

White River Partnership Meeting  
November 18, 1:00-2:45

Online Meeting: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/252001037>

You can also dial in using your phone: [+1 \(646\) 749-3122](tel:+16467493122)

Access Code: 252-001-037

Draft Agenda

**Objectives:**

- Updates on implementation funding proposals
- Restoration plan timeline
- Agreement on restoration plan's Prioritization Criteria for active and passive restoration

**1:00** Welcome and agenda

**1:10** Applications recently submitted for implementation

**1:20** Restoration plan

- Introduction (purpose)
- Sections
- Timeline

**1:45** Site Prioritization and Feasibility Criteria for active and passive restoration

**2:35** Additional comments

**2:45** Adjourn

## **Restoration plan**

### **Introduction** (purpose of the plan)

To provide:

- a framework for communicating our mutual goals and common approaches (facilitate collaboration)
- a framework for developing site-level restoration plans
- the context for where this plan fits in the White River basin

### **Sections:**

- Main body
  - Introduction
  - Vision and Guiding Principles
  - Planning Effort Background
  - Description of Focus Area
  - Goals and Objectives
  - System Stressors and Assumptions
  - Site Prioritization Criteria
  - Two Year Goals (Implementation and Partnership Goals)
  - Methods for Achieving Goals
- Appendices
  - Tamarisk and Russian olive ecology
  - TRO Removal, Native Revegetation, Monitoring and Maintenance Techniques
  - Best Management Practices for Restoration and Grazing
  - Private Lands Approaches
  - River Reaches
  - Fish Habitat
  - Wildlife Habitat
  - Flows/Climate Change
  - Geomorphology
  - Funding Opportunities

# Introduction

Invasive tamarisk and Russian olive are present throughout the White River basin in northwest Colorado and northeast Utah. These woody invasive plants and their associated secondary invasive plant infestations cause myriad ecological, social, economic, and land management problems. The White River Partnership developed this restoration plan for the following purposes:

1. To articulate the tamarisk and Russian olive related vision, goals, and restoration site selection criteria common to White River basin stakeholders in order to facilitate a consistent approach to the restoration of tamarisk and Russian olive impacted areas in the White River basin by.
2. To increase collaboration and communication among stakeholders to enhance information transfer, adaptive management, and the likelihood of large-scale, long-term successful restoration.

Ultimately, land management decisions are made by land managers and landowners. This document also aims to serve as a resource for land and wildlife management agencies and landowners to develop site-specific riparian restoration plans. These implementation plans will provide detailed approaches for actual work sites including but not limited to: site specific project goals, project timeline and scheduling, a baseline data collection plan, work force selection, post-project monitoring, and a mechanism for maintenance determination and scheduling. Each plan will vary, but using this document as a guide will lend consistency to restoration projects that aid in creating a holistic approach to riparian restoration in the White River basin.

This restoration plan was developed with the understanding that controlling invasive tamarisk and Russian olive and their associated secondary invasive plant species as well as establishing native vegetation communities are only a few components of a watershed or river restoration plan. Other components that must be considered in a comprehensive riparian restoration plan include flow regimes, responsible livestock grazing, in-stream structures, and non-native fish and terrestrial wildlife species. Many of these issues are addressed by other entities that operate in the region, and related plans (known as of the development of this document) is listed in the Planning Effort Background chapter.

## **Criteria for Prioritizing Active and Passive Restoration Actions**

Establishing a common approach to riparian restoration in the White River basin requires articulating the site criteria that are used to identify and prioritize restoration sites. Suggested criteria for land managers and land owners to use to prioritize sites are listed in Table 1 for active tamarisk and Russian olive control measures and in Table 2 for biological control measures (tamarisk leaf beetle). These criteria are principally driven by the Ecological Goals for the White River. Social, Economic, Cultural, and Management Goals provide direction for the manner in which selected sites are managed.

The selection of actual work sites will be driven by land management agencies and landowners in the context of the many other issues in the watershed (for example land-use issues, workforce availability, budget limitations, and logistical hurdles.) The prioritization criteria are a tool to inform the site selection process in order to increase the positive ecological impacts and the cost-effectiveness of restoration actions.

**Feasibility Characteristics:** The following three characteristics determine the feasibility of a site to be restored and must be met in order for restoration to proceed on a prioritized site.

1. Funding is available to complete the entire project, including monitoring and maintenance, to a point of success.
2. The landowner is willing. Cooperation, commitment, and common goals with the land owner or land manager are essential. Without long-term collaboration, monitoring, and maintenance, restoration is unlikely to succeed.
3. Site access is economically feasible. The accessibility of the site is important to consider due to the difficulty in management, monitoring, and maintaining the site. If there are adequate financial resources to properly monitor and maintain remote sites this is not an issue.

