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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2-21-07

SPONSOR Kernan LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB \_\_\_\_\_

SHORT TITLE Roosevelt and Lea County Weather Modification SB 1154

ANALYST Woods

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
NFI	\$225.0	Non-Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Companion to HB1133

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Office of the State Engineer (OSE)

Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)

New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 1154 seeks to appropriate \$225,000 from the general fund to the Interstate Stream Commission for expenditure in fiscal year 2008 for weather modification programs in Roosevelt and Lea counties. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2008 shall revert to the general fund.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

OSE notes that evaluation of the benefits derived from weather modification programs is difficult. Long-term data collection activities and subsequent analyses are required to evaluate the effects and impacts of weather modification programs. Existing staff of the OSE/ISC does not include weather modification (cloud seeding) expertise.

**SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

OSE suggests that because of a resurgence of weather modification research and cloud seeding operations throughout the western United States, motivated by increasing water demands and drought, the ISC expects a marked increase in programs under the New Mexico Weather Control Act. Weather modification is identified in the state water plan and most regional water plans as a potential source of new water supply. However, it is unknown whether any group(s) in Roosevelt or Lea counties may have developed a project plan and scope of work for the proposed weather modification programs.

NMED states that, according to the Lea County Regional Water Plan, “most of Lea County's water is pumped from the Ogallala aquifer, which has been significantly depleted since 1960. Lea County agricultural water uses are expected to double in the 40-year planning period. The region faces serious water-quality problems associated with livestock and the oil and gas industry.” The plan outlines a number of approaches to bring Lea County's growing demand into balance with its shrinking groundwater resource. One of these approaches is cloud seeding.

**CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

This bill is companion to HB1133 with respect to purpose; however, this bill would appropriate \$225,000 and HB 1133 would appropriate \$150,000.

**TECHNICAL ISSUES**

OSE indicates that, given the variability of the natural meteorological environment, great care must be taken in the planning, execution, and assessment of cloud seeding projects. New Mexico has previously funded a weather modification program in Roosevelt, Curry and southwest Quay counties in conjunction with a summer cloud seeding program conducted in the high plains region of western Texas.

**WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

OSE concludes that cloud seeding activities show promise in terms of development of alternate water resources. If this bill is not enacted, there will be no state support.

BFW/mt