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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/14/13

SPONSOR Easley LAST UPDATED 02/23/13 HB 493

SHORT TITLE Geospatial Data Clearinghouse at UNM SB _____

ANALYST Hartzler-Toon

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY13	FY14		
	NFI	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act, Higher Education, University of New Mexico, Resource Geographic Information Center

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

University of New Mexico, Earth Data Analysis Center (UNM/EDAC)
 State Land Office (SLO)
 Department of Health (DOH)

Responses Not Received From

Department of Information Technology (DoIT)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 493 would codify activities currently performed by the Earth Data Analysis Center Resource Geographic Information Center (RGIS), and implement components of the state's Geospatial Strategic Plan (Jan. 2008), including the point that the Earth Data Analysis Center (EDAC) be designated as the state's GIS data clearinghouse.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The bill does not contain an appropriation. The RGIS received \$63.1 thousand in general fund appropriations in FY13. House Bill 2 includes a general fund appropriation of \$64.6 thousand for FY14.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to UNM, the RGIS' program mission is

- to develop and expand geographic information and use of GIS technology, creating a comprehensive GIS resource for state, tribal, and local governments; educational institutions; nonprofit organizations; and businesses
- to promote geospatial information and GIS technology as analytical tools for decision makers and researchers;
- to provide a statewide, central clearinghouse to avoid duplication of effort and resources and improve information transfer efficiency.

Further, the EDAC reports that there is a continuing need for (1) a far-reaching repository of New Mexico-specific, spatially-based information from varied and unique sources that minimizes duplication of resources within the state and (2) an organization that promotes the sharing and development of these resources, methods, and recognized standards in New Mexico. The RGIS addresses these needs by

- housing an ever-expanding clearinghouse (<http://rgis.unm.edu>) that contains spatially-based data;
- providing a site for other organizations to contribute to by linking their databases to the clearinghouse, preserving limited resources;
- investing and improving the clearinghouse interface, search features, and adopting national standards for metadata;
- participating in state and local government bodies, including the state's Geospatial Advisory Committee and Geographic Information Council;
- assists organizations in their applications for grants and funding; and
- expands instruction opportunities at UNM and other institutions.

Both the DOH and SLO note that the RGIS serves as the state's primary source for statewide geographic data and information. The bill would formalize this role, perhaps making it easier for the RGIS to enter agreements and generate additional funding support to expand the clearinghouse. Both agencies reported that a centralized geospatial data repository is particularly useful, allowing user agencies to focus on other priorities while relying on the RGIS staff and information to provide data and initial analysis of data.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The RGIS completes performance reports in its annual budget submission to the Higher Education Department (HED). For FY14 submission, the RGIS noted a significantly greater number of databases developed and enhanced in FY12, an increased number of new or revised datasets and related metadata was made available over the internet via the clearinghouse, and an increase in distinct, unique hosts served by the clearinghouse and the amount of data downloaded.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The law is silent on the relationship between the clearinghouse and existing Geospatial Advisory Committee, and this may need to be addressed.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The RGIS will continue to serve as the state’s clearinghouse for geospatial data, but not able to maximize its resources and potential for other funding and data agreements.

THT/svb:blm