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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE

SPONSOR Martinez, W.K. **LAST UPDATED** 01/30/08 **HB** 534

SHORT TITLE Casamero Lake Watershed Restoration Projects **SB** _____

ANALYST Weber

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$30.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Indian Affairs Department (IAD)

Office of the State Engineer (OSE)

Energy Minerals and Natural Resources (EMNRD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 534 appropriates \$30 thousand from the general fund to The Indian Affairs Department to fund a youth conservation program to engage in watershed restoration projects in Casamero Lake.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$30 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY09 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Indian Affairs Department provides the following background information.

Casamero Lake is a Navajo Nation Chapter located about 50-miles east of Gallup, New Mexico and covers 47,230.66-acres¹. According to 2000 Census estimates, there are 549 residents at the Casamero Lake Chapter.

¹ See, *Casamero Lake Chapter Website*,

<http://casamerolake.nndes.org/default.asp?DomName=casamerolake.nndes.org> (visited Jan. 29, 2008).

The bill would provide funding for a youth conservation program for the Casamero Lake Chapter to engage in a watershed restoration program. Casamero Lake is located in the Rio Puerco Watershed which is, “the largest tributary to the middle Rio Grande basin. Covering nearly 7,350 square miles, it includes nine sub-watersheds that drain into portions of seven counties west of the greater Rio Grande Basin.”² Environmental conditions have caused the Rio Puerco to become recognized worldwide “as a severely impacted and degraded watershed due to the harmful impact of accelerated erosion. The river transports one of the world’s highest average annual sediment concentrations, resulting in decreased water quality and agricultural yield.”³

Energy and Minerals comments on the youth conservation programs.

The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) Act was passed into law in 1992. The Act outlines where YCC projects may be placed and who may sponsor a YCC project. Since 1992, the YCC program has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars to New Mexico tribes and pueblos. Hundreds of Native American youth have been employed through YCC, not only by Native American project sponsors but also by state agencies, cities, counties, school districts, colleges and non-profit organizations all across New Mexico.

The YCC Commission funds projects similar to what is outlined in this bill through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The RFP is based on the YCC Act and Rules, outlines the types of projects that may be funded, stresses the importance of including an educational component in the project and provides direction in developing budgets.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Are the funds to be used for a formal Youth Conservation Corps project or some other model?

MW/bb

² See, *Rio Puerco*, Environmental Protection Agency (visited Jan. 23, 2008)
<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative/2003/summaries/riopuerco.pdf>.

³ *Id.*