses of the New Mexico reforestation center as provided in
7 the agreement entered into pursuant to Section 2 of the New
8 Mexico Reforestation Center Act. Any unexpended or
9 unencumbered balance remaining at the end of a fiscal year
10 shall not revert to the general fund; provided that if the
11 agreement required by Section 2 of the New Mexico Reforestation
12 Center Act is not entered into by July 1, 2023, the amount
13 appropriated in this section shall revert to the general fund.