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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Stewart **ORIGINAL DATE** 01/22/14
LAST UPDATED 02/04/14 **HM** 3/aHJC

SHORT TITLE Animal Poaching Penalties & Awareness **SB** _____

ANALYST Weber

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY14	FY15	FY16	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		NFI				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Game and Fish (DGF)

State Land Office (SLO)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of HJC Amendment

The House Judiciary Committee amendment makes the following changes to House Memorial 3:

1. On page 2, line 2, strike "hunters" and insert in lieu thereof "the population".
2. On page 2, line 3, strike "engage" and insert in lieu thereof "engages".
3. On page 2, line 3, strike "hunters" and insert in lieu thereof "individuals".

The changes are for style and clarity and do not change the purpose.

Synopsis of Original Bill

House Memorial 3 recognizing the negative impact of trophy poaching (illegally killing an animal for the most valuable part of its body) on legal hunters, the big game population, human enjoyment in the presence of animals and tourism. The memorial asks that the importance of wildlife in the state and the harm caused by trophy poaching be acknowledged, that DGF be requested to take steps to deter trophy poaching, to increase public awareness of issues concerning trophy poaching, and be commended for proposing stiffer penalties for trophy poaching. In addition this memorial asks that the governor be requested to issue a proclamation declaring a trophy Poaching awareness day.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No fiscal impacts are identified.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DGF reports that officers routinely find approximately 100 headless game animals each year. Conservation officers continue to patrol throughout New Mexico, investigating and prosecuting wildlife crimes. Department employees are also responsible for educating the public about poaching, presenting conservation education in the schools, hunter education and various public events throughout the year. The Department’s website and *New Mexico Wildlife* have spotlighted this issue, as well. DGF has implemented a five person special investigative team that focuses on trophy poaching and other wildlife crimes that have a significant impact on New Mexico’s wildlife resource. Operation Game Thief has been successful for over thirty years, providing a means to report violations of wildlife crimes 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Callers can remain anonymous and may qualify for a reward. Even with these efforts, poaching of “trophy” animals continues, often for commercial purposes.

MW/svb:ds