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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/26/08

SPONSOR McCoy LAST UPDATED _____ HB 397

SHORT TITLE Ciudad Soil & Water Projects SB _____

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$100.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

New Mexico State University (NMSU)

Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 397 appropriates \$100.0 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University to support projects of the Ciudad soil and water conservation district.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$100.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

This request was not submitted by NMSU to the New Mexico Higher Education Department for review and is not included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY09.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

NMSU states:

- Ciudad SWCD is an independent subdivision of state government, led by a board of supervisors, the majority of which are locally elected. Local conservation districts are tasked with implementing programs to address local conservation needs. Ciudad SWCD serves Albuquerque and portions of Bernalillo and Sandoval counties.
- Ciudad SWCD has adopted an annual plan for fiscal year 2007-2008, which indicates that the district is actively working on projects related to forest health, community wildfire protection, bosque restoration, erosion control, watersheds, drainage, and maintaining land in agricultural production. The district provides guidance to the natural resources conservation service for implementation of the federal farm bill in the local area.
- Ciudad SWCD has a history of successfully implementing a variety of projects with funding from many sources in cooperation with landowners, other local agencies and organizations. Funds appropriated under this bill will increase the district's ability to leverage project funding from other sources.

According to the EMNRD:

- Since 2001, the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department has provided federal and state funds to the Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District to conduct forest health and hazardous fuel reduction thinning projects around communities and individual homes to reduce local fire danger and improve forest health. Although the appropriation indicated in this bill is not specifically directed to conduct forest health and fuel reduction projects, the district's capacity to conduct this type of work will be enhanced.
- This bill will likely benefit the Forestry Division's efforts to improve forest and watershed health, as well as reduce hazardous forest fuel loads in and around at risk communities within the Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District.

GH/bb