

Non-Native Phreatophyte Management Program - Pecos River
Quarterly Report
June 30, 2010

This report addresses activities of the Non-Native Phreatophyte Management Program on the Pecos River through the thirty-second quarter. To maintain continuity activities in each of the five previous legislative items are addressed, as well as financial activities. Items of interest from the summarized final report of activities for the House Bill 2 Legislative appropriations from 2002 to 2005 are included in this report. An update on the administrative and monitoring aspect for the House Bill 2-2007 appropriations and some general comments on the other programs connected to this program are also included.

Develop management and native vegetation restoration plans

Site-specific plans continued to be developed for areas where restoration work has been proposed. We continue our efforts to seek additional restoration funds through other grants and programs.

Senator Bingaman's Riparian Restoration Program – The project has three phases, with the first phase-treatment of non-native phreatophytes (saltcedar)-completed; phase two-masticating 596 acres, of which 263 acres are completed; final phase is ongoing, which consists of monitoring work carried out by Walthall Environmental, LLC. Dr. Walthall has also installed five groundwater wells at each of two demonstration sites and at control sites (untreated saltcedar) in the near vicinity. Each of the wells extends to a depth of nine feet below ground level. These wells monitor the ground water levels within treated and non-treated areas.

Demonstration Areas: Santa Rosa Area – The Guadalupe demonstration site is planted. Carlsbad Area – *Callaway Drive* – Monitoring of this area on a regular basis helps to assess how the plantings will survive in a native state without any follow up maintenance. Fifteen cottonwood trees and various shrubs and forbs have survived near the water with the dead standing kochia acting as a weed barrier. *Bujac Property* – Many native species are emerging on the site and grasses are spreading. *Six-Mile Dam* – A conservation plan put together and approved by the NRCS February 2010; BLM fire crew burned the island March 2010; weed treatment and pre-emergent to be applied in early April 2010. *BLM – Delaware River* – The BLM planted 100 cottonwood and 25 willow poles along the Delaware River in April 2009, with Zeolite inserted into the holes to assist the wicking of water around the base of the poles. A run-off based method of upland reseeding used to seed gullies; solar watering stations installed; and fencing work completed along the state line.

Test Plots: Cecil Pollard – 150-foot by 300-foot plot; kochia mowed; weed control done in July; seeding and mulching completed August 2007; fencing completed in December 2007 and repaired in January 2009. An evaluation of the site in January 2009 revealed a few sacaton plants and six weeks grama with mostly kochia and Russian thistle. The application of the wood chips, etc. did not appear to have improved the seeding success.

Bach – 400-foot by 500-foot plot; kochia mowed; weed control done in July; removal of debris and seeding completed in August 2007; fencing completed in December 2007. Fence repair and observation performed in December 2008. This plot is showing signs of re-establishing itself in native grasses. The repairing of the fence will allow for a reduction of rabbit problems.

John Wright Farm – approximately 160-foot by 260-foot plot: weed control done in July seeding done in August 2007 fencing completed in December 2007. Upon inspection of this plot in July 2008, there is very little kochia and weed growth and good grass growth within and around the pitter seeder divots. Because of the success of the pitter seeder on this plot landowners within the District have started using it for native grass seeding on their properties.

BLM - Tran King – approximately 140-foot by 180-foot plot; removal of salt cedar and weed control done in July; seeding done in August 2007; fencing completed in December 2007. Upon

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inspection in June 2008, there is some soil erosion and very little growth of any vegetation on this plot. A small patch of Bermuda has started in a low portion of the plot.

BOR McMillan Delta project - The staff at Carlsbad Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) continues administrative support as needed of the monitoring activities. Monitoring of the precipitation and soil moisture continues. Sixteen hundred acres within the clay area of the lakebed were strategically planted with sorghum alum and constructions of five water catchment berms were installed to retain overland flow.

BLM Control and Restoration Efforts –The collaborative effort with the BLM on the Black River cut and paint was completed in March 2008. The BLM funding was utilized to extract 98 acres of saltcedar along a tributary northeast of Roswell. Funding became available for the extraction of 185 acres along the Pecos River; 28 acres in Owl Draw; and 53 acres in the Hay Hollow tributaries.

New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Commission Grant - The Carlsbad SWCD received a grant from the NMSWCC to extract thirty-seven (37) acres of saltcedar around a local spring area. With a cooperative range improvement agreement in place with the BLM-CFO, this allowed for a coordinated effort between the BLM-CFO, Carlsbad SWCD, and the landowner. Through this agreement, the BLM-CFO provided the environmental analysis and cultural clearance.

Conduct Hearings in the Local Districts

The Carlsbad SWCD continues to provide information in their quarterly newsletter along with various local newspaper articles, brochures, and presentations to civic organizations to keep the public updated on the project activities.

Summary of Project 2002-2005 Appropriations

Aerial Application – Aerial applications with the use of helicopters began in the fall of 2002. The following table reflects the acreage treated by soil and water conservation districts:

District	Acres 2002	Acres 2003	Acres 2004	Acres 2006	Total Acres
Carlsbad	1,219	1,125	-0-	384	2,728
Central Valley	1,301	1,426	700	721	4,148
Chaves-Border	1,872	311	-0-	-0-	2,183
DeBaca	2,599	1,548	1,968	-0-	6,115
Guadalupe	1,146	91	-0-	-0-	1,237
Hagerman-Dexter	963	572	-0-	-0-	1,535
Totals	9,100	5,073	2,668	1,105	17,946

Ground Application - Ground applications were administered in the form of cut/stump, ground spray applications, and extraction.

The following ground application (Cut/Stump) acreage's were completed:

- Carlsbad SWCD – 141.8 acres (including 87 acres on Black River in BLM collaboration)
- Upper Hondo SWCD - 37.1 acres
- Guadalupe SWCD - 29.8 acres

The following acreage reflects the tributaries and how treated:

- Peñasco River (Peñasco SWCD) – 292.95 acres (ground spray)
- Dark Canyon (Carlsbad SWCD) - 115.5 acres (extraction)

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- Delaware River (Carlsbad SWCD/BLM) - 134 acres (extraction)
- Bosque Redondo Park (DeBaca SWCD) – 32 acres (extraction)
- Hay Hollow (Carlsbad SWCD) – 52.72 acres (extraction)
- Owl Draw (Carlsbad SWCD) - 27.91 acres (extraction)

Restoration Work – In 2004 restoration work (primarily extraction of treated saltcedar) began in aerial treated. To date approximately 2,275.61 acres have been restored, a breakdown by SWCD's is as follows:

- Carlsbad SWCD 1,451.34 acres
- Central Valley SWCD 202 acres (Bingaman Riparian Funds)
- Chaves SWCD 496.04 acres
- Guadalupe SWCD 126.23 acres

Monitoring and Evaluating

Dr. Mark Walthall continues to provide monitoring activities of streambank stability, dissipation, natural regeneration of vegetation, and ground water monitoring wells along the Pecos River. The completion of the installation of twenty-ground water monitoring wells completed in December 2007.

Threatened & Endangered Species Concerns

We have worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management to address concerns of threatened and endangered species, as well as those areas included in sensitive designations such as wildlife refuges and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC's). Two plant species (the Pecos Sunflower and Gypsum Buckwheat) and one fish (Pecos Bluntnose Shiner) exist along the Pecos River. We have identified areas where these exist and have avoided those areas during spraying operations. Copies of reports and inventories of plants and animals found in impacted areas are on file at the Carlsbad SWCD office.

Funding

Other Funding (Balance of BLM Funds) for a balance of \$22,960.17 as of June 30, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Bock, Project Manager