

Chapter 75

Miscellaneous Natural Resource Matters

Article 1

Rural Infrastructure

§ 75-1-1. Short title.

Chapter 75, Article 1 NMSA 1978 may be cited as the "Rural Infrastructure Act".

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-41-1, enacted by Laws 1973, ch. 333, § 1; 1983, ch. 173, § 1; 1988, ch. 28, § 1.

Cross-references. - For provisions relating to water supply associations, see 3-28-1 NMSA 1978 et seq.

The 1988 amendment, effective July 1, 1988, substituted "Rural Infrastructure Act" for "Water Supply Construction Act."

§ 75-1-2. Definitions.

As used in the Rural Infrastructure Act [Chapter 75, Article 1 NMSA 1978]:

- A. "agency" or "division" means the environmental improvement division of the health and environment department;
- B. "board" means the environmental improvement board;
- C. "fund" means the rural infrastructure revolving loan fund;
- D. "local authority" means any incorporated city, town or village, county, mutual domestic association, public water cooperative association or sanitation district whose water supply facility serves a population of less than ten thousand;
- E. "operate and maintain" means all necessary activities including but not limited to replacement of equipment or appurtenances to assure the dependable and economical function of a water supply facility in accordance with its intended purpose; and
- F. "water supply facility" includes the source of supply of water, pumping equipment, storage facilities, transmission lines, treatment works and distribution systems.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-41-2, enacted by Laws 1973, ch. 333, § 2; 1977, ch. 253, § 75; 1979, ch. 219, § 1; 1983, ch. 173, § 2; 1987, ch. 175, § 1; 1988, ch. 28, § 2.

The 1987 amendment, effective July 1, 1987, added present Subsection D, redesignating former Subsections D and E as present Subsections E and F, and added "whose water supply facility serves a population of less than ten thousand" in present Subsection E.

The 1988 amendment, effective July 1, 1988, substituted "Rural Infrastructure Act" for "Water Supply Construction Act" in the introductory paragraph; deleted former Subsection C, which contained the definition of "department"; redesignated former Subsections D and E as present Subsections C and D and changed the definition of "fund" in Subsection C from "water supply construction revolving loan fund" to "rural infrastructure revolving loan fund"; and added present Subsection E.

Am. Jur. 2d, A.L.R. and C.J.S. references. - 94 C.J.S. Waters § 241.

§ 75-1-2.1. Purpose of act.

The purpose of the Rural Infrastructure Act [Chapter 75, Article 1 NMSA 1978] is to provide financial assistance for the construction or modification of water supply facilities to local authorities which will correct demonstrable [demonstrably] hazardous or inadequate conditions.

History: 1978 Comp., § 75-1-2.1, enacted by Laws 1983, ch. 173, § 3; 1988, ch. 28, § 3.

The 1988 amendment, effective July 1, 1988, substituted "Rural Infrastructure Act" for "Water Supply Construction Act."

Law reviews. - For article, "Centralized Decisionmaking in the Administration of Groundwater Rights: The Experience of Arizona, California and New Mexico and Suggestions for the Future," see 24 Nat. Resources J. 641 (1984).

§ 75-1-3. Fund created; administration; emergency fund.

A. A special fund is created to be known as the "rural infrastructure revolving loan fund". Money appropriated to the fund or to the division to carry out the provisions of the Rural Infrastructure Act [Chapter 75, Article 1 NMSA 1978] may be used to make loans and grants to local authorities, individually or jointly, for water supply facilities. Appropriations made to the fund but not expended at the end of the fiscal year for which appropriated shall not revert to the general fund but shall accrue to the credit of the fund. Earnings on the balance in the fund shall be credited to the fund.

B. Ten percent of any appropriation to the fund or to the division to carry out the

provisions of the Rural Infrastructure Act shall be set aside for emergency grants and loans pursuant to Section 75-1-5 NMSA 1978.

C. All water supply facilities shall be designed in compliance with the engineering requirements established by the board after consulting with and considering the recommendations of the professional engineering societies operating in New Mexico. The board shall also establish, by regulations, guidelines for the ranking of projects for top priority based on public health needs.

