

Colorado State Conservation Board 2007 Matching Grants Project:
Mancos Conservation District: Mancos River Valley Noxious Weed Control

What natural resource problem(s) did the project address?

The infestation of riparian habitat by Tamarisk and Russian Olive is a well-known problem in Colorado. These noxious weed species choke water courses and impair river function, and significantly devalue riparian habitat for fish and wildlife. They can also utilize considerable quantities of water for their rapid growth patterns. Control of these species is expensive and does not yield a direct economic benefit to land users - therefore it is often a low priority for private landowners. **Tamarisk and Russian Olive had not been previously controlled in the Mancos Valley until the Mancos Conservation district began this mapping and control effort.**

What was achieved?

- **Two miles of the Mancos River encompassing four properties was mapped** for invasive woody species - which emerged as mostly Russian Olive with a few plants beginning to establish a tamarisk population. Low population of tamarisk provided an excellent opportunity to prevent it's establishment.
- **Contract manager and Weed Treatment technician hired full time for 3 months** to chainsaw out woody invasives and treat stumps with herbicides. Tree trunks mostly salvaged as firewood and slash chipped.
- **35 acres of medium to heavy infestations treated on four properties along one mile of river**
- **Kill estimates being monitored every six months** for three years and early estimates suggest low 5% re-growth rate requiring re-treatment.
- **Two tours of treatment areas given** due to public interest shown in activity
- **Re-growth of natural vegetation to be monitored** with consideration of native species reseeding if appropriate. Area downstream of treatment will be fenced off from livestock by landowner later in 2007 and project will also monitor this site to see the effect of livestock exclusion on native species growth.



Mapping and tagging of Russian Olive and Tamarisk growth begins in the Mancos River Valley.



The tagged trees are removed and stumps treated with herbicide. Trunks are used for firewood and slash chipped.