

Background

Two weather modification techniques are utilized in Colorado: ground-based wintertime cloud seeding and hail cannons. Cloud seeding involves attempting to increase the nuclei, or seeds, in the cloud in order to increase precipitation and augment snowpack. There are currently 8 active permits for cloud seeding in Colorado. Hail cannons attempt to disrupt hail formation so that the precipitation falls as rain rather than as hail. There is currently 1 hail cannon permit for an operation in the San Luis Valley.

State Revenue and Expenditures

Weather modification permitting is funded through 2 permitting fees: an application fee and a commercial fee. The application fee is \$100 and the commercial fee is calculated as 2 percent of the value of the contract between the project sponsor and the operator. Both fees are credited to the CWCB Construction Fund and are used to cover the direct costs of reviewing permit applications, holding public hearings, and monitoring permitted weather modification operations. Permits for cloud seeding operations are issued for 5 years. They may then be renewed for 1 additional 5-year period. All subsequent renewals may be issued for 10 years. Permits for hail cannons are valid for 1 year.

Under current law, the program receives continuous spending authority of up to \$25,000 through FY 2011-12. However, expenditures are dependent on the amount the program collects in fees. This fiscal note assumes that the program will receive the same spending authority for FY 2012-13.

Departments Contacted

Natural Resources