

INSIDE:
Rainbow Trout
on the Rebound
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Making The Byway Scenic

Dolores River Restoration Project Opens Up Views Through Canyon



Travelers from the West End to Gateway have probably noticed that Highway 141 seems more wide open lately as the clear views of the adjacent Dolores River and lower canyon walls can be seen more clearly. In some areas, due to the overgrowth of Tamarisk, the river hasn't been seen from the roadway in years. That is one of many benefits the Dolores River Restoration Partnership (DRRP), a partner in the Tamarisk Coalition, has highlighted in the ongoing work on the 175 mile stretch of the Dolores River from the McPhee Dam to its confluence with the Colorado River in Utah.

Currently there are three interns that can be seen during most of the weekdays performing the brunt of the work that is scheduled this year - clearing Tamarisk and other non-native plants, shrubs and bushes from the Mesa/Montrose County Line to the Salt Creek confluence where 7.2 Road joins Highway 141 (7.2 Road meanders through the Salt Creek Canyon leading access to Sinbad Valley).

"The three interns are going to be down there doing work most of the year, and we are also going to hire some local contractors where we can get some excavating machines in there safely (in some of those wider swatches) to treat some of that Tamarisk mechanically as well. That should happen late Fall/early Winter," said Daniel Oppenheimer, Tamarisk Coalition Restoration Coordinator.

"The most obvious visible thing that people see is that the tamarisk is getting cut down. That's just one of a lot of different things we are doing to restore the riparian area," said Oppenheimer. "We are going in to treat a lot of secondary weeds like Russian Knapweed, White Top and a whole bunch more. Those are the two common ones. And we are going in and really investing time, energy and thought into planting native plants, shrubs and trees. It's not just go in do a few things and walk away. Each of these sites require a lot of up front intensive work removing tamarisk, treating the secondary weeds and oftentimes re-vegetating it with the native or desirable species. And doing the long term maintenance. It's a really long term process." *Cont. on Pg. 3*

Boosting The Spirits



Nucla Liquor at 485 Main Street in Nucla is under new ownership and the owner, Ashley Tomlinson, is busy boosting the spirits in the store as she experiments with what products people like. There are a number of various new products for customers to sample, along with the regular mainstays such as Bud Light, Coors Light and Busch.

"Right now we're just kind of cleaning up the building, restocking, adding new product and taking down product that nobody really is interested in," said Tomlinson who closed on the business purchase May 20th.

"We have had a lot of people come in and request certain items. I'm starting to get some new items. I have new wines. It's just a matter of getting the old out and bringing in the new that people want," she added.

A couple new beers have caught the taste buds of a few locals - "Shiner Ruby Redbird Crisp" which has a ginger flavor with underlying grapefruit notes and "Not Your Father's Root Beer" which is a herbed/spiced beer that looks, smells, acts and tastes like Root Beer (put to the test at the Ball Park in Historic Uravan last week).

"Luckily a lot of the distributors offer some *Cont. on Pg. 2*

New Doc In Town

There's a new doctor in town who joined the contracted medical staff at the Basin Clinic in Naturita. Although Dr. Peter Harrelson, M.D., is the new doc in town, he also sports a familiar face to a lot of residents in the West End having served as a doctor at the clinic about 18 years ago.

"We've been talking since last November when I started exploring this and since I was here before I sort of knew what it was like out here, and I also worked in Norwood, back about 18 years ago. A lot of the people that come through I know them, I can recognize them and they recognize me. I just like working here it was great," said Dr. Harrelson.

He grew up in Virginia and graduated from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. While seeking his medical degree, Dr. Harrelson took advantage of a government program that paid for two years of his study in return for a future promise to payback the funding with medical service.

That payback took him out west where he stayed for good.

"I was just a GP (general practitioner) and had just one post graduate year out of medical school - and although I just had one year as an M.D., I thought I would just go ahead and do my payback now," said Dr. Harrelson. "I had a placement conference in Phoenix and could have ended up anywhere - Minnesota, Alaska ..."

From that placement conference he was commissioned a Lieutenant O-3 in the Indian Health Service on the Navajo reservation in New Mexico.