D. The division shall administer the fund and shall make grant and loan disbursements in accordance with the Rural Infrastructure Act. The board shall adopt regulations to govern the application procedure and requirements for disbursing grants and loans under the Rural Infrastructure Act, including requirements consistent with the purpose of the act for determining the eligibility and priority of local authorities for such grants and loans. The division shall coordinate its application procedures and funding cycle pursuant to the New Mexico Community Assistance Act.

E. Receipts from the repayment of loans shall be deposited in the fund by the division, including receipts from the repayment of loans made pursuant to appropriations to carry out the purposes of the Water Supply Construction Act made prior to the effective date of the Rural Infrastructure Act.

F. Loans and grants made pursuant to the provisions of the Rural Infrastructure Act shall not be used by the local authority on any project constructed in fulfillment or partial fulfillment of requirements made of a subdivider by the provisions of the Land Subdivision Act [47-5-1 to 47-5-8 NMSA 1978] or the New Mexico Subdivision Act.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-41-3, enacted by Laws 1973, ch. 333, § 3; 1977, ch. 283, § 1; 1979, ch. 219, § 2; 1983, ch. 173, § 4; 1984, ch. 5, § 14; 1987, ch. 175, § 2; 1988, ch. 28, § 4.

Cross-references. - As to exemption of environmental improvement board from authority of secretary of health and environment, see 9-7-13 NMSA 1978.

The 1987 amendment, effective July 1, 1987, inserted "revolving loan" in the first sentence of Subsection A and rewrote the second sentence of that subsection; substituted "loan" or "loans" for "grant and loan" or "grants and loans" in several places in Subsection C; substituted "fund" for "general fund" in Subsection D, while adding all of the language following "department" in that subsection; deleted former Subsection E, relating to reservation of funds for emergencies; redesignated former Subsection F as present Subsection E; and made minor stylistic changes throughout the section.

The 1988 amendment, effective July 1, 1988, substituted "rural infrastructure revolving loan fund" for "water supply revolving loan fund" in Subsection A; substituted "division" for "department" in the first and last sentences in Subsection D and in Subsections A and E; inserted references to "grants" adjacent to references to "loans" throughout the

section; deleted "provided fifteen percent of any such appropriation shall be set aside for emergency grants and loans pursuant to Section 75-1-5 NMSA 1978" after "water supply facilities" in the second sentence of Subsection A; added a new Subsection B and redesignated the succeeding subsections accordingly; substituted "board" for "department" in the second sentence in Subsection D; deleted the former third and fourth sentences in Subsection D which read "Before adopting such regulations, the department shall consult with the division. The division may make recommendations concerning the development of regulations as it deems appropriate."; and substituted "the effective date of the Rural Infrastructure Act" for "July 1, 1987" in Subsection E.

Temporary provisions. - Laws 1987, ch. 175, § 5 provides for the transfer of all money in the water supply construction fund to the water supply construction revolving loan fund on the effective date of Chapter 175, July 1, 1987.

Laws 1988, ch. 28, § 8, effective July 1, 1988, transfers all of the unencumbered balance in the water supply construction loan fund to the rural infrastructure revolving loan fund and transfers all tangible and intangible items used in the administration of the Water Supply Construction Act to the environmental improvement division of the health and environment department from the local government division of the department of finance and administration.

Compiler's notes. - The Water Supply Construction Act, referred to in Subsection E, was replaced by the Rural Infrastructure Act, effective July 1, 1988.

New Mexico Community Assistance Act. - See 11-6-1 NMSA 1978 and notes thereto.

New Mexico Subdivision Act. - See 47-6-1 NMSA 1978 and notes thereto.

§ 75-1-4. Conditions for grants and loans.

A. Grants and loans shall be made only to local authorities that:

(1) agree to operate and maintain the water supply facilities so that the facilities will function properly over the structural and material design life, which shall not be less than twenty years;

(2) require the contractor of the construction project to post a performance and payment bond in accordance with the requirements of Section 13-4-18 NMSA 1978;

(3) provide a written assurance, signed by an attorney, that the local authority has proper title, easements and rights-of-way to the property upon or through which the water supply facility proposed for funding is to be constructed or extended;

(4) meet the requirements of the financial capability set by the division to assure sufficient revenues to operate and maintain the facility for its useful life and to repay the

loan;

(5) pledge sufficient revenues for repayment of the loan, provided that such revenues may by law be pledged for that purpose; and

(6) agree to properly maintain financial records and to conduct audit [audits] of the project's financial records.

