



Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control

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SB13-270, Concerning Funding for Certain Activities Relating to Wildfire

by Senators Nicholson and Roberts; also Representatives Coram and Fischer

The issues . . .

The issues related to the Wildfire Emergency Response Fund and the Wildfire Preparedness Fund that this bill seeks to address are:

1. The Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF) does not have a source of funding and has no uncommitted funds going into the 2013 wildland fire season.
2. The WERF authorizing statutes limit the Governor's discretion to increase the amount of aerial firefighting resources and handcrews to be made available to local governments when wildfire severity dictates.
3. A source of funding for the Wildfire Preparedness Fund (preparedness and suppression activities), other than federal mineral lease revenues needs to be identified. The last transfer from the Mineral Leasing Fund currently authorized by statute will be on July 1, 2013.

Note: Issue #3 was included as Recommendation #6 in the Report of the Lower North Fork Wildfire Commission, dated December 2012. "The commission recommends that a consistent source of funding for wildfire preparedness and suppression activities, other than federal mineral lease revenues, be identified."

What the bill does . . .

- Establishes the minimum amount of WERF that is available and authorizes the Governor to increase the authorized amount annually, at the time the Wildfire Preparedness Plan is released, or as needed if the wildfire season is more severe than predicted.
- Further authorizes the Governor to make transfers from the Disaster Emergency Fund to the WERF based on the Governor's determination that a disaster emergency is imminent.
- Identifies insurance premium tax revenues already collected by the State as the source of funding for the WERF and the Wildfire Preparedness Fund.
- Makes an appropriation of \$500,000 to the WERF for the 2013 wildfire season.
- Changes the date when the annual Wildfire Preparedness Plan is to be submitted to the Governor and the members of the general assembly from December 15 to April 1 of each year.

For more information contact DFPC Director Paul Cooke at 303-239-5865 or paul.cooke@state.co.us.

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