



HB22-1323

SHORT TITLE: Updates to State Forest Service Tree Nursery

LONG TITLE: Concerning updates to the Colorado state forest service seedling tree nursery.

SPONSORS: Representatives Snyder and Froelich/Senator Rankin

COMMITTEES: House Energy & Environment Committee and House Appropriations Committee

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: To upgrade and improve the state Forest Service seedling tree nursery to expand capacity and contribute to reforestation efforts

PROPOSERS OF THE BILL: State Forest Service, Nature Conservancy, Dept. of Natural Resources

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS: Entities needing to purchase seedlings for reforestation

BACKGROUND: Sponsors stated that the current facilities are outdated and in need of upgrading and repair. Also, with the reforestation needs in Colorado (and elsewhere) the nurseries are running out of seedlings before the year is up. Colorado is a major supplier of seedlings in the region. Some seedlings are not taking hold and growing, there are questions regarding drought and climate impacts; therefore, additional expertise on staff is necessary.

Is this bill necessary this year? Sponsors stated that the nursery is running out of seedlings as demand increases

How does the bill change current law? It increases the budget for the Colorado State Forest Service.

Does the bill affect the prior appropriations system? No.

How is the bill implemented? Through an increased appropriation for the Colorado State Forest Service. The bill requires physical upgrades and improvements in all areas of nursery operations, including the purchase of new vehicles and the addition of full-time nursery managers. The CSFS must contract with management and reforestation professionals to analyze the nursery's capacity and knowledge investments to better address reforestation needs in response to wildfire, flood, insect, and disease events. It is anticipated that the expanded program will lead to more revenue from sale of seedlings so that the need for GF dollars will decrease over time.

Practical Considerations: How long will it take to complete the facility upgrades and expansion? Where will this fit into the budget (it was not part of the Governor's budget request)?

Fiscal Impact: The bill increases state expenditures in the CSFS by \$8.3 million in FY 2022-23, by \$1.5 million in FY 2023-24, and by \$0.9 million in FY 2024-25 from the General Fund.