B. Except as otherwise provided in the Rural Infrastructure Act [Chapter 75, Article 1 NMSA 1978], a loan shall be for a period of time not to exceed twenty years with an annual interest rate of five percent on the unpaid balance, unless, in order to comply with federal arbitrage requirements, the state board of finance upon issuance and sale of bonds appropriated to the fund specifies a lower rate of interest on such loan to match the interest rate upon bonds funding the project, and shall not exceed three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000). The repayment of loans shall be in equal annual installments.

C. No loan recipient eligible to receive a grant under the Rural Infrastructure Act shall receive grants in any one year totaling more than two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000).

D. The maximum assistance, including both loans and grants, which a local authority may receive under the Rural Infrastructure Act is five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000).

E. Plans and specifications for a water supply facility construction project shall be approved by the division before a grant or loan is made to a local authority.

F. Privately owned water supply facilities are not eligible for assistance under the Rural Infrastructure Act.

G. Grants and loans shall be made only for eligible items. Eligible items shall include the costs of engineering feasibility reports, contracted engineering design, inspection of construction, special engineering services and contracted construction. The costs of water rights, land, easements and rights-of-way; legal costs; fiscal agents' fees; and local authority and county administrative costs shall not be included as eligible items.

H. The division may make interim loans and grants to local authorities for contracted engineering services prior to approval of plans and specifications by the division.

I. In the event the local authority fails to make the prescribed loan repayment, the division is authorized to set water user rates in the area of the local authority's jurisdiction in order to provide sufficient money for repayment of this loan and proper operation and maintenance.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-41-4, enacted by Laws 1973, ch. 333, § 4; 1977, ch. 283, § 2; 1983, ch. 173, § 5; 1984, ch. 4, § 7; 1984, ch. 5, § 15; 1987, ch. 175, § 3; 1988, ch. 28, § 5.

Cross-references. - As to rural infrastructure revolving loan fund, see 75-1-3 NMSA 1978.

The 1987 amendment, effective July 1, 1987, substituted "Loans" for "Grants and loans" at the beginning of Subsections A and B; substituted "five percent" for "seven percent" and "fund" for "water supply construction fund" in the second sentence of Subsection B and deleted the former fourth and fifth sentences of that subsection, relating to limitations on the amount of grants; substituted "shall" for "must" and "loan" for "grant" in Subsection C; substituted "loans" for "loans and grants" in Subsection F; and added Subsection G.

The 1988 amendment, effective July 1, 1988, inserted references to grants adjacent to references to loans in the catchline and in Subsections A, E, and H; inserted "and maintain" following "operate" in Subsection A(1); substituted "in accordance with the requirements of Section 13-4-18 NMSA 1978" for "or other security approved by the department in the amount of the bid; and" in Subsection A(2); added Subsections A(4), (5) and (6); substituted "Except as otherwise provided in the Rural Infrastructure Act" for "Loans shall be made only for eligible items as defined in Subsection E of this section" at the beginning of Subsection B; added present Subsections C and D and redesignated succeeding subsections accordingly; substituted "Rural Infrastructure Act" for "Water Supply Construction Act" in present Subsection F; added the first sentence in present Subsection G; and substituted "division" for "department" in present Subsections H and I.

§ 75-1-5. Emergency loans and grants.

Ten percent of the proceeds of each severance tax bond issuance or other appropriation for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Rural Infrastructure Act [Chapter 75, Article 1 NMSA 1978] shall be reserved for emergencies and shall be allocated by the division only upon approval of the state board of finance. This amount shall not be deposited in the fund and shall be allocated only for emergency loans and grants. Emergency loans and grants shall be made in accordance with the applicable provisions for loans pursuant to the Rural Infrastructure Act; provided that a grant shall not exceed two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000). At the end of the third quarter of each fiscal year, the unexpended balance of the reserved amount may be transferred by the division to the fund for use in accordance with the Rural Infrastructure Act.

History: 1978 Comp., § 75-1-5, enacted by Laws 1987, ch. 175, § 4; 1988, ch. 28, § 6.

The 1988 amendment, effective July 1, 1988, substituted "Rural Infrastructure Act" for "Water Supply Construction Act" and "division" for "department" throughout the section.

