



# Tamarisk Coalition Newsletter

November 2008

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## Colorado River Basin Tamarisk and Russian Olive Assessment

We are in the process of wrapping up the Colorado River Basin Tamarisk and Russian Olive Assessment and will deliver it to the seven states of the Colorado River watershed in February. This assessment has four main objectives:

1. We are assessing the current extent of tamarisk and Russian olive infestation in the Colorado River Basin and projecting potential future distribution of these species. This assessment will address impacts and make recommendations for control of tamarisk and Russian olive and native habitat restoration
2. We are reviewing available research and consulting with experts to assess how much water is used non-beneficially by tamarisk and Russian olive and how much might be saved by control of these species and revegetation with native plants.
3. We are analyzing the economic cost of managing tamarisk and Russian olive compared to potential water savings and the costs due to the environmental impacts of these species if they are not controlled. This analysis will also address legal issues associated with tamarisk and Russian olive control as well as how management of these invasive species fits in with other environmental concerns and programs.
4. Based on the information gathered in the first three objectives we will identify high-priority locations for tamarisk and Russian olive control and the best methods to use at these sites. These proposed projects will be submitted to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to be considered for federal funding.

We will be presenting this comprehensive assessment to the seven states in the form of a detailed, multi-media report this winter. This is an ambitious project comprising an enormous amount of information that we hope will help guide effective tamarisk and Russian olive management.

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## Colorado River System Biocontrol Monitoring

Thanks to the hard work of Levi Jamison of the Palisade Insectary and our own Clark and

## Meet the Staff

Tim Carlson



John Heideman



Stacy Kolegas



Clark Tate



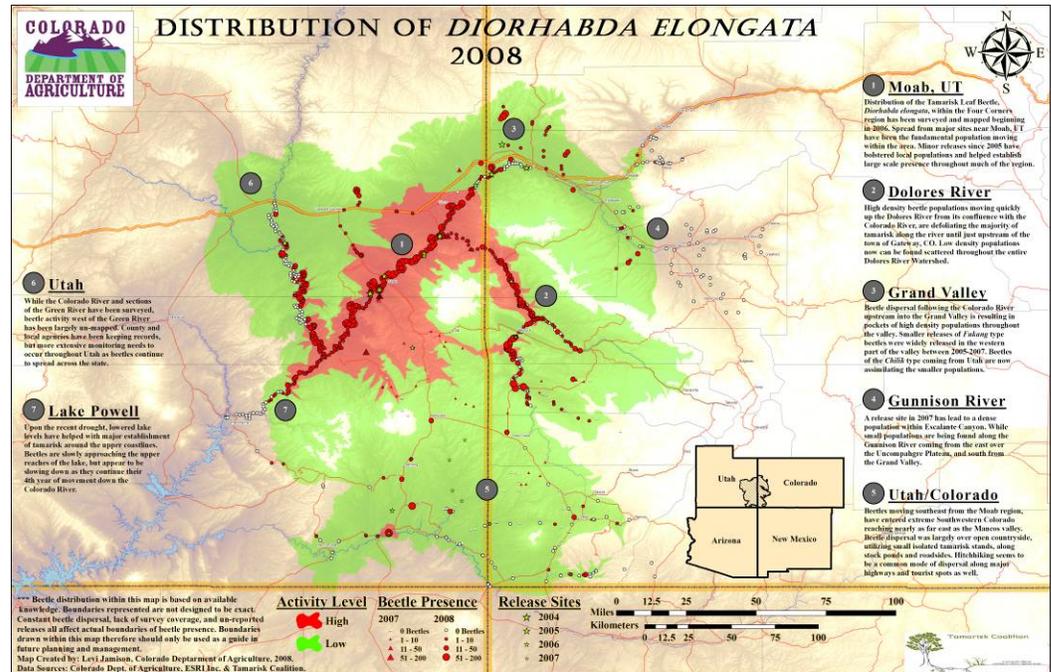
Nate Ament



Jamie Nielsen



Nate we now have critical data on the distribution of the Tamarisk leaf beetle *Diorhabda elongata*. The beetle was released at several sites in Western Colorado and Eastern Utah and is now spreading on its own, munching tamarisk along the way. When the leaf beetles feed en masse on a tamarisk, they can defoliate the plant in about a week. Repeated defoliations are necessary to kill tamarisk, and it will likely take a colony of beetles about 3 to 5 years to kill a single plant. *D. elongata* is an inexpensive and effective tool in our tamarisk control arsenal, but it is not a silver bullet. If you are interested in learning more about the Tamarisk leaf beetle, check out the bio-control section of our webpage <http://www.tamariskcoalition.org/tamariskcoalition/BioControl.html>



## Three new members have joined the Tamarisk Coalition Team!

**Stacy Kolegas** will be shadowing Tim Carlson and will eventually replace him as Executive Director. (But don't fear! Tim will still be here, he'll just have more time to do what he loves as our Research and Policy Director.) We are thrilled to have Stacy moving into the executive director position. She has previously served as the executive director of Yampatika, an environmental education non-profit in Steamboat Springs, CO. Most recently she has worked for the city of Phoenix as an Environmental Programs Assistant, where she has helped the city tackle air quality, sustainability and climate change among other environmental challenges. Stacy's environmental experience in both the non-profit and government sectors make her an ideal addition to our team. Plus she loves the outdoors as much as we do, is a talented artist and is fabulous company!

