Saltcedar

Tamarix spp.

Colorado Dept. of Agriculture
Conservation Services Division
700 Kipling Street
Suite 4000
Lakewood, CO 80215
303-239-4100

Saltcedar Identification and Management

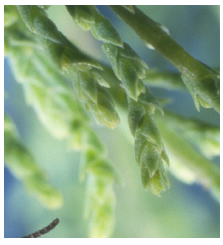
Identification and Impacts

Saltcedar, or tamarisk (*Tamarix spp.*), is a non-native deciduous evergreen shrub or small tree that grows from 5 to 20 feet tall. The bark on saplings and stems is reddish-brown. The leaves are small, scale-like and bluish-green in color. Tiny pink to white flowers have five petals and grow on slender racemes. Saltcedar reproduces by seeds as well as vegetatively. A mature plant can produce up to 600,000 seeds per year. Seeds are viable for up to 45 days under ideal conditions. Saltcedar buds break dormancy in February or March. Flowering occurs anytime between April and August. Ideal conditions for saltcedar seedling survival are saturated soil during the first few weeks of life, a high water table, and open sunny ground with little competition from other plants.

Saltcedar was introduced from central Asia, northern Africa, and southern Europe for ornamental purposes and for stream bank stabilization. It is now widespread in the United States. Saltcedar crowds out native stands of riparian and wetland vegetation. Saltcedar increases salinity of surface soil, rendering the soil inhospitable to native plant species. Saltcedar can be found along floodplains, riverbanks, streambanks, marshes, and irrigation ditches. It's heavy use of water has contributed to the intensity of the drought.

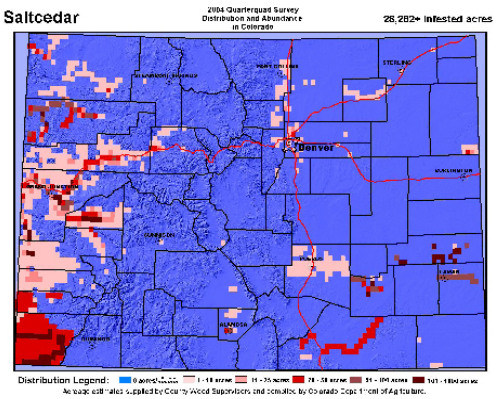
The most effective method of control for saltcedar is to prevent its establishment through proper land management. Monitor susceptible areas for new infestations. An integrated weed management approach has proven to be an effective control when dealing with saltcedar. Details on the back of this sheet can help to create a management plan compatible with your site ecology.

Saltcedar is designated as a "List B" species on the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. It is required to be either eradicated, contained, or suppressed depending on the local infestations. For more information, please visit www.colorado.gov/ag/csd and click on the Noxious Weed Program link. Or call the State Weed Coordinator of the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Conservation Services Division, 303-239-4100.



Key ID Points

1. Saltcedar is a tall shrub or small tree that has white to pink flowers in clusters called racimes.
2. Leaves are small and scaly.



Plant and flower photos © Kelly Uhing. Leaf photo © USDA Aphis PPQ. Infestation photo above, © Steve Dewey, Invasive.org. Tamarisk branch © Stevens County, WA Noxious Weed Control Board

Updated on: 02/08

Management Recomendations

Saltcedar

CULTURAL
After a saltcedar infestation is managed, revegetation is necessary in order to protect the soil resource and reduce the threat of reinvasion. Seeded grasses, willow stakes, and cottonwood cuttings can reduce the chances of saltcedar reinvading managed sites.

BIOLOGICAL
The saltcedar leaf beetle (*Diorhabda elongata*) larvae and adults feed on foliage. This causes stem dieback and potential death of the plant if defoliation is consistent. The leaf beetle should be available for limited distribution. For more information, contact the Palisade Insectary of the Colorado Department of Agriculture, 970-464-7916.

MECHANICAL
A bulldozer or prescribed fire can be used to open up large stands of saltcedar. These methods must be followed up with a herbicide treatment of the resprouts when they are 1 to 2 meters tall. Chainsaws, or loppers for smaller plants, are effective for cut-stump treatments to smaller infestations or in environmentally-sensitive management areas.

Integrated Weed Management:

Select the appropriate control method based on the size of the area and other environmental or cultural considerations. Re-seed controlled areas with desirable species to protect the soil resource and to prevent or slow saltcedar reinvasion. Follow up control efforts the same growing season and for several years afterwards.

HERBICIDES: The following are recommendations for herbicides that can be applied to range and pasturelands. Rates are approximate and based on hand-held equipment with an output of 30 gallons per acre. Always read, understand, and follow the label directions. **The herbicide label is the LAW!**

HERBICIDE	RATE	APPLICATION TIMING
Garlon 4	Foliar - 2-4 qts./acre Cut-stump - undiluted 100% Basal bark treatment 1:3 of herbicide:natural oil	Foliar treatments - late spring to early fall Cut-stump - anytime except when snow is present Basal bark - anytime except when snow is present
Rodeo *approved aquatic label* **nonselective, will kill all vegetation it contacts**	Cut-stump - undiluted 100%	Treat anytime except when snow is present. Treat the cambium immediately after being cut. Thoroughly wet the surface, but not to the of run-off.
Arsenal or Habitat *Habitat is approved for use in aquatic sites*	Cut-stump - 8-12oz/gal water Foliar - 0.5-6.5oz/gal water + nonionic surfactant or methylated seed oil	Cut-stump - anytime except spring during heavy sap flows. Foliar - late spring to late summer. Spray entire crown and 70% of plant. Avoid spray solution run-off. After application, do not disturb saltcedar for 2 years or overall control will be reduced.

All photos © Kelly Uhing.

Colorado State University

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE