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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Romero DATE TYPED: 03/13/01 HB _____
 SHORT TITLE: “Public Land Hunter Advocate” Position SB 762
 ANALYST: Dotson

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY01	FY02	FY01	FY02		
	\$ 50.0			Recurring	Game Protection Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in The General Appropriation Act Conflicts with SB 730.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Game and Fish Department.

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

SB 762 appropriates \$50.0 from the Game Protection Fund to the State Game Commission for the purpose of expenditures associated with the position of the “public land hunter advocate”.

Significant Issues

This exempt position, appointed by the Governor, serves a two year term. The person filling this position must have no ties to the outfitting industry; no ties to ranching, cattle, or agriculture industries; not have ever received a landowner hunting permit; and never served as a broker or profited in any manner from the sale of a land owner hunting permit.

The salary for this position will be established by the State Game Commission and the salary will be paid out of the Game Protection Fund. Duties will be to attend all state game commission meetings to represent the public land hunters, serve as an advocate for public land hunters, attend public meeting throughout the state in order to acquire information relating to public land issues and game; develop a method to disseminate public land and game information to public land hunters, and act as a watch dog in the area of landowner permit allocations.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$50.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the Game Protection Fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY 2002 shall revert to the game Protection Fund.

According to the Game and Fish Department, the \$50,000 appropriation may not cover all costs needed to fully fund this person. This will depend on the salary offered.

According to the Game and Fish Department, this bill increases costs to the agency by a minimum \$50,000. We have not budgeted for this item. This is a two year term, that can be re-appointed at the pleasure of the Governor, therefore we expect these costs to be recurring and also increase from year to year. This agency can absorb these costs through unobligated cash balance and relying on budget adjustment authority.

CONFLICT/DUPLICATION/COMPANIONSHIP/RELATIONSHIP

According to the Game and Fish Department, Senate Bill 730 proposes to eliminate the current game and fish agency structure including the State Game Commission with a new structure under the proposed re-organization plan.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

According to the Game and Fish Department, many public land hunters attend state game commission meetings either representing themselves or representing established hunter/conservation organizations. The success of the advocate position will rely heavily on the acceptance of these groups and individuals that the advocate can and will speak on behalf of all public land hunters. Public land hunters vary greatly in their position on many wildlife hunting issues which presents a challenge to the advocate to represent public land hunter concerns that many times conflict with other public land hunter interests and conflicting public land hunter desires for identifying acceptable resolutions.

The Game and Fish Department suggests, establishing a public land hunter advisory council instead of a full time FTE.

PD/njw