

expect that the cost could be tremendously higher than what you and what Senator Elmer suggested to me the other day. So I'm concerned about the unfunded mandates that we're placing on the NRDs. I think we've even got some unfunded mandates in this bill on the Department of Water Resources, and that's another point I wanted to ask you about on the bill. On page 73, you talk about the Interrelated Water Management Fund is created, but there's no money coming to that fund. I mean you provide for gifts and funds...fees and donations, bequests, or specifically appropriated money. But there's nothing in this bill, in this A bill, that provides funding for this Interrelated Water Management Fund. How do you...how do you explain that? I'd like for you to take some time to tell me about that. I'd like it for the record, Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Sure. The Interrelated Water Management Fund doesn't need funding right now, Senator, but it was thought to be a good idea to put the mechanism in place, so that at such point in time, if it should come where we wanted to augment or substitute or use General Funds for the purpose of doing studies, that it could be done...

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...through the use of this particular fund, and that was the reason that that was suggested.

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Beutler, your light is next.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Just one...let me extend my answer to you, Senator Dierks, in one respect, with regard to unfunded mandates on the NRDs. Remember that there are three...three situations here that could evolve. One would involve conflicts within an NRD. The NRD controls what happens there entirely and so if they feel they don't have enough money or don't want to spend their own money for that purpose, they may choose not to do so. Likewise if there are conflicts between one NRD and another...or I should not say between the NRD but between users in one NRD and users in another NRD, again all of the NRDs that geographically are connected to that dispute must agree, all of them, in order to expend their own funds for that purpose. So there could not be an unfunded mandate in either of those situations. The third situation that remains is, of course, the one where there is a conflict between users in the state and