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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Jennings DATE TYPED 2/11/2004 HB _____

SHORT TITLE Game & Fish Dept. Employee Salary Increases SB 554

ANALYST Aguilar

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY04	FY05	FY04	FY05		
	\$709.0			Recurring	Game Protection Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to SB2/FLR#1

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Department of Game and Fish (DGF)

Response Not Received From
State Personnel Office

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 554 appropriates \$709 thousand from the general fund to the Department of Game and Fish for the purpose of providing salary increases for game and fish law enforcement commissioned conservation officers, clerical, secretarial, and farm and ranch workers of the department.

The bill makes the appropriation contingent upon the department adopting a tiered salary schedule for all employees based on experience and job qualifications; and with respect to commissioned law enforcement officers, based on education, experience and risk. DGF is directed to request the state personnel office to reclassify commissioned officers or to assign them to an alternative pay band.

Significant Issues

The New Mexico Conservation Officers Association (NMCOA) has approached the department regarding concern surrounding the recruitment and retention of officers and salary compaction within the pay group. An investigation of concerns recognized a segment of employees who are being compensated at a salary that does not reflect their demonstrated performance in their current positions.

An approximately six month in-house evaluation of compensation and the duties performed by the officers was undertaken and a proposed resolution developed. NMCOA has reviewed the proposal and supports this plan. Additionally, several State Game Commission members and legislators have indicated their concern and the need to address this issue. As a result, the plan specified in HB 554 is being recommended to correct compensation issues among Conservation Officers.

DGF has not completed a study of salary issues in some of the other classified positions. The agency is preparing to work with SPO to determine appropriate classification changes if necessary. It will be important that SPO be involved in any reclassification efforts.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$709 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the game protection fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2005 shall revert to the game protection fund

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The legislature may wish to consider adding the following language:

Page 1, Line 21 after “provide” insert “*up to*”

Page 2, Line 4 after “secretarial” insert “*financial specialists*”

PA/yr:dm