



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE

COST ESTIMATE

October 1, 2004

H.R. 3176

Ojito Wilderness Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on September 22, 2004

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 3176 would have no significant impact on the federal budget. The bill would increase both offsetting receipts and direct spending, but we estimate that the net change in direct spending would be negligible. Enacting H.R. 3176 would not affect revenues.

H.R. 3176 would designate 11,183 acres of land in New Mexico as the Ojito Wilderness and would authorize the Secretary of the Interior, under certain circumstances, to expand that wilderness to include 118 additional acres of land. The bill would direct the Secretary to take into trust, on behalf of the Pueblo of Zia, about 11,500 acres of federal land. All of the affected federal land would be withdrawn from programs to develop natural resources. According to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), that land currently generates no significant income from such programs and is not expected to do so over the next 10 years. Hence, we estimate that the proposed changes would not significantly affect offsetting receipts (a credit against direct spending). Based on information from BLM, we also estimate that any increase in federal spending for land management, which would be subject to appropriation, would not exceed \$500,000 a year.

In exchange for the federal land to be taken into trust on behalf of the Pueblo of Zia, the Pueblo would pay to the Secretary the fair market value of that land as defined in the bill. The bill would authorize the Secretary to retain and spend amounts received from the Pueblo, without further appropriation, to acquire nonfederal property in New Mexico. Based on information from BLM, CBO estimates that the proposed transaction would increase offsetting receipts (a credit against direct spending) by up to \$500,000 in 2005. We also estimate that those receipts would be largely offset by an increase in direct spending in the same year, resulting in a negligible net change in direct spending.

H.R. 3176 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. Enacting this bill would benefit the Pueblo and would have no significant impact on the budgets of other state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Megan Carroll. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.