

1893 San Juan Non-Native Phreatophyte Removal



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The San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District aims to protect and reduce wildfire risk by removing non-native Russian olive and Salt Cedar infestations in identified high-priority areas. The project will also undertake native plant and tree restoration activities to help restore riparian habitat and improve hydrology, involve the community in restoration and monitoring activities, and encourage a renewed connection with the river.

Removal of Russian olive and salt cedar has benefits that meet multiple regional priorities:

- Water Quantity (San Juan Regional Water Plan)
- Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration (Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan)
- Community Wildfire Protection (CWPP).

The most urgent of these regional priorities is wildfire protection. During the development of the CWPP, the Community Action Group (CAG) identified priority treatment areas for fuel reduction projects in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), to create defensible space, and to enhance public and firefighter safety.

Treatment of non-native woody invasive species will reduce overall fuel loading and thus fire intensity, turning a catastrophic, high-intensity wildfire that runs through the tree canopy into a low to moderate fire that may have beneficial effects to a riparian understory and reduce the likelihood that a wildfire would threaten lives or property.

Additionally, returning a riparian ecosystem to a natural heterogeneous mix of native species will reduce channelization, which increases downstream impacts of fires that occur upstream.

Allowing a more natural, native, and dynamic river course to catch sediment and debris after a wildfire will reduce the area downstream that experiences detrimental effects of sediment on municipal water systems, agricultural irrigation, and crop health.

Wildfires that occur within the wildland-urban



interface where forest thinning treatments have taken place may provide areas where firefighters could safely construct direct firelines or provide safe point-protection to homes rather than making attempts to construct an indirect fireline far ahead of a running fire. Aerial resources are often called in at great costs to the public in order to slow fires down so firefighters can have time to create firelines large enough to hopefully stop the spread of a wildfire. In untreated areas, it takes heavy equipment to remove these large trees. This takes more time than firefighters can spare. Large treated areas can now be safety zones, whereas before, would only marginally be considered a deployment zone. Treating these overgrown stands may allow property owners to shelter in place safely, should escape routes be compromised, until such time that it is safe to evacuate an area due to smoke or other hazardous situations.

Eligibility: Projects must be located in the Geographic Priority Area. (see attached map)

Lead Partner Organization: San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District

Other Partners: NM State Forestry, San Juan County Extension Service, NM Game and Fish and Farmington Fire Department

Resource Concerns: Degraded Plant Condition, Fire Management, Terrestrial Habitat

Activity Types: Land Management

Start Date: 10/6/22
End Date: 12/31/27

Eligible Practices: Forest Stand Improvement (666), Woody Residue Treatment (384), Brush Management (314) other Facilitating Practices may be used.

Financial Assistance Available: \$750,000

Deadlines: November 18, 2022

Ranking Deadline: March 10, 2023

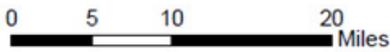
100% Obligations: June 2, 2023

NRCS - New Mexico

San Juan Non-Native Phreatophyte Removal Program



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



Legend
 Program Areas

Path: C:\data\San_Juan\san_juan.mxd

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