

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 and previously issued FIRs are available on the NM Legislative Website ([www.nmlegis.gov](http://www.nmlegis.gov)) and may also be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

**ORIGINAL DATE** 1/30/15

**SPONSOR** Hall **LAST UPDATED** \_\_\_\_\_ **HB** 98

**SHORT TITLE** Game & Fish Annual Report **SB** \_\_\_\_\_

**ANALYST** Elkins

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY15	FY16	FY17	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
<b>Total</b>		\$125.0- \$250.0	\$125.0- \$250.0	\$250.0- \$500.0	Nonrecurring	Game Protection Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Department of Game and Fish (DGF)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 98 amends Section 17-1-14 NMSA 1978 to require the director of the Department of Game and Fish and chairman of the State Game Commission to report to the Legislative Finance Committee, by no later than November 15 of each year, on the following five categories;

- The viability of New Mexico’s game animal, bird and fish populations, including the numbers and types of licenses that each population is anticipated to support in the ensuing five-year period;
- The types and numbers of hunting and fishing licenses issued for the previous year and the aggregate revenue generated from the issuance of each license type;
- The numbers of animals, birds and fish harvested the previous year pursuant to issued licenses;
- The various units of lands managed by the department, including the uses designated for various units, the condition of the various units of land, and whether any unit will need to be closed for rehabilitation; and
- Recommendations for any unit of land identified either as a unit needing additional land acquisition to enhance its ability to fulfill its designated use or as a unit of limited use that should be considered for exchange or for sale.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The department would need to design and implement harvest reporting processes for game birds, upland game, and fish. The additional reporting would require computer system upgrades, rule amendments, and large scale public outreach and education. The estimated nonrecurring cost is \$250 thousand to \$500 thousand.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

According to DGF, based on population assessments and harvest recommendations by the department's wildlife and fisheries biologist, the State Game Commission promulgates rules for the taking of game animals, birds, and fish, season dates, bag limits, weapon types, areas open for hunting, and other management parameters. To ensure that biologists can effectively and appropriately evaluate the variety of information needed to make management and harvest recommendations for various species, these rules have varying durations and effective dates.

Several license types are available over-the-counter or on an unlimited basis, such as small game, game birds, and fishing licenses. The department would have to rely on historical license sales and economic and social trends to anticipate sales on an annual basis. The species represented by these unlimited licenses are widely distributed and abundant; also fish are raised in hatcheries and stocked in streams and lakes. These processes and the need for flexibility, make it difficult to accurately anticipate the numbers and types of licenses that each population could support in a five year period.

Currently, Game Commission rules require mandatory harvest reporting for bear, cougar, deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, javelina, Barbary sheep, oryx, Persian ibex, turkey and furbearers, but no reporting requirement exists for small game, birds or fish.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The five categories the bill proposes DGF report annually to the LFC could be required as performance measures in House Bill 2, General Appropriations Act of 2015.

DGF could be required to make this information available on their website in addition to reporting it to LFC.

## **POSSIBLE QUESTION**

1. How will the information in this report be used?

CE/je/bb/je