**Jamie Nielsen** moved to the Colorado Plateau from Anchorage, Alaska. Based in Flagstaff, Arizona, she helps to represent Tamarisk Coalition in the southern portions of the Colorado River Watershed. Jamie has a BS from the University of Michigan in Resource Ecology & Management, an MS from the University of Idaho in Forest Resources, and a couple of years of Peace Corps service in Latin America under her belt. Most recently, she worked for the University of Alaska Cooperative Extension, doing invasive plants public education, jump-starting Cooperative Weed Mgmt Areas, and working with state policy makers on weed regulations and legislation. She now spends her free time (with her husband and

Meredith Swett



Christy Duncan



Sarahlee Lawrence



their dog) hiking and exploring their new Arizona home.

**Meredith Swett** moved to Colorado after completing her Ph.D. in Organismal Biology and Ecology at the University of Montana where she studied bird behavior and physiology. Over the years she has chased birds from Wyoming to the Bay of Fundy, South Africa to Vermont. She joined the Tamarisk Coalition in 2008 and will be coordinating the Volunteer and Education Program as well as adding her two cents on scientific matters. Meredith lives in Fruita where she enjoys hiking in McInnis Canyons with her dogs and has recently taken up mountain biking. She is thrilled to be part of the Coalition's dynamic and collaborative effort to tackle the invasive species problem.

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## There's still time to submit an abstract for the 2009 Tamarisk and Russian Olive Research Conference

A conference poster with a background image of a river flowing through a canyon. The text is centered and reads:

2009 Tamarisk and Russian Olive Research  
Conference  
February 18th and 19th  
Grand Sierra Resort  
Reno, NV

*Bringing tamarisk and Russian olive researchers together to share results with other scientists and land managers so that future management efforts can be guided by the state-of-the-science. This conference will promote dialogue between researchers and managers to identify future research needs for the development of effective policy and management.*

Ecology • Control • Restoration • Biodiversity • Soil • ET • Genetics • Fire

Abstracts are due November 15! You can submit an abstract and get more information about the conference by visiting our website [www.tamariskcoalition.org/tamariskcoalition/index.html](http://www.tamariskcoalition.org/tamariskcoalition/index.html). Registration fees are \$120 (\$50 for students) if you register by January 1st. We have reserved a block of rooms at the Grand Sierra Resort where the conference will be held. If you book a room with them by January 18<sup>th</sup> you may request the "Tamarisk Coalition" rate of \$89/night.

## Meet the Mascots

Chewbacca



Ghoti



Corvus



## Volunteer News: Watson Island restoration has begun!



The Chevron team kicked off volunteer efforts on Watson Island

Tamarisk and Russian olive removal has begun on the Watson Island complex! The Coalition is pooling talent from many sources to tackle invasive species on this critical piece of riverfront. We contracted with the Western Colorado Conservation Corps and the Mesa County Workenders to begin the process, cutting Russian olive on the South Bank island. A few weekends later a fantastic group of Chevron employees kicked off our volunteer effort on a drizzly Saturday in early October. Watson Island, with its proximity to the Riverfront trails, Western Colorado Botanic Gardens and downtown, is an ideal location to showcase riparian restoration efforts on the Colorado River. Come check it out! Our final volunteer event of the fall will be on Watson Island Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> hope you can join us!

Watson Island is a hot topic! Check out this article in the Grand Junction Free Press: [Grand Junction Free Press August 26, 2008](#).

## Devils Canyon Expedition



Devil's Canyon Expedition

September 27, 2008

In late September, a hearty band of weed warriors braved the unseasonably hot weather and hiked to the upper reaches of Devil's Canyon to take out tamarisk and Russian olive. Prescott Bell of the BLM helped make this trip possible by hauling drinking water up the canyon for our thirsty crew. This fabulous group of

volunteers cleared a 3 mile stretch of canyon, enjoyed some cowboy poetry and a warm night stargazing. If you are interested in joining us for an overnight volunteer trip, we will be working in McDonald Creek Canyon Nov. 7-8. Please join us for one or both days. We will be drinking hot cider and sleeping under the stars Saturday night. (But feel free to go home to your own bed if you prefer.)

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## Funding the Tamarisk Coalition

**You're on our list for a good reason** – you understand that tamarisk, as an invasive non-native plant, is impacting the health of the West's river systems. And, remarkably – **You can help solve this problem.** To be part of the solution, become a member of the Tamarisk Coalition for as little as \$35 per year.

Due to the active involvement of our partnerships and membership contributions, the Tamarisk Coalition continues to grow in numbers and in influence. But, as a non-profit, the Tamarisk Coalition continuously strives to fund the restoration of western river ways. We now need your financial assistance to continue successfully providing educational opportunities, technical assistance, and coordinating support.

So, make the difference. Fill out the membership form available on our website ([www.tamariskcoalition.org](http://www.tamariskcoalition.org)) under the "Join Us" heading at the level that best fits your commitment. Your membership allows the **Tamarisk Coalition to facilitate tamarisk control efforts and to reestablish native vegetation along the West's rivers and streams.**

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Happy trails,

**Tim Carlson**

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