

# Impacts and Challenges of Salt Cedar in Montana



Rachel Frost

Coordinator, Missouri River Conservation Districts Council

Coordinator, Montana Saltcedar Team

[mrcdc@macdnet.org](mailto:mrcdc@macdnet.org) | 406-454-0056

[www.missouririvercouncil.info](http://www.missouririvercouncil.info)

# Tough Tree

- Can tolerate water inundation > 3 months.
- Tolerates high concentration of dissolved solids
- Can grow under mature Cottonwood stand
- Montana – elevation from 2,000 to 5,000 ft





# Biology & Ecology

- Seed Production
  - 600,000 per plant annually
  - Viable for 45+ days depending on moisture
  - Disseminated by wind, water and wildlife



# Impacts in Montana

- Consumes 80-120 g of water /day/mature tree
  - Uses from 2- 4.5 million acre-feet of water per year in West
    - 20 million people with water for one year
    - irrigate over 1,000,000 acres of land
- Channel congestion & increased sediment



"Tamarisk Forest" by Rachel Zurer, CC via Flickr



Photo courtesy of USGS



# Impacts in Montana

- Poor forage and cover
- Fire Danger
- Changes in soil and water salinity



Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. Photo: Scarlett Howell/USGS



Photo credit: USFWS





# Salt Cedar – It's a logistics thing

What's missing from this picture?













# 2011 Floods and Saltcedar





# Salt cedar in Montana

- Access for treatment
- Expense of treatment
- Cost of doing nothing

