



Legislative Council Staff
Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

Revised Fiscal Note

(replaces fiscal note dated April 20, 2021)

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Prime Sponsors: Sen. Donovan Bill Status: Senate Agriculture
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Bill Topic: CREATE FOREST HEALTH COUNCIL IN DNR

- Summary of Fiscal Impact:
- State Revenue
 - State Expenditure
 - State Transfer
 - TABOR Refund
 - Local Government
 - 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 reduce expenditures for the Forest Service and increase expenditures for multiple state agencies.

Appropriation Summary: For FY 2021-22, the bill requires an appropriation of \$668 to the Legislative Department.

Fiscal Note Status: This revised fiscal note reflects the introduced bill, and has been revised to reflect new information.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under SB 21-237

	Budget Year FY 2021-22	Out Year FY 2022-23
Revenue	-	-
Expenditures		
General Fund	\$668	\$1,412
Centrally Appropriated	\$59	\$59
Total Expenditures	\$727	\$1,471
Transfers	-	-
TABOR Refund	-	-

Summary of Legislation

This bill repeals the Forest Health Advisory Council in the Department of Higher Education's (DHE'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 of the General Assembly.

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. The committee meets approximately once per quarter.

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 increase General Fund expenditures in the Legislative Department by \$727 in FY 2021-22 and \$1,471 in FY 2022-23. It also increases workload and meeting-related expenses for the Department of Natural Resources. These costs are summarized in Table 2 and discussed below.

Table 2
Expenditures Under SB 21-237

	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23
Legislative Department		
Legislator Per Diem	\$668	\$668
Travel	-	\$744
Centrally Appropriated Costs ¹	\$59	\$59
Total Cost	\$727	\$1,471

¹ Centrally appropriated costs are not included in the bill's appropriation.

Assumptions. The fiscal note assumes that the council will meet once per quarter, and that three meetings each fiscal year will require legislator per diem since they will occur during the interim. The fiscal note also assumes that meetings will be held virtually in FY 2021-22, and in-person in FY 2022-23.

Legislative Department. The Legislative Department will have increased costs of \$727 in FY 2021-22 and \$1,471 in FY 2022-23 to provide per diem and reimbursement of travel expenses for the two members of the General Assembly appointed to the council. This cost is based on per diem of \$111 and travel costs of \$124 per member for each meeting. Travel costs only occur in FY 2022-23 due to the assumption that in-person meetings of the council will not begin until FY 2022-23. Per diem and travel expenses are only provided for meetings occurring outside of the legislative session.

Department of Natural Resources. The bill will minimally increase cash fund expenditures in the DNR. 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.

Department of Higher Education. This bill will reduce expenditures for the Forest Service by approximately \$22,000 from the continuously appropriated Healthy Forests and Vibrant Communities Fund.

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

Centrally appropriated costs. Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. These costs, which include employee insurance and supplemental employee retirement payments, are estimated to be \$59 in FY 2021-22 and \$59 in FY 2022-23.

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 Appropriations

For FY 2021-22, the bill requires a General Fund appropriation of \$666 to the Legislative Department.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties
Information Technology

Economic Development
Natural Resources

Forest Service
Public Safety