



## Legislative Council Staff

*Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature*

# Fiscal Note

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<b>Drafting Number:</b>	LLS 21-0927	<b>Date:</b>	April 20, 2021
<b>Prime Sponsors:</b>	Sen. Donovan Rep. McCluskie	<b>Bill Status:</b>	Senate Agriculture
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**Bill Topic:**                   **CREATE FOREST HEALTH COUNCIL IN DNR**

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**Summary of Fiscal Impact:**

<input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity

This bill repeals the Forest Health Advisory Council within the Colorado State Forest Service and creates the Forest Health Council within the Department of Natural Resources. The bill will reduced expenditures for the Forest Service and increase expenditures for the Department of Natural Resources.

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**Appropriation Summary:**           No appropriation is required.

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**Fiscal Note Status:**               This fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

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## Summary of Legislation

This bill repeals the Forest Health Advisory Council in the Department of Higher Education's State Forest Service and creates the Forest Health Council (council) within the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The council is comprised of 23 members including 6 state and federal ex officio members, 15 members appointed by the Governor, and 2 members appointed by legislative leadership.

The council's mission is to improve forest health in Colorado through a science-based, statewide approach focused on collaboration among public and private partners to mitigate wildfire, restore ecological health, safeguard communities, address climate change, support local economies, and protects recreational areas. The council is further directed to undertake activities as specified in the bill related to forest restoration and wildfire mitigation.

The DNR is directed to provide staffing, office, and equipment support for the council, which must brief the Wildfire Matters Review Committee annually and submit an annual report to the Governor. The council is scheduled to repeal on September 1, 2026, following a sunset review.

## **Background**

In 2016, the Forest Health Advisory Council was established to advise the State Forester on a broad range of issues, opportunities, and threats with respect to Colorado's forests. The 24-member committee is housed within Colorado State University and recommends legislation and facilitates collaboration on forestry, in addition to its advisory role. Program expenditures to operate the committee are around \$22,000 per year for meeting facilitation, mediation, and travel expenses. Expenditures are paid from the Healthy Forests and Vibrant Communities Fund, which is continuously appropriated to the forest service.

Under current law, the Forest Health Advisory Council repeals on September 1, 2021. Senate Bill 21-136, as introduced, continues the Forest Health Advisory Council through September 1, 2026.

## **State Expenditures**

The bill will minimally increase cash fund expenditures in the DNR and reduce expenditures for the Forest Service. DNR's expenditures will consist of meeting and travel-related expenses, in addition to staff support for research and meeting facilitation. This fiscal note assumes these expenditures can be accomplished within existing appropriations. The bill will reduce expenditures by approximately \$22,000 for the Forest Service from the continuously appropriated Healthy Forests and Vibrant Communities Fund

Workload will continue or increase for the state agencies participating in the council. This workload can be accommodated with existing resources.

## **Local Government**

For county commissioners and other local government members of the council, workload will either continue or increase to participate in the council. This workload can be accommodated within existing resources.

## **Effective Date**

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

## **State and Local Government Contacts**

Counties  
Information Technology  
Office of Economic Development and International Trade

Forest Service  
Natural Resources  
Public Safety