

Salt Cedar Control at the Ladd S. Gordon Waterfowl Complex

During the 2005 Legislative Session the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish received additional appropriations for habitat and infrastructure improvements for the Complex. These improvements included graveling the tour route, additional signage and some equipment for habitat work. Additionally the Department and the US Fish and Wildlife Service received matching grant money from the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) for improvement to the Quagmire Unit termed the Quagmire Project. This unit contains infestations of salt cedar, an exotic tree introduced into the Rio Grande watershed.



Extensive stands of salt cedar can be a detriment to wildlife and ecological processes. Monotypic stands provide little or no wildlife forage and reduce structural and species diversity. Salt cedar stands are known to increase soil salinity which further reduces plant diversity and structure.

To combat this problem, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish in collaboration with the Socorro Soil and Water Conservation District sprayed about 300 acres of salt cedar with an herbicide. Sprayed salt cedar will be allowed to stand for 3 growing seasons to optimize plant mortality.



Also as part of the Quagmire Project a new and improved Langaman Gate system was installed to allow better control of water utilized to flood irrigate the Quagmire and the Bernardo Ponds.

