

BLM RESTORATION OF NATIVE PLANTS ALONG THE COLORADO AND DOLORES RIVERS

During October and November, the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM), Moab Field Office and Canyon Country Fire Zone will be continuing efforts to remove invasive tamarisk and Russian olive and restore native vegetation along the Colorado and Dolores rivers. The BLM will also be working to re-construct popular campgrounds in selected treatment areas.

The reduction of tamarisk and Russian olive, in coordination with state and local agencies, has been underway for several years along the Colorado River and its tributaries. Multiple methods have been employed to remove the invasive species, which have degraded wildlife habitat, blocked access to the river, and created other problems. Mechanical treatments, prescribed fire, and hand cutting followed by herbicide application have been the most commonly used methods to remove tamarisk and Russian olive.

The invasive plants in high priority sites along stretches of both rivers have been successfully removed and the area is ready for planting and reseeding. In October, native cottonwood trees and willows will be planted along stream banks where the tamarisk and Russian olive have been removed. Other sections of the treatment areas will be reseeded in November with a mix of native grasses and shrubs. Additionally, dormant native willows from adjacent areas will be "pole-planted" in the late winter to provide additional ground cover and campsite screening.

The vegetation project is one portion of the BLM's larger effort to reduce invasive tamarisk following the introduction of the tamarisk leaf eating beetle (*Diorhabda elongata*) by state and local agencies. Treatments are being coordinated and implemented with many partners including the City of Moab, Grand County, the Southeast Utah Tamarisk Partnership, The Tamarisk Coalition and the Utah State Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

For more information about this project, call Brian Keating at 435-259-2194 or visit www.utahfireinfo.gov.