



COLORADO
WATER CONGRESS
INFORM | CONVENE | TRAIN | ACT

SB21-240

SHORT TITLE: Watershed Restoration Grant Program Stimulus

LONG TITLE: Concerning the transfer of money from the general fund to the Colorado Water Conservation Board Construction Fund for Watershed protection programs, and, in connection therewith, making an appropriation

SPONSORS: Senators Danielson and Simpson/Representatives Kipp and Catlin

COMMITTEES: Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: The bill repeals the Forest Health Advisory Council in the State Forest service and establishes the Forest Health Council in the Dept. of Natural Resources.

PROPONENTS OF THE BILL: Governor's office? Water and forest health advocates

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS: Dept. Natural Resources, CWCB, water providers impacted by wildfire

BACKGROUND: Forest health and watershed restoration was one of the major focus' of the Governor's budget for both recovery and stimulus spending.

Is this bill necessary this year? There is no deadline, but watersheds have been and will be impacted by wildfire.

How does the bill change current law? It provides additional appropriation to accomplish watershed protection and restoration.

Does the bill affect the prior appropriations system? No

How is the bill implemented? On the effective date the Treasurer is directed to transfer \$4 million from the General Fund and within three days transfer another \$15 million to the CWCB construction fund. \$500,000 is to be used for a statewide analysis of susceptibility to life, safety, infrastructure and water supplies to wildfire. \$10 million is to be used for grants. The CWCB can use up to 5% of the money to administer the program and up to 10% for technical engineering services to grantees.

Practical considerations: Can the work be accomplished by the deadlines in 2022? Can it make a difference this year to watersheds impacted by the 2020 fires?

Fiscal Impact: \$15 million from General Fund.