



# Tamarisk Coalition Newsletter

March 2008

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Help support the Tamarisk Coalition!

## Contact Us

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Grand Junction, CO 81502

## *Exciting Changes at the Tamarisk Coalition*

The Tamarisk Coalition is going through some exciting changes this spring. We would like to welcome Stacy Kolegas as the new Executive Director for the organization! Tim Carlson, our former Executive Director, has switched positions and is now our Research and Policy Director. Stacy has been training with Tim for the past three months. She has her bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies and Art from Illinois Wesleyan University and has worked with environmental non-profits and locals government for the past five years. Stacy served as the Executive Director at Yampatika, an environmental education non-profit in Steamboat Springs, CO. Stacy describes her new role, "Among other areas, I will be focusing on enhancing our fundraising program and updating our strategic plan. I am so excited to be a part of the team and work with the staff, board, volunteers and partners to support the Tamarisk Coalition's mission."

## *Thank You Lion's Club*

The Grand Junction Lion's Club has graciously awarded the Tamarisk Coalition a \$10,000 grant to install interpretive signs and related amenities at Watson Island. Tamarisk Coalition Volunteers helped us celebrate by participating in the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Lion's Club Carnival Parade. Thank you, volunteers for your participation and enthusiasm! Special thanks to Andrea Hildebrandt for making the fabulous tamarisk headdresses!



(L to R) Darrel Schweitzer, Andrea Hildebrandt, Kim Woynowskie, Tim Carlson, Max Barnstead, Judith Barnstead, Stacy Kolegas

## Meet the Staff

Stacy Kolegas



Tim Carlson



John Heideman



Clark Tate



Nate Ament



Meredith Swett



### *Board of Directors Member Update*

The Tamarisk Coalition would like to recognize **John Redifer** and **Joe DiTomaso** for their service on the Board of Directors. We would like to thank them for their dedication and support of the Tamarisk Coalition.

The Tamarisk Coalition would like to welcome a new board member, **Terry Nelson**. Terry is a Senior Engineer with Tri-State Generation and Transmission in Westminster, CO. We are excited to add his experience and enthusiasm to the Tamarisk Coalition Board.

*The Tamarisk Coalition can earn a donation every time you search the Internet and shop online!!!*

GoodSearch & GoodShop



Search the web with Yahoo-powered **GoodSearch.com** and they'll donate a penny to your cause each time you search!

Shop at more than 600 **GoodShop.com** merchants including Amazon, Best Buy, Toys R Us, and others, and a percentage of each purchase will go to our cause!

### *Spring Volunteer Season Kicks off March 21<sup>st</sup> at Watson Island*

We hope everyone has gotten a chance to stroll around Watson Island during the recent warm weather and check out the AMAZING progress our fabulous volunteers and the hardworking crews of the Western Colorado Conservation Corp have made. We will be removing the last bits of tamarisk and some Siberian elm on Saturday March 21<sup>st</sup>. In addition, we will use some of the chipped tamarisk and Russian olive that we cut last fall to construct some soft trails. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Meredith ([mswett@tamariskcoalition.org](mailto:mswett@tamariskcoalition.org) or 256-7400) and she will get you the details.

Can't join us on the 21<sup>st</sup>? Never fear! We have several great volunteer events planned this spring. We will be planting native willows and cottonwoods at Leatha Jean Stassen SWA in April and have two projects in McInnis Canyons planned for May. Check out our website or contact Meredith for more details.

Christy Duncan



Sarahlee Lawrence



### ***2009 Tamarisk and Russian Olive Research Conference***

Experts on Tamarisk and Russian olive from all over the country headed to Reno, NV in February for the 2009 Tamarisk and Russian Olive Research Conference hosted by the Tamarisk Coalition and Colorado State University. The conference featured two days of presentations of the latest science on these invasive species and their impacts on riparian ecosystems. If you would like to learn more, please visit the conference website (coming soon...check out the Tamarisk Coalition website for a link.) The conference website will feature abstracts of all of the talks and posters as well as video of the presentations- it will be just like you were in Reno, only without the slot machines!



### ***Tamarisk Coalition Hits the Rivers to Study Biological Control***

Biological control, or bio-control, uses specific organisms to control an undesirable organism, in this case tamarisk. *D. elongata*, or the tamarisk leaf beetle, aids in the control tamarisk by repeatedly defoliating the plant over several years and eventually killing it. After well over a decade of testing, the beetles were first released near Grand Junction in 2004. Now the tamarisk biological control agent, *Diorhabda elongata*, is providing an active ecosystem experiment across the Upper Colorado Plateau on over 2,000 miles of rivers and their tributaries. Many diverse stakeholders in the tamarisk issue, from private landowners to government agencies, are very interested to know what the short and long term ecosystem responses to these beetles will be.

In 2007, the Tamarisk Coalition, in partnership with the Colorado Department of Agriculture's Palisade Insectary, identified the need to determine the value and impacts of the beetle activity and began monitoring beetle populations on the

## Meet the Mascots

Chewbacca



Ghoti



Corvus



Sierra



Colorado and Green Rivers. The Tamarisk Coalition expanded their beetle monitoring efforts in 2008 across a newly expanded beetle range. This February, the Tamarisk Coalition was awarded a grant to undertake a more comprehensive monitoring effort characterizing diverse ecosystem changes that may accompany the *Diorhabda* beetles. Tamarisk Coalition field crews will spend late May to early September systematically measuring beetle activity and vegetative responses in the designated survey area. Additionally, biologists from the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory will perform bird population surveys in order to monitor potential impacts to bird populations in riparian areas. At the end of the field season, the data collected will be disseminated to researchers and resource managers. The project goal is to paint a clear picture of a changing ecosystem and to facilitate efficient management of the affected riparian areas.

### ***Tamarisk Coalition Programs Need Your Support!***

Help the Tamarisk Coalition support the restoration of riparian lands. Our volunteer programs and restoration projects are gearing up for the spring, summer and fall.

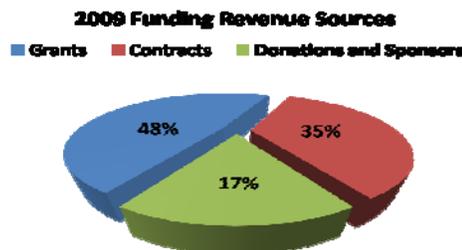
*The following programs could really use your help!*

**Volunteer Programs** – Equipment needs (i.e. herbicide, tools, gloves), volunteer meals, promotional expenses.

**Watson Island** – The majority of tamarisk and Russian olive has been removed on the Main Island and this fall we will start planting natives! Revegetation materials (i.e. native grass seeds, willow and cottonwood pole plantings), irrigation equipment and education materials.

**Island Acres** – Western Colorado Conservation Corps to remove dense tamarisk stands that require heavy machinery; and revegetation materials (i.e. cottonwoods and skunkbush sumac) and food for the volunteer revegetation day (planned for the fall).

The Tamarisk Coalition is funded through grants, contracts, and most importantly, individual donors and corporate sponsors. Donations and sponsors for a significant portion of our budget. It is important that we continue to receive assistance from our loyal supporters!



Please send your contributions to Tamarisk Coalition, PO Box 1907 Grand Junction, CO 81502. Please indicate if you have a specific wish for where your contribution should be directed. Thank you again; our good work depends on you!