

*Natural Resources*

**HB 1014**

**Brief Description:** *Preserving appropriated funds and interest earned in the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account.*

**Sponsors:** *Representatives Pennington, Mielke, Buck and Jackley.*

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- *Requires unexpended funds in the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account to remain in the account instead of lapsing into the state general fund.*
- *Credits interest earned on moneys in the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account to that account rather than the state general fund.*

**Hearing Date:** *1/22/01*

**Staff:** *Bill Lynch (786-7092).*

**Background:**

*Most forest landowners pay a forest protection assessment to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to protect their property from fire. In addition to this assessment, most forest landowners also pay into the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account.*

*Moneys from the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account are used to pay for emergency fire suppression costs for fires caused by the operations of landowners who pay into the fund. Annual assessments are paid into this account by participating landowners at a rate established by DNR. When establishing the assessments, DNR is directed to seek a balance in the account of three million dollars. The assessments for emergency fire*

*suppression may be adjusted annually by DNR subject to statutory caps.*

*The annual assessment that may be imposed by DNR for emergency fire suppression differs by the amount of acreage owned. Landowners who own parcels of 50 acres or less pay a flat fee assessment of no more than \$7.50. Landowners owning parcels of more than 50 acres pay the flat fee assessment of no more than \$7.50, plus a per acre assessment for every acre over 50 acres not to exceed 15 cents per acre.*

*Although moneys in the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account are not subject to appropriation by the Legislature, moneys that are not expended prior to the end of the biennium in which they were collected lapse into the state general fund. None of the interest earned from money in this account are credited to the account.*

***Summary of Bill:***

*Moneys in the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account which are not expended before the end of the biennium in which they were collected remain in the account instead of lapsing into the state general fund. Interest earned on moneys in the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account is credited to that account.*

***Effective Date:*** *Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.*

***Appropriation:*** *None.*

***Fiscal Note:*** *Not Requested.*