

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 493

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .192103.2SA

Short Title: Geospatial Data Clearinghouse at UNM

Sponsor(s): Representative Stephen Easley

Analyst: Travis Dulany

Date: March 4, 2013 (revised)

Bill Summary:

HB 493 designates the Resource Geographic Information System (RGIS) within the Earth Data Analysis Center (EDAC) at the University of New Mexico (UNM) as the state digital geospatial data clearinghouse, which is to serve as a publicly accessible repository for digital geospatial data.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 493 does not contain an appropriation.

Fiscal Issues:

UNM received \$63,100 for FY 13 for the RGIS, and, as of March 1, the most recent version of CS/HB 2 contains an appropriation of \$64,600 for the RGIS for FY 14.

UNM reports that there initially will be no fiscal impact, as the activities mandated in the bill are currently being performed by the center. Also, any agreements with external entities would generate revenue for UNM, and agreements within the university would incur the administrative cost of transfers between departments.

Substantive Issues:

According to the UNM bill analysis:

- HB 493 implements the recommendations from a geospatial information sharing task force established by a 2009 joint memorial; and
- with formal statutory recognition as the state clearinghouse, EDAC will be better positioned to enter into agreements with data sources and clients.

According to the EDAC website, EDAC seeks to:

- serve the needs of various communities – including federal agencies, the state, and local and tribal governments – with regard to geospatial information science and technologies;
- bridge UNM’s academic units and the external communities they serve;
- facilitate and stimulate collaborations between:

- government agencies;
 - government and private organizations; and
 - universities in the region;
- strengthen graduate education to meet the increasingly complex resource management and decision needs; and
 - hire students to work with the center on its geospatial information science projects.

Also according to EDAC, RGIS seeks to:

- reduce state and local government expense by providing a convenient point of transport for geographic information of all types;
- provide public access to data via the internet to promote the use of modern methods of analyzing, managing, and utilizing geographic information through special projects, technical support, and outreach;
- maximize the value and utility of existing and new databases;
- enable effective responses to requests for information from government, legislative, private, and nonprofit entities through customized projects; and
- facilitate coordination among state agency staff, legislators, cabinet officers, key administrators, and other public officials.

Background:

According to EDAC, the RGIS program was created by legislation in 1988 and was designed, developed, and maintained by UNM, specifically EDAC and the Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

Committee Referrals:

HENRC/HEC

Related Bills:

None as of March 4, 2013