



Purgatoire Watershed

WEED MANAGEMENT

COLLABORATIVE

CREATION OF PWWMC



2003 **Initiation of the *Tackling Tamarisk on the Purgatoire Partnership***

- Partner resources allowed for successful landscape-scale tamarisk and Russian-olive control

2016 **Formalization of the Partnership: *Purgatoire Watershed Weed Management Collaborative***

- MOU Signatories:
 - RiversEdge West
 - Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Conservation District
 - Purgatoire Watershed Partnership
- Hired Coordinator to realize PWWMC vision:
 - Independent
 - Strategically focused
 - Financially self-sustaining

CREATION OF PWWMC - HOW

Shared Resources to get collaborative up and running



RiversEdge West – Employed Coordinator for three years.

Key Inputs - Provided full employee benefits to attract and retain highly skilled coordinator, and access to diverse funding mechanisms to support PWWMC capacity.



SPPRCD – Houses all landowner programs, assuming all financial and legal liability.

Key Inputs – Employment of coordinator after collaborative is established and successfully operating; employment of Noxious Weed Technician; cash match to all programs; capital investments (spray rig/mapping technology/equipment).

Goal

Maintain, protect, and improve the ecological integrity, agricultural productivity, recreational and hunting opportunities, and the economy of the Purgatoire River Watershed

ACTIONS



Control Noxious Weeds

Improve and Protect Native vegetative cover and, thus, native wildlife habitat; agricultural productivity; recreational and hunting opportunities; drinking water supplies; local economies

Increase Public awareness and support for healthy lands within the watershed

Establish PWWMC as a permanent program housed within Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Conservation District

NOTABLE Accomplishments

- 2003** Creation of informal partnership among 10 key partners,
Tackling Tamarisk on the Purgatoire
- 2004** Completed watershed-scale mapping of tamarisk and Russian-olive (RiversEdge West)
- 2008** Completed woody invasives management plan
- 2009** Biocontrol for tamarisk weed management implemented
- 2007-2012** Completed over 1,400 acres of woody invasive treatment on private lands within the Chacuaco drainage and the upper reaches of the watershed
- 2013-2015** Completed 150 acres of woody invasive treatment along the Trinidad River Walk
- 2016** Formally established PWWMC with the goal of promoting healthy lands, and thus long-term watershed protection, through a self-sustaining organization focused on delivering programs for private lands
- 2016-2019** ~2,000 Acres Treated on over 71 private properties within five unique land conservation programs housed within the Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Conservation District: African rue, Russian knapweed, Riparian Restoration (tamarisk/Russian-olive), Herbaceous Noxious Weed, Tercio Good Neighbor

Private Lands Implementation



Tamarisk Leaf Beetle Damage on private property along the Mainstem of the Purgatoire

Landowner Perspective

- **Goals for *their* land**
 - Grazing: Improve grass production, improve ability to gather cattle
 - Hunting: Improve native habitat, access to river
 - Farming: Improve crop production
 - Wildlife: Improve bird habitat
- **Limitations**
 - Financial
 - Time



Program Structure

- **Simple application, plan and sign-up process**
- **Run Program through local Conservation District**
 - Tons of flexibility
 - Substantially less overhead
 - Direct line to landowners
- **Financially attractive and feasible**
 - Cost incentive (instead of cost-share) for large \$ projects

Program Structure

- **At least a five year landowner commitment to maintain project (this is their 'cost share')**
 - Provide tools and personal technical assistance
 - Treatment tracking log
 - Annual monitoring/photo points

Program Structure EXAMPLES

Cost Incentive for High \$ Project - Tamarisk and Russian-olive Removal/Riparian restoration

- Program pays for all initial treatment costs
 - Phase I – biomass removal
 - Phase II – Vegetative monitoring using reference sites (pre-herbicide tx)
 - Phase III – Herbicide Tx to TRO Re-growth and herbaceous noxious weeds
 - Phase IV – Vegetative monitoring (post herbicide tx)
 - Phase V – active revegetation (if needed)
- Five year commitment from landowner to maintain project area
REQUIRED
 - Herbicide tx to TRO/herbaceous noxious weeds
 - Seasonal Grazing deferment (if needed)
 - Project manager does annual inspections and assists with photo points and monitoring

Riparian Restoration (tamarisk/Russian-olive)



*Before TRO tx on private property along the
Mainstem of the Purgatoire*



*Before TRO tx on private property along the
Mainstem of the Purgatoire*



*Before TRO tx on private property along the
Mainstem of the Purgatoire*



*During mechanical TRO biomass removal on private property
along the Mainstem of the Purgatoire*



*During mechanical TRO biomass removal on private property
along the Mainstem of the Purgatoire*



Directly after mechanical TRO biomass removal on private property along the Mainstem of the Purgatoire



Two seasons after TRO removal and reseeding efforts on private property along the Mainstem of the Purgatoire



Two seasons after TRO removal and reseeding efforts on private property along the Mainstem of the Purgatoire

Scientifically Rigorous Vegetative Monitoring

This provides information to direct adaptive management of implementation practices



Herbaceous Noxious Weed Program

- Sign-up on a rolling basis; one year from sign-up to do treatments and accrue costs
- \$1,000 maximum reimbursement per landowner, per year
- Reimbursed 50% of total cost
- LandO Provides documentation of applicable costs



- Highly recommend using Licensed Applicators (especially for those with no application experience)
- Five year monitoring and maintenance highly recommended, but not required
- Landowners can sign up annually if funds are available



Steps for **Success**

- Host landowner workshops/forums where potential projects may occur
- Go to them – let all local ag, conservation organizations know you want to work with them; propose how you all can work together to achieve common land management goals



- Developing good landowner relationships and implementing successful projects = more community buy-in
 - Increased funding opportunities
 - More landowner participation and support
 - More local agency participation and support
- Be flexible when common sense dictates
- Ask for landowner input about your program
 - What is working well, not so well: How can it be improved?



Food for **Thought**

- Accident and liability waiver for all programs
- Working with Conservation District Boards
 - Protocol for board member sign-up for programs
 - Protocol for board member submitting bids for project contract work
 - Protocol for Independent Contractors
 - Job bid announcements
 - Acceptance and notification process
 - Independent contractor agreement



Purgatoire Watershed

WEED MANAGEMENT
COLLABORATIVE

Shelly L. Simmons

Purgatoire Watershed Weed Management Collaborative

Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Conservation District