Effective dates. - Laws 1987, ch. 175, § 6 makes the act effective on July 1, 1987.

§ 75-1-6. Average user cost reduction grants and zero percent loans.

A. No more than twenty-five percent of the proceeds of each severance tax bond issuance or other appropriation for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Rural Infrastructure Act [Chapter 75, Article 1 NMSA 1978] shall be reserved for average user cost reduction grants or zero percent loans to reduce average user cost to a reasonable level for eligible financially needy loan recipients whose water supply facilities serves [serve] less than three thousand persons.

B. Average user cost reduction grants and zero percent loans shall be allocated by the division in accordance with the provisions for grants and loans pursuant to the Rural Infrastructure Act provided that an average user cost reduction grant or zero percent loan shall not exceed two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000). Such grants and loans shall reduce only the principal and interest portion of the average user cost to a reasonable cost as determined by the division.

C. A zero percent loan or average user cost reduction grant shall be approved by the division when after construction bids have been received, the following conditions have been met by the local authority whose average user costs are in need of reduction:

(1) the construction project is designed using the most cost effective and dependable option;

(2) the system is designed with adequate built-in expansion capacity;

(3) other sources of grant funds have been sought and are not available in a timely manner;

(4) the project cannot feasibly be reduced in scope or phased, so as to bring it within available loan funds and within reasonable user cost; and

(5) the local authority's average user cost in need of the reduction is at least fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per month.

History: 1978 Comp., § 75-1-6, enacted by Laws 1988, ch. 28, § 7.

Effective dates. - Laws 1988, ch. 28, § 9 makes the act effective on July 1, 1988.

Article 2

Water Research, Conservation and Development

§ 75-2-1. Short title.

This act [75-2-1 to 75-2-5 NMSA 1978] may be cited as the "Water Research, Conservation and Development Act."

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-42-1, enacted by Laws 1975, ch. 265, § 1.

§ 75-2-2. Purpose.

It is the purpose of the Water Research, Conservation and Development Act [75-2-1 to 75-2-5 NMSA 1978] to provide means to seek solutions to water shortage, conservation and utilization problems through research, conservation or development projects for the benefit of the citizens of New Mexico.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-42-2, enacted by Laws 1975, ch. 265, § 2.

§ 75-2-3. Special fund created.

There is created a special fund to be known as the "water research, conservation and development fund". All money appropriated to this fund or accruing to it through gifts, grants or bequests shall not be transferred to another fund or encumbered or disbursed in any manner except as provided in the Water Research, Conservation and Development Act [75-2-1 to 75-2-5 NMSA 1978]. The fund shall not revert at the end of the fiscal year. Disbursements from the fund shall be made only upon warrant drawn by the secretary of finance and administration pursuant to vouchers signed by the secretary of the interstate stream commission for research, conservation or development projects of merit and potential benefit to the state and approved by the interstate stream commission.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-42-3, enacted by Laws 1975, ch. 265, § 3; 1977, ch. 247, § 201; 1989, ch. 324, § 40.

The 1989 amendment, effective April 7, 1989, deleted "and all income earned by the fund" following "grants or bequests" in the second sentence.

§ 75-2-4. Interstate stream commission; additional powers and duties.

In addition to its other powers and duties, the interstate stream commission shall:

A. meet upon the call of its chairman;

B. review and approve or deny water research, conservation or development project proposals submitted to the commission by institutions of higher learning, political subdivisions or other appropriate nonprofit research or development entities on the basis of potential merit, benefit to the state and feasibility;

C. adopt guidelines for project preparation, review, application and approval;

D. upon approval of a project, allocate available funds for such water research, conservation or development project, provided:

(1) no single project shall receive more than forty percent of the total available funds;

(2) no less than forty percent of the total available funds shall be allocated for conservation or development projects which have the potential of providing immediate solutions to problems facing the people of the state; and

(3) no funds appropriated to the water research, conservation and development fund shall be used for water distribution system construction, including, but not limited to, irrigation canals, acequias, reservoirs, dams or domestic or municipal water distribution systems;

E. adopt reporting and monitoring procedures for evaluation of research, conservation or development projects being conducted by recipients of disbursements under the Water Research, Conservation and Development Act [75-2-1 to 75-2-5 NMSA 1978], and, after making the appropriate evaluation of the project, make arrangements for termination of the project, if so indicated;

F. report annually to the governor and the legislature on the status of the various research, conservation or development projects, including a report on total funds expended under this act [75-2-1 to 75-2-5 NMSA 1978], including the amounts and sources of outside matching funds; and

G. expend no more than fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) from the water research, conservation and development fund for the administrative purposes of the Water Research, Conservation and Development Act during any fiscal year.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-42-4, enacted by Laws 1975, ch. 265, § 4; 1977, ch. 205, § 1.

