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Fiscal Note

Drafting Number:	LLS 24-0424	Date:	January 15, 2024
Prime Sponsors:	Sen. Cutter; Jaquez Lewis Rep. Snyder	Bill Status:	Senate Ag. & Natural Resources
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Bill Topic: LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISASTER-RELATED PROGRAMS

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

The bill creates two programs to support local governments in wildfire risk mitigation. It increases state expenditures beginning in FY 2024-25.

Appropriation Summary: For FY 2024-25, the bill requires appropriations totaling \$448,082 to multiple state agencies.

Fiscal Note Status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill, which was recommended by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under SB 24-009

		Budget Year FY 2024-25	Out Year FY 2025-26
Revenue		-	-
Expenditures	General Fund	\$448,082	\$468,099
	Centrally Appropriated	\$34,366	\$42,957
	Total Expenditures	\$482,448	\$511,056
	Total FTE	2.0 FTE	2.4 FTE
Transfers		-	-
Other Budget Impacts	General Fund Reserve	\$67,212	\$70,215

Summary of Legislation

The bill creates two programs to support local governments in wildfire risk mitigation.

Slash removal pilot program. The bill directs the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) at Colorado State University to create a pilot program supporting county efforts to remove slash, which is the residue created by wildfire risk mitigation efforts. CSFS, in consultation with counties that already have slash removal programs, must select counties to participate in the pilot program and provide knowledge and resources to facilitate slash removal.

Post-disaster debris removal. The bill directs the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in the Department of Public Safety (CDPS) to provide guidance to local governments to facilitate debris removal following a disaster. This includes negotiating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency; developing standard forms and procedures; and ensuring that local programs are limited to residential, rather than commercial, debris removal. The department must publish this guidance on its website and update it as necessary.

State Expenditures

The bill increases state expenditures in CSFS by about \$290,000 in FY 2024-25 and \$280,000 in FY 2025-26, and increases expenditures in CDPS by about \$200,000 in FY 2024-25 and \$230,000 in FY 2025-26, paid from the General Fund. Expenditures are shown in Table 2 and detailed below.

Table 2
Expenditures Under SB 24-009

	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Colorado State Forest Service		
Personal Services	\$29,308	\$25,839
Operating Expenses	\$512	\$512
Grant Program	\$250,000	\$250,000
Employee Insurance and Supplemental Retirement	\$6,315	\$5,989
FTE – Personal Services	0.4 FTE	0.4 FTE
CSFS Subtotal	\$286,135	\$282,340

Table 2
Expenditures Under SB 24-009 (Cont.)

	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Department of Public Safety		
Personal Services	\$140,159	\$175,199
Operating Expenses	\$2,048	\$2,560
Capital Outlay Costs	\$13,340	-
Travel	\$6,400	\$8,000
Centrally Appropriated Costs ¹	\$34,366	\$42,957
FTE – Personal Services	1.6 FTE	2.0 FTE
CDPS Subtotal	\$196,313	\$228,716
Total	\$482,448	\$511,056
Total FTE	2.0 FTE	2.4 FTE

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

Colorado State Forest Service. CSFS requires 0.4 FTE term-limited staff to develop and administer the grant program beginning in FY 2024-25 until the pilot program sunsets in September 2027. Standard operating and capital outlay costs are included, and costs are prorated in FY 2024-25 for the bill's effective date. The bill does not specify the amount of grant funding or the duration of the slash removal pilot program. The fiscal note assumes that five counties will receive grants of \$50,000 each, for a total of \$250,000 in grant awards each year, subject to available appropriations. Grant amounts are at the discretion of the General Assembly.

Department of Public Safety. The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in CDPS requires 2.0 FTE beginning in FY 2024-25 to coordinate with the federal government and other stakeholders, develop guidelines for local governments, and provide training and other support to local governments. Any changes from stakeholder engagement will require updates to the guidelines, and this workload continues in future years. Travel expenses are included to conduct trainings as necessary with local governments. Standard operating and capital outlay costs are included, and costs are prorated in FY 2024-25 for the bill's effective date.

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 shown in Table 2.

Other Budget Impacts

General Fund reserve. Under current law, an amount equal to 15 percent of General Fund appropriations must be set aside in the General Fund statutory reserve. Based on this fiscal note, the bill is expected to increase the amount of General Fund held in reserve by the amounts shown in Table 1, decreasing the amount of General Fund available for other purposes.

Local Government

The bill increases revenue and expenditures in counties that receive grant awards under the slash removal pilot program.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

State Appropriations

For FY 2024-25, the bill requires the following General Fund appropriations:

- \$286,135 to the Department of Higher Education, and 0.4 FTE, for use by the Colorado State Forest Service at Colorado State University; and
- \$161,947 to the Department of Public Safety, and 1.6 FTE.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties	Forest Service	Higher Education
Natural Resources	Public Safety	

The revenue and expenditure impacts in this fiscal note represent changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year. For additional information about fiscal notes, please visit: leg.colorado.gov/fiscalnotes.