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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/27/21

SPONSOR Chatfield LAST UPDATED _____ HB 77

SHORT TITLE Northeast NM Ground Water Resource Study SB _____

ANALYST Valenzuela

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY21	FY22		
	\$200.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

New Mexico State University (NMSU)
Office of the State Engineer (SEO)
New Mexico State Land Office (SLO)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 77 (HB77) appropriates \$200 thousand from the general fund to New Mexico State University for the cooperative extension service to complete a study on the quantity and quality of ground water in northeastern New Mexico. The work contemplated in HB77 would examine conservation-oriented agricultural practices that use data – water resources with soil, grass and animal health – to make informed rangeland decisions.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$200 thousand contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance shall not revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

According to the office of the State Engineer, the scope of the study may require additional resources because the aquifers in the northeastern part of the state are not well connected.

House Bill 77 – Page 2

According to NMSU, the geology that controls groundwater distribution and availability is complex and results in compartmentalized “bathtubs”.

Several research entities or state agencies normally perform these studies, such as the Bureau of Geology located at New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology or the Water Resources Research Institute at New Mexico State University (NMSU).

The appropriation in HB77 would be directed at the cooperative extension service (CES) of the NMSU College of Agriculture. CES may need to contract with outside experts – hydrologists or geologists – to complete the study.

MFV/al