

## Tamarisk Coalition – Our Philosophy

*The Tamarisk Coalition's mission is to provide education and technical assistance for the restoration of riparian lands.*

**Guiding Principle:** The Tamarisk Coalition believes that a diverse native plant community is a preferred ecosystem for western rivers. We recognize that tamarisk in low density in a mixed native plant community does not represent a serious problem; however, over time this condition can change for the worse especially through episodic events such as fires and floods.

Ultimately, tamarisk control is one of the many instruments that we use to achieve the goal of riparian restoration. Tamarisk is an indicator of riparian lands in decline, not the whole problem. Other issues must be considered such as other invasive plants like Russian olive and Russian knapweed, soil salinity, lack of periodic overbank flooding, and site-specific restoration challenges. Successful riparian restoration will require:

1. Defining the problem and the restoration objectives,
2. Developing a collaborative comprehensive approach,
3. Controlling tamarisk and other invasive species,
4. Revegetation either through passive and/or active means,
5. Monitoring and long-term maintenance, and
6. Identifying funding sources to implement all components of restoration.

The above philosophy originated with John Taylor, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

**Integrated Pest Management:** No single approach should be viewed as a “silver bullet”. Every available control and restoration method should be evaluated for the site conditions present and those that best meet the desired restoration goal should be employed.

**Restoration Approach:** Actions for control and revegetation should be based on *Best Management Practices* informed by science. *Monitoring* is essential on all actions to increase effectiveness and efficiency through *Adaptive Management* practices that use current monitoring data to inform on-going management practices for optimal success.

**Respect:** The Tamarisk Coalition believes that riparian restoration must be accomplished with respect for state water laws and water rights, respect for property rights, respect for existing infrastructure such as water storage and delivery systems, respect for endangered species, and respect for cultural values.

- Based on case law, if water is actually saved within the groundwater and surface water regimes it is not new water but rather system water.

- Private property owners are some of the strongest supporters of tamarisk control and riparian restoration, and it is important to acknowledge that private property rights must be respected.
- The rivers of the West have been highly altered by humans to improve their capability to store and supply water (e.g., dams, irrigation systems) for beneficial use. Existing infrastructure is important for the continuation of these uses and control and restoration should respect these conditions. The Tamarisk Coalition advocates that, whenever possible, operational protocols of these systems should be modified to increase seasonal flows to enhance restoration efforts.
- Protection of endangered species is critical in developing restoration actions. Actions taken should be designed to minimize negative impact on existing populations and enhance recovery over time. Cooperation between responsible agencies is essential to this effort.
- Rivers of the west are hugely important to recreational, Tribal, agricultural and other interests for many reasons. Thus, it is important to respect and consider these interests as part of restoration.

