

FISCAL NOTE TO

[First Reprint]
ASSEMBLY, No. 2134

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 22, 1996

Assembly Bill No. 2134 (1R) of 1996 requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), in cooperation with the Division of Travel and Tourism in the Department of Commerce and Economic Development (DCED), to establish a natural resources inventory, using the Geographic Information System, for the purposes of promoting ecologically-based tourism and recreation in New Jersey. This inventory would contain information on New Jersey's natural, historic, and recreational resources. The bill requires the DEP to publish and make available to the public at all state offices, within one year of the date of enactment, a pamphlet describing these resources. The pamphlet would contain information on the location, available facilities and activities, operating hours, admission fees, parking fees, and phone numbers, together with any maps or indexes and any other information deemed helpful to facilitate the use of these areas.

The bill also requires the DEP to make the information in the pamphlet available on the Internet within one year of the pamphlet's publication. An appropriation of \$20,000 is included in the bill to implement its provisions.

The DCED estimates that it would incur the following costs to implement the bill:

<u>Cost Item</u>	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
Salary	\$22,000	\$5,000	\$4,000
Non-salary	<u>30,000</u>	<u>7,000</u>	<u>7,000</u>
Total	\$52,000	\$12,000	\$11,000

The salary estimates reflect manpower costs incurred by existing departmental personnel in carrying out the provisions of the bill. The non-salary estimates consist primarily of data processing, brochure development and distribution costs.

The Office of Legislative Services does not concur with the DCED's estimates because it appears that they are based on the assumption that the DCED, rather than the DEP, will be responsible for all or most of the brochure development and distribution costs. According to the bill, the DEP is the agency responsible for the development of the natural resources inventory only ".....in cooperation with the Division of Travel and Tourism....". The bill also gives the DEP total responsibility for publishing and distributing the subsequent pamphlet and other related information to the public.

The OLS therefore estimates that the bill's appropriation amount, along with existing staff and resources in the two affected State departments, should be sufficient to carry out the bill's objectives. It should also be noted that the bill could have a positive, long-range fiscal impact on the State's economy if more revenues from ecotourism are generated as a result of the information provided to the public concerning the State's natural resources.

This fiscal note has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.