Cross-references. - For provisions relating to the interstate stream commission, see 72-14-1 NMSA 1978 et seq.

§ 75-2-5. Acceptance of funds and donations.

The interstate stream commission may accept for the purposes of the Water Research, Conservation and Development Act [75-2-1 to 75-2-5 NMSA 1978] any federal matching funds or grants for water research, conservation or development projects and may accept similar donations and bequests from private sources for such projects.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-42-5, enacted by Laws 1975, ch. 265, § 5.

Article 3

Weather Control and Cloud Modification

§ 75-3-1. Short title.

This act [75-3-1 to 75-3-15 NMSA 1978] may be cited as the "Weather Control Act."

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-1, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 1.

Law reviews. - For article, "Weather Modification: Law and Administration," see 8 Nat. Resources J. 207 (1968).

§ 75-3-2. Definitions.

As used in the Weather Control Act [75-3-1 to 75-3-15 NMSA 1978] "commission" means the weather control and cloud modification commission.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-2, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 2.

§ 75-3-3. Declaration of rights.

It is declared that the state of New Mexico claims the right to all moisture in the atmosphere which would fall so as to become a part of the natural streams or percolated water of New Mexico, for use in accordance with its laws.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-3, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 3.

§ 75-3-4. License required.

No person or corporation shall, without having first received a license from the commission, conduct any weather control or cloud modification operations or attempt to control precipitation.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-4, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 4.

§ 75-3-5. Application for license.

Any individual or corporation who proposes to operate weather control or cloud modification projects or who attempts to induce precipitation, shall, before engaging in any such operation, make application to the commission for a license to engage in the particular weather control or cloud modification operation contemplated.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-5, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 5.

§ 75-3-6. Annual license fee; statement.

At the time of applying for the license, the applicant shall pay to the commission a fee of one hundred dollars (\$100), and shall file an application in the form prescribed by the commission which shall be accompanied by a statement showing:

A. the name and address of the applicant;

B. the names of the operating personnel, and, if unincorporated, all individuals connected with the organization, or, if a corporation, the names of each of the officers and directors thereof, together with the address of each;

C. the scientific qualifications of all operating and supervising personnel;

D. a statement of all other contracts completed or in process of completion at the time the application is made, giving the names and addresses of the persons to whom the services were furnished and the areas in which such operations have been or are being conducted;

E. the objective of the operation, methods of operation the licensee will use, and the description of the aircraft, ground and meteorological services to be used;

F. names of the contracting parties within the state; including:

(1) the area to be served;

(2) the months in which operations will be conducted;

(3) the methods to be used in evaluating the operation; and

G. any other information the commission deems necessary.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-6, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 6.

§ 75-3-7. Issuance of license.

The commission may issue a license to any applicant who demonstrates sufficient financial responsibility, to the satisfaction of the board, necessary to meet obligations reasonably likely to be attached to or result from weather control or cloud modification activities, and skill and experience reasonably necessary to accomplishment of weather control without actionable injury to property or person.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-7, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 7.

Unsound, detrimental or undesirable projects may be refused. - The weather control and cloud modification commission may refuse a license to conduct weather control and cloud modification activities in the state of New Mexico to an applicant who satisfies the requirements for a license specified in this section, but who proposes a weather modification project which, in the scientific judgment of the commission, may be unsound, detrimental or undesirable. 1971 Op. Att'y Gen. No. 71-53.

§ 75-3-8. License fee; expiration.

A license shall expire at the end of the calendar year in which it is issued and may be renewed upon payment of the annual license fee.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-8, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 8.

§ 75-3-9. Reports required from licensees.

