



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

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HB 25-1332: STATE TRUST LANDS CONSERV & REC WORK GROUP

Prime Sponsors:

Rep. McCormick
Sen. Roberts; Wallace

Fiscal Analyst:

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Published for: House Ag., Water, & Natural Res.**Drafting number:** LLS 25-1047**Version:** Initial Fiscal Note**Date:** April 18, 2025**Fiscal note status:** The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill creates the State Trust Lands Conservation and Recreation Work Group in the Department of Natural Resources to study opportunities to advance conservation, climate resilience, biodiversity, and recreation on state trust lands.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas in FY 2025-26 and FY 2026-27 only:

- State Expenditures

Appropriations. For FY 2025-26, the bill requires an appropriation of \$427,840 to the Department of Natural Resources.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts

Type of Impact¹	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27
State Revenue	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures	\$471,515	\$62,174
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	2.0 FTE	0.5 FTE

¹ Fund sources for these impacts are shown in the table below.

Table 1A
State Expenditures

Fund Source	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27
General Fund	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds	\$427,840	\$51,255
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Centrally Appropriated	\$43,675	\$10,919
Total Expenditures	\$471,515	\$62,174
Total FTE	2.0 FTE	0.5 FTE

Summary of Legislation

The bill requires that the executive director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) convene a State Trust Lands Conservation and Recreation Work Group to study opportunities to advance conservation, climate resilience, biodiversity, and recreation on state trust lands.

The workgroup consists of voting members with subject matter expertise and members representing stakeholder groups, as well as non-voting members representing the DNR, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), the Department of Education (CDE), and the Department of Agriculture (CDA). The DNR must appoint voting members by June 2025.

The workgroup must convene by September 2025, meet at least four times, issue an interim report by February 2025, and make final recommendations by July 2026 to the Governor, the General Assembly, the State Land Board (SLB), and the executive director of the DNR. The workgroup must be assisted by a professional facilitator, solicit public input, and engage subject matter specialists as needed including experts on the economy, landscape ecology, and climate resilience.

By October 2025, the SLB must review all existing parcels to determine if the lands are managed primarily to preserve long-term returns, review and update all existing stewardship trust management plans to achieve conservation purposes and required corrective actions, and report this and other pertinent information to the work group.

By December 2026, the SLB must consider the work group's recommendations and adopt an administrative policy or rules governing the implementation of conservation leases and related instruments on state trust lands, and a process to substantiate how the board balances revenue generation with conserving the long-term value of state trust lands.

State Expenditures

The bill increases state expenditures in the DNR by \$471,515 in FY 2025-26, and by \$62,174 in FY 2026-27. These costs, paid from the State Land Board Trust Administration Fund, are summarized in Table 2 and discussed below. The bill also minimally affects workload in CPW, CDE, and CDA to participate as representatives on the workgroup.

Table 2
State Expenditures
Department of Natural Resources

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27
Personal Services	\$202,458	\$50,615
Operating Expenses	\$2,560	\$640
Capital Outlay Costs	\$6,670	\$0
Professional Facilitator	\$200,000	\$0
Travel Reimbursements	\$16,152	\$0
Centrally Appropriated Costs	\$43,675	\$10,919
Total Costs	\$471,515	\$62,174
Total FTE	2.0 FTE	0.5 FTE

Staff

The DNR will have an absorbable workload impact in the current FY 2024-25 to begin the procurement process for a professional facilitator and to make appointments to the workgroup.

In FY 2025-26, the department requires 2.0 FTE Program Managers to conduct an analysis of all existing leases on Long-term Stewardship Trust parcels to determine primary purposes of those leases and review and update all existing management plans, and to conduct additional required research in support of the workgroup’s statutory charge. Staff reduces to 0.5 FTE in FY 2026-27 to provide final assistance with policy development and workgroup recommendations, and to assist the commissioners in adopting rules.

Professional Facilitator

The DNR will contract with a professional facilitator to assist the workgroup with all statutory requirements, analyses, and the production of interim and final reports. Based on recent projects of similar complexity completed by the department, this cost is estimated at 800 hours of contracted service at \$250 per hour.

Travel Reimbursements

The workgroup consists of roughly 17 members attending a minimum of four meetings. It is assumed that on average, six members of the workgroup will attend meetings in person and the remaining members will attend virtually. Costs for in person attendance include lodging, per-diem, and mileage.

Other Agency Impacts

The CPW, CDE, and CDA are required to provide representatives to participate in the workgroup. This workload effort can be accomplished within existing appropriations.

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 may include employee insurance, supplemental employee retirement payments, leased space, and indirect cost assessments, are shown in the expenditure table above.

Technical Note

The bill requires a detailed analysis of all Long-Term Stewardship Trust Parcel Leases by October 1, 2025. Assuming the bill takes effect in the current FY 2024-25, and that the DNR has acquired the staff capacity and professional facilitation necessary to begin this effort immediately on July 1, 2025, three months may not be sufficient to complete the work.

Effective Date

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

State Appropriations

For FY 2025-26, the bill requires an appropriation of \$427,840 from the State Land Board Trust Administration Cash Fund to the Department of Natural Resources, and 2.0 FTE.

State and Local Government Contacts

Agriculture

Natural Resources

Education