

## Tamarisk 0, BLM 1

Tamarisk, a shrubby tree also known as saltcedar, was intentionally brought to the United States in the early 1800s as a decorative landscape species. Its spring flowers are attractive and it is easy to grow. But that doesn't make up for its dark side. It is a weedy invader that crowds out native vegetation. It can deplete

groundwater resources to the point of reducing a perennial flow to a trickle. Tamarisk infestations at springs, and along streams and rivers, is disastrous for native animal species

Hiko Springs, six miles west of Laughlin, was choked with tamarisk. In

1997, the Las Vegas Field Office initiated a tamarisk removal project that was completed this past year. Success came with yearly monitoring and removal projects on a nine-acre site.

According to Tim Rash, fire ecologist at the Las Vegas Field Office, effectively removing noxious weeds like tamarisk requires successive treatments, and in this case, more than one method of removal.

Two removal methods were used at Hiko Springs: cut stump and basal bark removal. The cut stump method involves cutting tamarisk six to eight inches above the ground and immediately applying a selective, non-emergent herbicide, such as Garlon 4, to the stump. The basal bark removal

method involves an initial treatment with fire. The first year a prescribed burn clears the vegetation. Successive yearly treatment is spraying sprouts with herbicide.

"Tamarisk is a tenacious weed that requires continual monitoring to ensure it has been eradicated," said Rash. "Missing just one seedling can lead to a new pocket of tamarisk the next year. If the area isn't properly moni-

tored, tamarisk can easily take over the area within a short amount of time."

Four years of keeping on top of the infestation has eradicated tamarisk at Hiko Springs. Now native vegetation such as cottonwood, willows and mesquite will have the opportunity to return.

**-Kirsten Cannon**  
*Las Vegas Field Office*



**Prescribed fire is the initial treatment to remove tamarisk from the Hiko Springs area. Successive yearly treatments is to spray new sprouts with herbicide.**