Each licensee shall, within ninety days after conclusion of any weather control or cloud modification project, file with the commission a final evaluation of the project. Each three months, during the operation of any project which has not been completed, each licensee shall file a report evaluating the operations for the preceding three months in the project. Failure to file such reports constitute[s] grounds for immediate revocation of the license. Each evaluation report shall contain such information as required by the commission in order to aid in research and development in weather modification and to aid in the protection of life and property.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-9, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 9.

§ 75-3-10. Revocation of license.

The commission shall revoke any license if it shall appear that the licensee no longer possesses the qualifications necessary for the issuance of a new license, or is guilty of

a violation of any of the provisions of the Weather Control Act [75-3-1 to 75-3-15 NMSA 1978]. Such revocation shall occur only after notice to the licensee, and a reasonable opportunity has been granted the licensee to be heard respecting the grounds of the proposed revocation.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-10, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 10.

§ 75-3-11. Judicial review.

Rulings by the commission on the issuance, refusal or revocation of a license are subject to review only in the district court for Santa Fe county and the state supreme court.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-11, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 11.

§ 75-3-12. Operations affecting weather in other states.

Weather control or cloud modification operations may not be carried on in New Mexico for the purpose of affecting weather in any other state which prohibits such operations, or which prohibits operations in that state for the benefit of New Mexico or its inhabitants.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-12, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 12.

§ 75-3-13. Enforcement.

Enforcement of the Weather Control Act [75-3-1 to 75-3-15 NMSA 1978] is vested in the board of regents of New Mexico institute of mining and technology. The board of regents shall appoint a three-member weather control and cloud modification commission for the purpose of administering the provisions of the Weather Control Act. Technical assistance, research, evaluation and advice to the commission shall be furnished by the institute at the direction of the board of regents. The commission shall elect from among its members a chairman and other officers it deems necessary. All fees collected by the commission shall be placed in a fund to be used by the commission for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of the Weather Control Act.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-13, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 13.

§ 75-3-14. Powers and duties of commission.

The commission may:

A. make all rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of the Weather Control Act [75-3-1 to 75-3-15 NMSA 1978];

B. make any field investigations and inspections necessary to the enforcement of the Weather Control Act;

C. make periodic reports on weather control and cloud modification activities in this state together with evaluations of the results of such activities; and

D. make recommendations to the legislature through the board of regents on needed legislation in the regard to weather control and cloud modification.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-14, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 14.

§ 75-3-15. Penalty.

Any person conducting weather control or cloud modification operations without first having procured a license, or who makes a false statement in the application for a license, or who fails to file any report or evaluation required by the Weather Control Act [75-3-1 to 75-3-15 NMSA 1978], or who conducts any weather control or cloud modification operation after revocation of his license, or who violates any provision of the Weather Control Act is guilty of a misdemeanor.

History: 1953 Comp., § 75-37-15, enacted by Laws 1965, ch. 235, § 15.

Article 4

State Climatologist

§ 75-4-1. Office of state climatologist created; state climatologist.

The "office of state climatologist" is created within the New Mexico department of agriculture. The administrative and executive head of the office of state climatologist shall be known as the "state climatologist." The board of regents of New Mexico state university shall appoint and fix the salary of the state climatologist.

History: Laws 1979, ch. 192, § 1.

§ 75-4-2. Office of state climatologist; purpose.

The purpose of the office of state climatologist is to assist the state to understand and

respond to natural and man-induced climate processes and their implications, to cooperate with the federal government in activities relating to climate studies and advisory services, to promote and disseminate a general knowledge of the climatology of the state, to establish a state climate program in accordance with the provisions of the federal National Climate Program Act and regulations promulgated pursuant to that act and to receive and utilize grants made available to the state pursuant to the provisions of the federal National Climate Program Act and other grants, gifts, donations or bequests from any source to be used in carrying out its purpose.

History: Laws 1979, ch. 192, § 2.

Compiler's notes. - The National Climate Program Act appears as 15 U.S.C. §§ 2901 to 2908.

§ 75-4-3. State climatologist; duties.

The duties of the state climatologist shall include:

A. assessing the effect of climate on the natural environment, agricultural production, land and natural resources and human health;

B. coordinating climate impact studies and programs to improve understanding of climate processes, natural and man-induced, and of the social and economic implications of climate change;

C. developing methods and procedures to enable interested state agencies and public institutions of higher education to participate in the program;

D. disseminating climate data, information, advice and assessments to state agencies, local public bodies and the general public;

E. establishing an effective mechanism for consultation and coordination with the federal government and other states in climate related activities; and

F. administering the state intergovernmental climate program.

History: Laws 1979, ch. 192, § 3.

