



Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

FISCAL NOTE

Drafting Number: LLS 19-0620
Prime Sponsors: Sen. Woodward

Date: January 9, 2019
Bill Status: Senate SVMA
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Bill Topic: WILDFIRE MITIGATION

- Summary of Fiscal Impact:
- State Revenue
- State Expenditure
- State Transfer
- TABOR Refund
- Local Government
- Statutory Public Entity

The bill confers additional powers to boards of county commissioners with respect to mitigating wildfire danger on state or federal land within or close to their territorial boundaries. The bill makes an appropriation and increases state expenditures for the forest restoration and wildfire mitigation grant program.

Appropriation Summary: The bill appropriates \$10.0 million to the Colorado State Forrest Service at the Colorado State University in FY 2019-20.

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

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under SB 19-037

Table with 3 columns: Category, FY 2019-20, FY 2020-21. Rows include Revenue, Expenditures (General Fund), Transfers, and TABOR Refund.

## **Summary of Legislation**

The bill permits a board of county commissioners to remove wildfire fuel materials from state or federal land within or close to the county's territorial boundary. The commissioners may use county staff or an outside contractor to remove fuel materials if those materials pose a substantial threat of causing or aggravating a wildfire, or where the state or federal government has failed to create a defensible space.

For FY 2019-20, the bill includes a General Fund appropriation of \$10.0 million to the Colorado State Forest Service at the Colorado State University for the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation grant program.

## **Background**

The Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation grant program is a competitive grant program designed to assist with funding community-level actions to reduce the risk from wildfire in the wildland urban interface (wui), promote forest health and the use of woody materials, and to encourage forest restoration projects. Grants may only be used on non-federal land. Applicants are required to have matching funds or in-kind contributions matching the value of the grant. No individual grant from the program may exceed \$250,000. As of FY 2016-17, the program has awarded nearly \$12.0 million in grants to 132 projects across 35 counties throughout the state.

## **State Expenditures**

This bill increases state expenditures by \$10.0 million in the Colorado State Forest Service for forest restoration and wildfire mitigation grants. It is unknown in which fiscal year these funds will be spent.

## **Local Government**

The bill authorizes a county to engage in forest fire mitigation activity outside of territorial boundaries, potentially increasing county workload and expenditures. The bill also makes additional funding available for local governments and other local entities for forest restoration and wildfire risk mitigation grants.

## **Effective Date**

The bill takes effect August 2, 2019, if the General Assembly adjourns on May 3, 2019, as scheduled, and no referendum petition is filed.

## **State Appropriations**

For FY 2019-20, the bill includes a General Fund appropriation of \$10.0 million to the Colorado State Forest Service at the Colorado State University in the Colorado Department of Higher Education. The appropriation is placed in the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program cash fund, which is continuously appropriated to the state forest service.

**State and Local Government Contacts**

Counties  
Information Technology  
Public Safety

Fire Chiefs  
Local Affairs

Higher Education  
Natural Resources