"I moved out to New Mexico in 1983 and worked there for two years," said Dr. Harrelson. "I started looking around and kind *Cont. on Pg. 5*



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Dolores River Restoration

Cont. from Pg. 1

DRRP began their work on the Dolores River in 2009 with a partnership between two states (Utah and Colorado), four BLM field offices, five counties and over 20 participating private properties. The driving force is their fourfold goal: Ecological, Social, Economic and Management.

Those goals are oftentimes melded together in DRRP's various activities, Oppenheimer pointed out. One of the most evident is in their outreach to youth which joins all four goals together giving the young folks opportunities to not only make money, but to learn new skills and leave their footprint on something deemed good ecologically.

"When this partnership was created, it was right in the middle of the recession and there was growing awareness that young adults were especially hit hard by the recession in terms of unemployment," said Oppenheimer. "So we made it a real focus of our partnership to try to address that alarming reality and so we work with three different conservation corps programs: Western Colorado Conservation Corps based in Grand Junction (which is where the three doing the current work are employed), Canyon Country Conservation Corps based in Monticello, Utah, and Southwest Conservation Corps based out of Durango.

"We are able to hire youth and young adults through primarily two different ways. One is through an eight person crew - they typically receive about 130 hours of education and training. This isn't just about getting the work done. It's about giving them a job opportunity and training them in everything from how to use a chainsaw, how to do CPR, how to identify plants, a whole variety of skills, etc. And, they go out for typically a ten week season where they do work and oftentimes they come back and do another season with the corps or use that experience to move on to another job.

"The other main way that we hire young adults is through our internship program. In that case we are taking young adults who have served in those eight person crews and done well and want to continue that type of work, and we pair them up with a land manager so that they are really able to hone their skills."

He said that during the internship they are able to earn all sorts of certifications in terms of herbicide application, saw work, etc.- "that will help them tremendously when they decide to go get another job."

"And, it's a really good fit for the partnership having these smaller two to three person strike teams who have the experience, the training and the skill set to do a variety of things from cutting Tamarisk, to broadcast seeding native grasses, to spraying Russian Knapweed. It's been a really good fit in terms of our social goals supporting youth and young adults but also good towards our management goals of trying to be efficient getting the work done and our ecological goal of having some really competent capable folks who can get good

restoration work completed."

In addition to the job training and earning potential for young folks, DRRP also offers learning and volunteer opportunities for students and adults throughout the year.

On Friday, May 29, DRRP and the Tamarisk Coalition presented a one day Dolores River Plant Identification Workshop in Bedrock led by Amanda Clements of the Uncompahgre BLM Field Office. During the event, participants meandered along the riparian areas at Bedrock, the confluence of the Dolores and San Miguel Rivers, and the Nature Conservancy's San Miguel River Tabeguache Preserve in Uravan. Most notable was during the morning when the group discovered evidence that work done by Paradox Valley School students and other volunteers in the recent past was successful as several species of native grasses have sprouted up all over the area near the Bedrock boat ramp.

More next week



Pictured are the three Western Colorado Conservation Corps interns that work with the BLM doing the brunt of the work this year between the Mesa/Montrose County Line and the Salt Creek confluence from left to right are John Roedell, Louis Hotchkiss, and Kyle Goddard. On the front page, Hotchkiss is cutting a targeted tree as Goddard overlooks. Photos courtesy of the Tamarisk Coalition.

On May 29, DRRP and the Tamarisk Coalition presented a one day Dolores River Plant Identification Workshop in Bedrock led by Amanda Clements of the Uncompahgre BLM Field Office. Pictured right, on the far left is Tamarisk Coalition Staff Scientist Julie Knudson helping to identify one of the plants at the event. The group discovered several reintroduced native grasses that appear to be taking successful root in the area around the Bedrock boat ramp which were seeded by the help of Paradox Valley School students and other volunteers. There is an upcoming three day volunteer project just upstream of Bedrock from October 2 - 4 where volunteers will be cutting Tamarisk and planting a bunch of native grasses and shrubs. Registration is required. For more information or to register call Daniel Oppenheimer at 970-256-7400 or e-mail at doppenheimer@tamariskcoalition.org



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