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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Wallace **ORIGINAL DATE** 2/18/09
LAST UPDATED _____ **HJM** 61
SHORT TITLE "Native Plant Day" **SB** _____
ANALYST Hoffmann

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY09	FY10		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department (ENMRD)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Joint Memorial 61 requests the Governor designate the last Saturday in August "Native Plant Day" to showcase the natural heritage of plants that New Mexico provides for its residents and visitors.

Copies of the HJM 61 will be transmitted to the Governor and the President of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

House Joint Memorial 61 makes no appropriations.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The ENMRD reports that New Mexico plant diversity is very high with over 3,200 known native species, which ranks New Mexico as fourth in the nation for plant diversity (only behind California, Texas and Arizona). Approximately 100 species are endemic to the state and occur nowhere else in the world. All New Mexico wildlife species are dependent upon native plants

for habitat and forage; native range plants support the livestock ranching industry; all timber and other wood products are derived from native trees; and the cover of native plant communities protect soil from erosion and contribute to the health of New Mexico watersheds. Indigenous New Mexico cultures have relied upon native plants for a bounty of traditional foods and herbal medicines, and modern urban landscapes can and do conserve scarce water resources by planting hardy native plants that are naturally adapted to the arid environment of New Mexico.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The ENMRD notes that enhancing public appreciation of native plants could have positive performance implications by increasing awareness and public support for the Forestry Division's Endangered Plant Program. Several native plants, such as piñon, juniper, sagebrush, creosote, etc. have been mislabeled as "invasive species" by some private and public land managers in New Mexico. Enhanced understanding that these are indigenous (not invasive) species could help shift the focus of native vegetation management towards ecosystem and watershed health and sustainability.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Not enacting House Joint Memorial 61 would diminish the ability of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico and other nonprofit and public organizations to emphasize a particular day for the appreciation of native plants and to educate the public on the importance and desirability of utilizing native plants for landscaping and conserving and protecting the New Mexico flora.

CH/mt