

IPM Mini Grant Final Report

Biological Control of Tamarisk, Workshop and Tour.
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The objectives of this grant were to provide a learning workshop, tour and collection and distribution of the Salt Cedar leaf Beetle (*Diorabda elongata deserticola*) for private landowners, public land managers and interested agency personnel. We feel that the program was a great success, even though there were some major difficulties.

We organized and hosted a two day conference in Delta, UT, on the 22-23 of June. The original intent was to provide an instructional workshop on the first day and the second day to have a tour of the release site and a collection day, with participants taking the collected insects and distributing them in other locations throughout the State. After we had completed the planning for the conference, prepared for it, contacted our speakers, and were taking registrations for the conference we were hit with problems. The Fish and Wildlife Service felt that we were out of our jurisdiction with regards to the collecting and distribution of the insects. To make a long story short, the end result was that two of our featured speakers, Dr. Jack Deloach and Greg Abbott were told by their respective agencies that they were not allowed to come to speak at our conference and we were told that we could not include the collection and distribution portion of our project. In the end we were still able to hold the conference, with fill in speakers appointed from USU Extension (Craig Poulson and Matt Palmer), and we held a simple tour of the release site that did not include collection of the insects. However, it has come to our attention that many of the workshop attendees returned to the release site throughout the summer and collected insects privately and distributed these insects through out the State. So we are still in the process of trying to get information together about how many insects were distributed and where they were relocated to, so that we can generate a state wide map of distribution of the Salt Cedar Leaf Beetle.

Workshop:

The workshop provided 4 hours of instruction on topics related to the target weed, Tamarisk (*tamarix ramosissima*), the biological control agent, Salt Cedar Leaf Beetle (SCLB), and riparian area restoration. There were 67 people in attendance. These persons represented 16 of Utah's 29 Counties and 1 attendee from Idaho. We were pleased with the attendance even though we had to contact everyone who had registered to let them know that we could not collect. Because of the not being able to collect there were about 12 people who backed out and did not attend. From the workshop we have two power point presentations prepared by the Principal Investigators in this project, as well as a follow up power point presentation that was prepared for the WRCA Association meetings on October 25, 2005. These presentations are too large to email, if you would like a copy of these then please let us know and we can print and fax them, or burn them to a CD and send it.

At the conclusion of the workshop we distributed a simple survey to the attendees to evaluate the effectiveness of the presentations and the overall usefulness of the workshop. We had nearly half of the attendees respond to the survey. The survey showed very positive results. We will include a copy of the survey. The results of the survey showed that on average

respondents felt they had increased their knowledge of general bio-control by 70%. When asked about specific knowledge regarding the SCLB respondents felt they had increased their knowledge by 113%. We covered specifics on collection and distribution of the beetle during the workshop even though we were not allowed to actually conduct the collection and distribution at the workshop. Respondents were asked how they rated their knowledge of collection and distribution procedures before and after the workshop. This was the area where respondents felt they had learned the most with 170% increase in their knowledge on the subject. The last question where respondents were asked to rate their knowledge was concerning riparian area restoration where on average there was a 74% increase of knowledge on the subject. When asked about the effectiveness of the presenters 91% of the respondents rated them as good or excellent. While 100% of respondents rated the usefulness of the information and the overall quality of the workshop as good or excellent. We also received very positive comments about the workshop. Overall we felt it was well done and the only complaints we had were regarding the sound system and the hard chairs.

Tour:

The second day of the workshop was dedicated to a tour of the release site and resulting damage to the tamarisk plants in the area due to the feeding of the SCLB. Fifty-five people went with us to the tour site. Everyone was very impressed with the damage that the beetles had done on the tamarisk plants. Unfortunately we were not able to collect and distribute insects at that time. We have heard that there has been collecting and distribution going on this summer and the original plans called for putting together a map of the areas where the insect has been released across the State. We determined this fall that we would follow-up with that part of the original proposal by distributing a survey via mail to those that attended the conference. We have included a copy of this survey, however, we do not yet have the results back and compiled.

As part of the project we also wanted to create a fact sheet regarding the use of the SCLB as a bio-control for Tamarisk. We are currently in the process of completing that fact sheet and will send you completed copies when that is done.

We feel that despite the set backs we faced in this process that the outcome was very positive. There is great interest across the State and throughout the Western U.S. regarding the control of Tamarisk and it appears that this bio-control will be an important tool to help with that control in the future. We feel that the program and the educational information that was and will still be generated from this program will greatly benefit the public.