§ 75-4-4. Agency cooperation.

In carrying out the responsibilities enumerated in Section 3 [75-4-3 NMSA 1978] of this act, the state climatologist shall seek the assistance of the geophysical research center at the New Mexico institute of mining and technology, the remote sensing facility at the

university of New Mexico and other appropriate agencies and facilities for scientific support.

History: Laws 1979, ch. 192, § 4.

Article 5

Natural Lands Protection

§ 75-5-1. Short title.

Sections 1 through 6 [75-5-1 to 75-5-6 NMSA 1978] of this act may be cited as the "Natural Lands Protection Act".

History: Laws 1987, ch. 192, § 1.

Effective dates. - Laws 1987, ch. 192 contains no effective date provision but, pursuant to N.M. Const., art. IV, § 23, is effective on June 19, 1987.

Compiler's notes. - Laws 1987, ch. 234, § 82, effective July 1, 1987, recompiled former 9-10-10 NMSA 1978 as 75-5-1 NMSA 1978, but, since Laws 1987, Chapter 192 had already enacted Article 5 of Chapter 75, former 9-10-10 NMSA 1978 has been recompiled as 75-6-1 NMSA 1978.

§ 75-5-2. Purpose.

The purpose of the Natural Lands Protection Act [75-5-1 to 75-5-6 NMSA 1978] is the joint acquisition and protection of unique and ecologically significant lands in New Mexico by the state of New Mexico and New Mexico corporations.

History: Laws 1987, ch. 192, § 2.

Effective dates. - Laws 1987, ch. 192 contains no effective date provision but, pursuant to N.M. Const., art. IV, § 23, is effective on June 19, 1987.

§ 75-5-3. Definitions.

As used in the Natural Lands Protection Act [75-5-1 to 75-5-6 NMSA 1978]:

A. "committee" means the natural lands protection committee;

B. "unique and ecologically significant lands" are lands which:

(1) afford habitat for species listed as rare, threatened or endangered by the state or federal government; and

(2) are identified by the natural resources department as constituting the best remaining examples of native ecological communities that are otherwise unprotected; and

C. "corporation" means a New Mexico not-for-profit corporation whose primary purpose is the preservation and conservation of lands.

History: Laws 1987, ch. 192, § 3.

Effective dates. - Laws 1987, ch. 192 contains no effective date provision but, pursuant to N.M. Const., art. IV, § 23, is effective on June 19, 1987.

§ 75-5-4. Administration of the act.

A. The Natural Lands Protection Act [75-5-1 to 75-5-6 NMSA 1978] shall be administered by the secretary of natural resources in consultation with a committee consisting of the secretary of natural resources, who shall serve as chairman of the committee, the director of the department of game and fish, the commissioner of public lands, the director of the New Mexico department of agriculture and three public members appointed by the governor, one of whom shall represent the ranching or farming industry.

B. The secretary of natural resources shall present a list of projects to the committee based on priorities generated by the natural resources department.

C. The committee shall recommend lands to be acquired under the provisions of the Natural Lands Protection Act and, subject to appropriation for such purpose by the legislature, pay the state's share of acquisitions. No land shall be acquired unless a corporation jointly acquires the land with the state. A corporation must participate in acquiring a minimum of at least ten percent undivided interest in the land or the state cannot participate in the acquisition. Title to lands acquired shall be held as cotenants having undivided interests in proportion to the state's and the corporation's share of the acquisition and shall be held in the name of the state of New Mexico and the corporation.

D. Priority among projects qualified under the Natural Lands Protection Act shall be determined in descending order as follows:

(1) the degree to which the lands in question are subject to the threat of immediate alteration or destruction;

(2) the degree to which ecosystems in question are unduplicated elsewhere; and

(3) usefulness for teaching and research.

History: Laws 1987, ch. 192, § 4.

Effective dates. - Laws 1987, ch. 192 contains no effective date provision but, pursuant to N.M. Const., art. IV, § 23, is effective on June 19, 1987.

§ 75-5-5. Management.