**Table 1: Criteria for Prioritizing Sites for Active Tamarisk and Russian Olive Control**

| Criteria Category                                                                                 | Criteria Objective(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A. Healthy native vegetation communities                                                          | <p>Cottonwood stands, especially those indicating good hydrology, e.g. young recruits, mixed age classes.</p> <p>Plant species or communities identified as threatened, endangered, special status, or of special concern by BLM, Colorado Natural Heritage Program, UDWR, USFWS, or Ute Tribe</p> <p>Islands of healthy native vegetation providing important seed sources for adjacent infested areas and/or high plant species diversity for wildlife</p> <p>Upland areas defoliated by the tamarisk leaf beetle where monitoring indicates that active revegetation is needed</p> <p>Stretches of high-density tamarisk where no active removal is planned but where the tamarisk leaf beetle will be active and the native seed source is insufficient for passive revegetation</p> |
| B. River channel complexity: side channels, backwaters, floodplain connection, large woody debris | <p>Conserve or restore aquatic habitat for native fish, including ESA (Colorado pikeminnow, razorback sucker) and Conservation Agreement (bluehead sucker, flannelmouth sucker, roundtail chub)</p> <p>Maintain or reestablish natural river channel morphology and sediment transport</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| C. Good hydrologic connectivity                                                                   | <p>Cottonwood stands, especially those indicating good hydrology, e.g. young recruits, mixed age classes</p> <p>Low lying areas with stands of invasive woody species that are likely scoured by high flows and that could provide for cottonwood recruitment</p> <p>Oxbows and off-channel emergent wetlands</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| D. Wildlife areas identified as important by BLM, CPW, UDWR, USFWS, and/or Ute Tribe              | <p>Areas that provide habitat for federal, state, and/or tribal priority species</p> <p>Game habitat and/or migratory areas</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| E. Social, Economic, Cultural                                                                     | <p>Agricultural or grazing improvement</p> <p>Recreation: enhance access for public and/or improve aesthetics</p> <p>Opportunities for educational outreach</p> <p>Reduce risk to human life and public and private property from wildfires supported by invasive woody species</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

| Criteria Category | Criteria Objective(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| F. Management     | <p>Desires of funding source</p> <p>Logical extension of other projects</p> <p>Educational and training opportunities</p> <p>Opportunistic e.g. small or isolated TRO infestations that are easily managed before they expand</p> |

**Table 2: Criteria for Prioritizing Sites for Monitoring Biological Tamarisk Control**

| Criteria Category           | Criteria Objective                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A. Costs                    | <p>Areas with insufficient funding to adequately address all aspects of restoration; i.e., active tamarisk control, revegetation, herbaceous weed control, monitoring, and maintenance</p> <p>Areas with very light tamarisk infestations with good native plant seed source.</p>                                        |
| B. Landowner considerations | <p>Sites without landowner permission for active restoration methods</p> <p>Sites that are experiencing livestock grazing practices that are not considered BMPs</p> <p>Sites with landowner requirements for control and revegetation that do not meet with the Vision, Guiding Principles, or Goals of the WRP</p>     |
| C. Accessibility            | <p>Areas generally inaccessible except through extraordinary measures</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| D. BMP under development    | <p>Areas of high herbaceous weed infestations along with tamarisk that are best left to a future effort that is informed by pilot projects</p>                                                                                                                                                                           |
| E. Other situations         | <p>Areas that could have sufficient native plant communities that are not considered as significant as cottonwood e.g. rabbitbrush, sagebrush, greasewood</p> <p>Cultural resource sites that would be damaged by active control</p> <p>Wildlife and plant species of concern that could be harmed by active control</p> |

#### A. List of Partnership Goals and Objectives

It is the intent of the Parties to work together to develop and implement a comprehensive approach for conserving, improving and creating a healthy riparian ecosystem along the White River that meets the ecological, cultural, social, management, and economic goals of the Partnership. These overarching goals of the Partnership are the following:

| Goal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Objective                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Ecological/Geomorphic:</p> <p>A healthy White River with a functioning riparian area and in-stream habitat characterized by a resilient community of native and/or desirable vegetation that supports wildlife and fish habitat needs.</p> | <p>To implement a coordinated restoration program on public and private land that manages invasive plant removal, native revegetation, and fish and wildlife habitat restoration work.</p> <p>Restore natural riverine processes in areas where the human infrastructure will not be negatively impacted.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p>Social:</p> <p>A restoration program along the White River that educates youth and the local community about natural resource management and provides opportunities for employment and career advancement in related fields.</p>           | <p>To employ and train youth and young adult conservation corps members in the restoration and maintenance of the White River</p> <p>Work with and engage local landowners and community members</p> <p>Offer volunteer opportunities for the local community.</p> <p>To cultivate a community of local river stewards (e.g. K-12, youth, local residents, BLM, and businesses) through education and volunteer programs.</p> <p>To the extent possible, work to mitigate wildfire hazards around human infrastructure.</p> |
| <p>Cultural:</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>To develop management protocols along the river that protects cultural resources in</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |



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| <p>A White River with robust cultural resources and adequate protections in place for these resources.</p>                                                                                                                                                         | <p>cooperation with the Ute Tribe, public land managers, and private landowners.</p> <p>Support traditional, cultural, and historic agricultural uses of the White River and its riparian areas</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>Management:</p> <p>An established process for ensuring ongoing restoration, maintenance, and stewardship of the river and the sharing of lessons learned with other practitioners.</p>                                                                          | <p>To establish transparent organizational processes that fairly address all stakeholder interests while also prioritizing implementation actions according to need</p> <p>Facilitate communication between managers and partners</p> <p>Garner support from agency budgets and attract other sources of funding</p> <p>Incorporate adaptive processes so as to improve effectiveness over time and with experience.</p>                                                                                                                     |
| <p>Economic:</p> <p>A restored White River that offers opportunities for improved recreation, sustainable agricultural production and ranching, employment for local contractors and youth conservation corps, and is mindful of other local industry's needs.</p> | <p>Improve river access for recreation (e.g. camping, rafting, hiking), hunting, and wildlife viewing (e.g. bird watching) opportunities for locals and visitors.</p> <p>Develop a professional, competitive, and efficient work force by enhancing local contractor capabilities and youth and young-adult conservation corps programs.</p> <p>To increase access and improve habitat through invasive plant removal, which could attract recreation, benefit agricultural producers, aid local industries, and grow the local economy.</p> |