



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

	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>	<b>3 Year Total Cost</b>	<b>Recurring or Nonrecurring</b>	<b>Fund Affected</b>
<b>Total</b>						

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:  
Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

### SECTION III: NARRATIVE

#### **BILL SUMMARY**

##### Synopsis:

House Bill 362 appropriates \$3,600,000 to the New Mexico State Board of Regents over FY26 through FY28 to develop a “Rainfall Enhancement Pilot Project”. Any funds remaining after FY28 would revert to the General Fund. The purpose of this project is to “demonstrate the efficacy of rainfall enhancement as a mechanism to mitigate the effects of climate change and drought” The bill directs the New Mexico State University to enter into a joint powers agreement with **Roosevelt Soil and Water Conservation District** to conduct the project. Reporting requirements include establishing forms and criteria for reporting data and record keeping and create a permanent record of all pertinent data. This requires annual reports to the legislative interim committee and a final report to the governor and legislature making recommendations for improvements to and the necessity of continuing the project.

#### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

Note: major assumptions underlying fiscal impact should be documented.

The fiscal impact besides the \$3,600,000 expenditure described in the bill is unknown.

New Mexico’s agriculture, with nearly 21,000 farms and 39 million acres, represents a significant contribution to the State’s economy. Cash receipts for all commodities in 2023 were \$4.0 billion, with livestock representing approximately 77% and crops representing 23% of total cash receipts. The raw commodities produced by the State’s farmers and ranchers are important inputs and drivers for food processing within the State.

Agriculture in the state is heavily reliant on water to support rangelands and crops. Summer monsoon rainfall, often relied upon for agricultural and ecological systems, varies significantly from year-to-year. With increasingly volatile weather patterns expected, season precipitation will become even more important.

To the extent the Rainfall Enhancement Project can increase seasonal precipitation and support range grassland, pastures, and agricultural production, the bill could have significant impacts on the state’s agricultural production and supply chain.

Note: if additional operating budget impact is estimated, assumptions and calculations should be reported in this section.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

## **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

The public interest, health, safety, welfare and necessity require scientific experimentation in the field of artificial nucleation, commonly known as rainfall enhancement or rainfall augmentation and the scientific efforts to develop and increase natural precipitation of rain, snow and moisture in any form contained in the atmosphere.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

## **ALTERNATIVES**

## **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

The Roosevelt Soil and Water Conservation District and NMSU would not be able to pilot a rainfall enhancement project and stakeholders would not know first-hand if rainfall enhancement is a viable option to support agricultural production in the state.

## **AMENDMENTS**