

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator, I'm informed that this is just for the two-year period, the third year to be considered by the Appropriations Committee and raised or lowered according to what they consider appropriate.

SENATOR DIERKS: Okay. There's a written note in here in the fiscal note that says that LB 108 allows NRDs to engage in a wide range of activities to manage the water resources. The bill also allows the DWR to assert specific powers based upon the course of action pursued by the NRD. Then it goes on to say, it must be noted that additional funds may be required if conjunctive use problems arise, and NRDs are unable or unwilling to take corrective action. I guess one of the questions I have and that it might be several questions. I'm going to ask a few of them and have you just respond to them as we get to them. Which...in...with what I've just read to you from the fiscal note, it does say there could be a need for extensive ground water mapping. Which government entity would be responsible for the payment of these professional services and drilling?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator, under the bill, the Department of Water Resources, if requested by the NRD, would probably end up doing the mapping or seeing that the mapping got done. It wouldn't necessarily be so.

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: As you know, no General Funds are provided for that currently because there's currently been no requests for that. It's possible to fund it out of General Funds. However, what we've explored, at great length actually, with the Environmental Trust, is whether they have authority to fund these types of studies and whether, if they do have the authority, they would be willing to do so. And the answer was, yes, and, yes, they do have the authority and they are interested in funding these kinds of studies.

SENATOR DIERKS: Okay. That was going to be one of my questions, so...

SENATOR BEUTLER: And as you know, the Environmental Trust gets several million dollars a year and will be getting more a little...a year or two from now. I anticipate that they will have...