

Discussion of two Tamarisk and Russian Olive Assessment Reports completed by the Tamarisk Coalition^a and the Department of the Interior^b

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In 2009 and 2010, two reports were published by the Tamarisk Coalition (TC), and the US Geological Survey (USGS) and Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) to assess the impacts of tamarisk and Russian olive (TRO) and synthesize the state of the science for both species. The TC report, was prepared for the seven Colorado River Basin states per an MOU signed by the Basin States. The USGS and USBR report, *Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act Science Assessment*, was a result of Congressional direction through the Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control and Demonstration Act of 2006.

Both reports discussed the distribution of TRO, interactions of the species with wildlife, control techniques, biomass utilization, revegetation and restoration, the potential for water savings through the control of TRO, and identified the importance for demonstration projects and provided guidance on the design of those projects. The TC report covered additional impacts of TRO on sediment, salinity, wildfire, cultural, and recreational issues which were considered essential for an overall assessment of TRO.

While both reports took a similar approach (peer-review literature) to assessing TRO impacts overall, the TC strayed from this to answer the question of the potential for water savings through the control of TRO. The TC report used peer-reviewed literature, and a panel of experts to assess TRO water lost to evapotranspiration. Both reports define water savings differently and, thus, arrive at different conclusions. A discussion of these differences and the other similarities in the reports will be provided in this presentation.

^a*Colorado River Basin Tamarisk and Russian Olive Assessment*. Tamarisk Coalition. December 2009.

^b*Saltcedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act Science Assessment*, Scientific Investigations Report 2009-5247. USGS and USBR: Shafroth PB, Brown CA, and Merritt DM (Eds).