



Mormon Mesa Riparian Restoration Pilot Project

Project Purpose

To control and eliminate invasive non-native salt cedar within the riparian woodland along the Virgin River. To restore native vegetation for wildlife habitat and ecosystem functions. To protect life and property from catastrophic wildfire.

Project Treatments

Removal of non-native salt cedar in via mastication and follow-up herbicide treatment to prevent re-sprouting. Additional work will include planting of native riparian species to improve and maintain native habitat for the endangered southwest willow flycatcher and western yellow billed cuckoo. Mechanical treatment using masticators will be conducted by the NDF Forest Products program, with all follow-up work to be completed by the Desert Conservation Program, from Clark County, Nevada.

Anticipated Impacts & Outcomes

Short-term benefits and impacts include improved riparian forest health conditions of the residual stand. Elimination of non-native salt cedar from the pilot project area will cause short term declines in overall tree cover and beneficial changes to fuel load structure and combustibility.

Long-term anticipated outcomes include the permanent establishment of native vegetation that provides critical habitat for special status species. If successful this project can be a model for future collaborative agency efforts at a landscape level.

Partners and Collaborators:

- ✓ Clark County
- ✓ Nevada Division of Forestry

Acres to be Conserved or Treated:

- ✓ 20 acres of riparian woodlands

Critical Resources Affected or Protected:

- ✓ Virgin River Watershed
- ✓ Southwest Willow Flycatcher & Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo habitat restoration

Watershed(s):

- ✓ Virgin River Watershed
- ✓ Serves domestic aquifer recharge, agricultural irrigation aquifer recharge, livestock watering, and wildlife use.

Project Details

Project Timeline	Start	to	End	Priority Landscape(s)
Project Scoping	3/2017		5/2017	Funding and treatments were targeted for this area because it is in the Virgin & Muddy River priority landscape in the Nevada Natural Resources Action Plan (http://www.stateforesters.org/forest-action-plans/nevada).
Resource Inventory	2009		2013	
Planning	5/2017		12/2017	
Funding Acquisition	7/2017		7/2020	
Implementation	1/2018		2/2018	
Monitoring			Pending	

Threats and Risks to the Area

Invasive species are dominating the landscape and causing landscape impacts to ecosystem functions including watershed and wildlife habitat. Wildfire hazards exist in this area because of the tremendous fuel loading associated with dense, contiguous salt cedar groves. Numerous scattered ranches and residences along the corridor are at risk to wildfire which have not occurred in the last 10 years. Threats due to wildfire exist not only to the scattered residences and ranches, but the riparian forest resource as well which provides critical wildlife habitat, and helps maintain water quality.

National and Nevada's Cohesive Strategy

This project is part of the strategy because it allows federal, state and local agencies to be more effective and efficient at responding to and controlling wildfires, maintaining resilient landscapes, and creating fire-adapted communities.

Funding Source(s)

- Nevada Division of Forestry
- US Forest Service – State and Private Forestry Western Bark Beetle 2017 Grant



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