



# Tamarisk Coalition Newsletter

December 2006

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## Next Issue

Our February newsletter will concentrate on volunteer projects.

If you or your organization has a project to share with us please send a descriptive paragraph and picture to [ctate@tamariskcoalition.org](mailto:ctate@tamariskcoalition.org).

## 2006 Tamarisk Research Conference

If you were unable to attend please visit the following website to download presentations and abstracts:

[http://www.weedcenter.org/tamarisk\\_conf\\_06/conference\\_home.html](http://www.weedcenter.org/tamarisk_conf_06/conference_home.html)

## Contact Us

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## Happy Holidays from the Tamarisk Coalition!

We have been working hard this year to provide education, technical assistance, and coordinating support to you and your organization for the restoration of riparian lands. Though it's hard to leave 2006 and all of our past accomplishments behind, momentum is building and we're excited to make new strides against tamarisk in 2007. The future looks very bright.

## Colorado Mapping

Over 78,000 acres, 1,400 miles and innumerable humus veggie wraps later, the Tamarisk Coalition has mapped the tamarisk infestations along all the major river systems in Colorado...and we're still feeling a bit queasy (note professional mapper Mac's face at right). Have you ever tried to evaluate a tamarisk strewn landscape, operate a laptop, and scribble in a field notebook while your slightly devious friend/co-worker drives on winding back roads, over mountain passes, or rows down class II white water? Let's just say that it's the kind of fun that leaves you a bit weak in the knees.



None-the-less, we have succeeded in implementing an inventory protocol that provides a good understanding of 85 to 90 percent of the tamarisk infestation in Colorado but is also economical to perform. The data produced provides "planning-level" information that can support state, federal, and local policy decisions concerning tamarisk control and riparian restoration efforts.

To provide such a thorough understanding of tamarisk infestations, a comprehensive data set was collected. This data includes the location, accessibility, maturity, acreage, canopy cover, percent upland (amount of vegetation in xeric habitats), average height, photo points, and average density of tamarisk infestations (gasp). Yes, it is quite a mouthful. These records are compatible with, and currently being incorporated into, the USGS national invasive species database system ([www.niiss.org](http://www.niiss.org)) and provide essential information for developing effective cost estimates for control and revegetation, while improving knowledge of impacts such as water losses and wildlife habitat effects.

Tamarisk infestations were mapped by the Coalition on the Arkansas, Colorado, Purgatory, White, Gunnison, Uncompahgre, Dolores, San Juan, Republican, and

## Meet the Staff

Elyse Scouting a Volunteer Project



Tim working hard



Jessie and Clark with a lopper and a weed wrench



Christy clicking away



John points out the San Juan watershed



South Platte watersheds including major tributaries of each. The Yampa River watershed was mapped under an agreement with the National Park Service at Dinosaur National Monument. The North Platte and Rio Grande watersheds have minimum infestations that were assessed based on local weed managers' input but were not directly surveyed. Over the next two months this information will be downloadable directly from our website under "Mapping" beneath the "Projects" section. Funding for this work was primarily provided by the Colorado Water Conservation Board.

Currently we are searching for grant opportunities to fund a mapping training course that will share this efficient and effective technique with western land managers, private companies, and other stakeholders.

## San Juan Watershed Woody-Invasives Initiative Plan

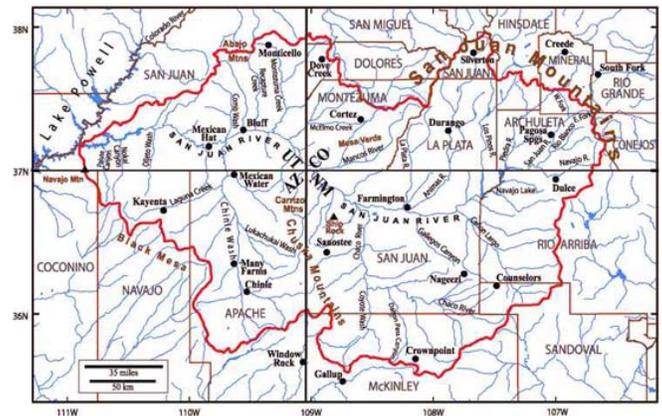
As troublesome as tamarisk are, they can bring diverse parties to the same table faster than Thanksgiving dinner. This year over fifty partners representing four adjoining states and four tribal units formed a unique alliance to formulate a tamarisk and Russian olive control plan for the San Juan Watershed (shown below in Figure 1).