A. The purposes of management shall be for education, research and preservation, provided that no use of the lands acquired under the Natural Lands Protection Act [75-5-1 to 75-5-6 NMSA 1978] shall compromise or endanger the natural attributes for which they were acquired.

B. The secretary of natural resources may assign responsibility for management of lands acquired under the Natural Lands Protection Act to the corporation which jointly owns the land.

C. The corporation shall be required to develop and submit to the secretary of natural resources for review a plan for the management of lands for which they are responsible. The secretary of natural resources, in consultation with the committee, will review these plans to insure compliance with the purposes of the Natural Lands Protection Act.

D. Lands adjacent to the land acquired under the Natural Lands Protection Act shall not be subjected to any regulation or restriction as a result of such acquisition [acquisition].

E. Access to the land by the general public may be restricted to visits conducted under the direct supervision of an employee or designated representative of the managing corporation.

F. The corporation shall annually pay to the state and its political subdivisions a sum equal to an amount which would have been paid in taxes, levies and assessments. This payment shall be in lieu of such taxes, levies and assessments.

History: Laws 1987, ch. 192, § 5.

Effective dates. - Laws 1987, ch. 192 contains no effective date provision but, pursuant to N.M. Const., art. IV, § 23, is effective on June 19, 1987.

§ 75-5-6. Acquisition of lands.

No lands or rights of access will be acquired under the Natural Lands Protection Act

[75-5-1 to 75-5-6 NMSA 1978] through exercise of the state's power of eminent domain or any other condemnation process.

History: Laws 1987, ch. 192, § 6.

Effective dates. - Laws 1987, ch. 192 contains no effective date provision but, pursuant to N.M. Const., art. IV, § 23, is effective on June 19, 1987.

Article 6

Endangered Plants

§ 75-6-1. Endangered plant species; definition; conservation; penalty protection; permits.

A. As used in this section, "endangered plant species" means any plant species whose prospects of survival within the state are in jeopardy or are likely, within the foreseeable future, to become jeopardized. Regulations passed by the natural resources department establishing a list of endangered plant species shall include those species listed in the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 or as that act may be amended.

B. The natural resources department shall conduct investigations of all species of plants in the state in order to develop information relating to population, distribution, habitat needs, limiting factors and other biological and ecological data, and to determine conservation measures and requirements necessary for their survival. On the basis of these investigations, the department shall establish a list of endangered plant species.

C. The department shall establish a program necessary for the conservation of listed endangered plant species. That program shall include research, census, law enforcement, habitat maintenance, propagation and transplantation. As used in this section, law enforcement shall be defined to be law enforcement for purposes of enforcement of the prohibition against taking, possession, transportation, exportation from this state, processing, sale or offer for sale or shipment within this state of listed plants or plant materials.

D. The department shall have authority to protect species of plants determined to be endangered by prohibiting the taking, possession, transportation, exportation from this state, processing, sale or offer for sale or shipment within this state of such species. Any person who violates the provisions of this subsection or any regulations issued pursuant to this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not less than three hundred dollars (\$300) nor more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or be imprisoned for a term of not more than one hundred twenty days or both. As used in this section, "possession" shall be defined to be possession of listed plants or plant materials for purposes of taking, transportation, exportation from this state,

processing, sale or offer for sale or shipment within this state.

E. The department may by permit allow collection otherwise prohibited by this section for scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation or survival of the affected species by transplanting or other means, but such permit shall not authorize any action that would violate federal laws or regulations.

F. The department may enter into agreements with federal agencies, other states, agencies or political subdivisions of the state, or with individuals for administration and management of any program established under this section.

History: 1978 Comp., § 9-10-10, enacted by Laws 1985, ch. 143, § 1; recompiled as 1978 Comp., § 75-5-1 by Laws 1987, ch. 234, § 82.

The 1987 amendment, effective July 1, 1987, recompiled former 9-10-10 NMSA 1978 as this section, without change.

Compiler's notes. - Laws 1987, ch. 234, § 82, effective July 1, 1987, recompiled former 9-10-10 NMSA 1978 as 75-5-1 NMSA 1978, but, since Laws 1987, Chapter 192 had already enacted Article 5 of Chapter 75, former 9-10-10 NMSA 1978 has been recompiled as 75-6-1 NMSA 1978.

Endangered Species Act of 1973. - The federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, referred to near the end of Subsection A, principally appears as 16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.