

## **FINAL REPORT**

### **CURRY EASEMENT WOODY INVASIVE Removal Project in the GUNNISON RIVER BASIN - PURCHASE ORDER OEPDA141BC000017 Dated October 28, 2013**

#### **I. GRANT BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

The Delta Conservation District received a Notice to Proceed on October 28, 2013. The project objectives included

- Complete the removal of woody invasives on the west side of the Curry Easements.
- Generate a final report which details all efforts completed.

Mechanical eradication combined with herbicidal treatment of Russian olive and tamarisk was to be accomplished with work crews from the Western Colorado Conservation Corps. Project completion under the grant was March 31, 2015.

#### **II. WORK PERFORMED**

Permission to access the Curry Easements along west bank of the North Fork of the Gunnison River was obtained from local landowners after they were identified from the Delta County tax parcel maps. The tax parcel maps were obtained from the Delta County GIS Department. Mechanical eradication work of Russian olive and tamarisk began on the Curry Easement in 2014 after difficulty in obtaining work crews from the Western Colorado Conservation Corps (WCCC). WCCC work crews were contemplated in the grant application. In lieu of WCCC work crews when staffing was not available, a former WCCC work crew chief who was attending graduate school was contacted. That individual was able to provide a 4 person work crew comprised of former WCCC and Southwestern Conservation Corps crew chiefs who began work in December 2014. Work crews returned in February and March 2015, completing mechanical eradication and herbicide treatment. Regrowth was checked in March.

Initial work involved removal of dense Russian olive growth utilizing chain saws and backpack sprayers for herbicide application. Garlon Ultra 4 mixed with methylated seed oil and blue dye was utilized. Slash was collected and put into habitat piles inland from the river. Where large trees overhung the river and would fall into the river if chain sawed, girdling of the trunks was employed and herbicide was kept from the river.

Tamarisk were found on the plain area just above the river and were removed where accessible. However several seeps from Highway 133 directly above were extremely densely infested with tamarisk on extremely steep sloping land that cannot be treated manually by sawyers. The Palisades, Colorado Insectary (Plant Industry Division Biological Pest Control Section) was contacted and arrangements were made for the release of tamarisk beetles in 2015 by Insectary personnel to treat those inaccessible areas with tamarisk growth.

Additional funding has been obtained to continue woody invasive treatment along the river corridor in the project area. Because of the delay in obtaining work crews, there was not sufficient time before the expiration of the grant to monitor regrowth and apply effective regrowth treatment. This additional funding will be utilized during late 2015 to monitor and treat any regrowth in the project area, continuing what has been a Delta Conservation District multi-year project begun in 2012 to control woody invasives along the length of the North Fork of the Gunnison River in the North Fork Valley.

Revegetation after initial eradication in the project area did not appear to be necessary because of the apparent abundant presence of native narrow leaf cottonwoods in the area. Sporadic native silver leaf buffaloberry were also found in the area.

**III.        PHOTOGRAPHS OF PRE AND POST MECHANICAL  
ERADICATION AND HERBICIDE TREATMENT**

Typical Russian olive infestation on West Bank of Curry Easement.



Russian olive infestation along channel bank in untreated area of Hotchkiss Property





## Photos of Curry Easement After Mechanical Removal and Herbicidal Treatment













