

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1-24-08
LAST UPDATED _____

SPONSOR Martinez **HB** _____

SHORT TITLE Rio Arriba Youth Environmental Conservation **SB** 271

Program _____ **ANALYST** Aubel

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$150.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY08	FY09	FY10	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
Total		\$0.1	\$0.1	\$0.1	See narrative	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Office of the State Engineer (OSE)
 New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)
 Youth Conservation Corps (YCC)
 Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 271 appropriates \$150.0 thousand from the general fund to the New Mexico Environment Department for the purpose of supporting a youth environmental conservation program in Rio Arriba County, including acequia restoration, cultural preservation and conservation activities.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$150 thousand contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general

fund to establish a youth program. If the intention of the legislation is to provide a one-time grant, then the appropriation would be non-recurring. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY09 shall revert to the general fund.

NMED notes that it does not currently have infrastructure to support youth conservation program activities. The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department has a Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) program coordinator and several staff that support its YCC funding efforts. If SB 262 is not amended to place the program under YCC, then NMED would incur additional operating expense to oversee this program under the Surface Water Bureau. Past estimates total \$130 thousand and 2 FTE.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has identified “alternative activities,” notably including summer and after-school employment opportunities for older youth, as a key strategy for preventing and dissociating gang involvement and for reducing youth-involved property crime.

PED notes that participation in service learning projects provides students the opportunity to learn about their community needs and engages youth in civic responsibility, academic curriculum and social action. Research shows that high-quality service-learning programs benefit students, schools, and communities (New Mexico Forum for Youth in Community, 2008).

The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) has awarded approximately \$289,798.99 in grants to several Rio Arriba County youth programs for projects that will be completed in FY09. Work projects to be implemented include fence construction, trail building, campground improvements, noxious weed removal, forest monitoring, riparian improvements, acequia restoration, cultural preservation, wildlife habitat and watershed improvements. YCC suggests that the \$150,000 appropriation contained in SB 271 for a youth environmental conservation program may be used to leverage existing funding to expand existing programs or to implement new programs to benefit local youth and communities.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The appropriate agency to administer the program is the Youth Conservation Corps under the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department.

AMENDMENT

Replace “New Mexico Environment Department” with the “Youth Conservation Corps within the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department.”

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The environmental conservation programs for Rio Arriba County youth would be curtailed.

MA/nt