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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT



SPONSOR: Cisneros DATE TYPED: 01/25/02 HB _____

SHORT TITLE: Study NM Water Dilemmas SB SJM 27

ANALYST: Chabot

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY02	FY03	FY02	FY03		
			\$60.0	Recurring	General Fund

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files
 Department of Game and Fish (DFG)
 New Mexico Finance Authority (NMFA)
 Office of the Natural Resources Trustee (ONRT)
 Office of the State Engineer (OSE)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

This Senate Joint Memorial resolves that the legislative council appoint an interim committee to comprehensively study the state's water dilemmas. The committee is to recommend legislation to improve water policy and management.

Significant Issues

Water issues continue to come to the forefront of New Mexico policy issues. A growing population puts additional strain on existing resources. Water in the state is fully appropriated with little opportunity to increase the available resources. In addition, the region has experienced a period of better than average precipitation which maybe coming to an end. Lack of adjudications in most water basins and interstate compact water delivery requirements to surrounding states, particularly Texas, limit our ability to effectively manage our water resources. Native American water rights claims have not been resolved and may have a significant impact in many areas of the state. Endangered species, such as the Rio Grande silvery minnow and Pecos River bluntnose shiner, have created additional demands on river flows. Water quality issues, particularly in the water crossing

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the state line to Texas, causes concern in our ability to meet federal clean water standards. Finally, the state is under a United States Supreme Court decree to meet compact deliveries on the Pecos River and failure to do so may result in the court appointed river master taking control of the river.

A comprehensive water management strategy for the state must be developed if we are to meet all our legal obligations relating to water and its use. Statewide water policy is fragmented between four major state agencies and several smaller one, numerous boards and commissions and local entities. A comprehensive approach is a critical in managing our most critical natural resource and a formal mechanism, such as a interim committee, is needed to develop water policy. Hearings conducted during the interim will allow public input into the decision-making process in this critical area.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The interim Legislative Water and Natural Resource Committee had a budget for \$60.0 during 2001.

GAC/ar