This Strategic Plan provides restoration goals for river ways in the San Juan Watershed, guidelines for management, and coordination for all partners in the regional area. It also creates a template structure useful to smaller watershed divisions in the San Juan Watershed as it can be modified to suit the needs of each unique community.

Information provided in the Strategic Plan to support planning for woody-invasive management projects was developed through the leadership of Dr. Catherine Ortega, director of the San Juan Institute of Natural and Cultural Resources at Fort Lewis College, and includes the following:

- GIS mapping uses
- Classifying levels of infestation
- Development of work plans
- Database maintenance
- Coordinating with state plans
- Determining priorities
- Physical integrity assessment of proposed projects
- Methods of Control
- Project Costs
- Working with Landowners
- Long-term Monitoring and Maintenance
- Education and Research Opportunities
- Consideration of Federal Laws

Fig. 1. San Juan Watershed in AZ, CO, NM,



## Meet the Mascots

Chewbacca



Ghoti



The wisdom captured in this document and updates will allow the San Juan watershed stakeholders to reach their goals while blazing a pathway through the tamarisk labyrinth. For more information or to view the full text, visit [www.southwestcoloradowetlands.org](http://www.southwestcoloradowetlands.org).

## Rio Grande Institute

President Avila Camacho of Mexico and Franklin Roosevelt of the United States were ahead of their time when they proposed the creation of a “Peace Park” to initiate binational conservation back in 1940. Over half a decade later in 1999, a meeting between US Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and correlating Mexican official Julia Carabias, allowed the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to tackle the issue by instigating riparian restoration discussions for the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo watersheds in both the U.S. and Mexico.

These trailblazing efforts allowed the Rio Grande Institute (RGI) to enter the fray in 2004. The RGI, with the support of the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), created a binational labor crew (shown at right) to treat tamarisk with herbicide on both sides of the Rio Grande through Boquillas and Colorado Canyons. These manual projects have been very successful and were supported by a network of scientists and stakeholders coordinated by the WWF and RGI. Up to 95% of tamarisk have been removed along 33 miles of Boquillas Canyon and efforts to enter and restore Colorado Canyon are in progress.



In 2005 the EPA helped RGI to host a workshop in Indian Hot Springs for landowners and experts to discuss the impacts of tamarisk, control techniques, and costs of sustainably managing the issue. The seminar recognized the necessity of locally practical solutions to the tamarisk problem. Currently the RGI and the Chihuahuan Desert Resource Conservation and Development Area (CDRC&D) are working to identify and employ suitable tamarisk control plans. Many management options, such as the introduction of biological control or large scale aerial herbicide applications, require further negotiations with Mexican authorities; these are being handled by the IBWC.

There are two upcoming binational RGI workshops; one to address scientific issues and protocols the other for policy and management agreements. Both seminars will draft cooperative agreements regulating the future use of biological control and herbicide on the Rio Grande. Such exercises can only serve to strengthen U.S./Mexican communication and cooperation concerning tamarisk control. For more information concerning these activities visit [www.riogrande.org](http://www.riogrande.org).

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## Funding the Tamarisk Coalition

As a non-profit, the Tamarisk Coalition struggles constantly to fund its efforts to restore western river ways. We are hitting our stride and need **YOUR help** to continue our efforts. A membership package should have reached you last month – please take the time to send in your membership dues if you haven't already. If you did not receive a membership package, please contact us at [cduncan@tamariskcoalition.org](mailto:cduncan@tamariskcoalition.org) and we will provide one promptly. You're continued membership is essential for the **Tamarisk Coalition to facilitate tamarisk control efforts and the long-term reestablishment of native vegetation along the West's rivers and streams.**

Happy trails,

*Tim Carlson*

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