

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DNR 1/9/02

LRB Number	01-4244/3	Introduction Number	AB-695	Estimate Type	Original
Subject					
Credentials required for DNR foresters					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Bill Summary: This bill requires every forester who is employed by the department of natural resources (DNR) after the effective date of the legislation to have received a bachelor's or higher degree in forestry from a school of forestry with a curriculum accredited by the society of American foresters or an equivalent degree from a school located in another country. The educational requirements of this bill only apply to newly employed foresters. Current statutes do not require foresters employed by DNR to satisfy specified educational requirements.

Under current law, before a tree may be cut in a state forest, it must be marked by a forester who is in the professional series of the state classified civil service or by a DNR employee who is equally qualified due to having long, practical experience in marking trees for cutting. Under the bill, the marking must be done either by a forester employed by DNR or an individual who DNR determines to be qualified and who is under the supervision of a DNR forester.

Fiscal Estimate: There is no direct fiscal impact. Indirect costs could be incurred if the current state hiring freeze extends beyond the effective date of this bill, because a current recruitment process would have to be reinitiated at additional cost. This cost would be absorbed within the department's existing budget. Other indirect costs could be incurred if "supervised" in Section 2 of the bill is taken literally. Under current practice, a forester may direct the marking of trees by non-foresters (e.g. forestry technicians), but that forester may not be the non-forester's direct line supervisor. If the bill requires a forester to be the direct line supervisor of a non-forester in order to mark trees for harvest, work activities may have to be re-structured, or organizational changes may be required. Organizational effectiveness proposals currently being considered may eliminate this concern.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications