

“B” Rated Weeds

A weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant,
but may have limited distribution in some counties

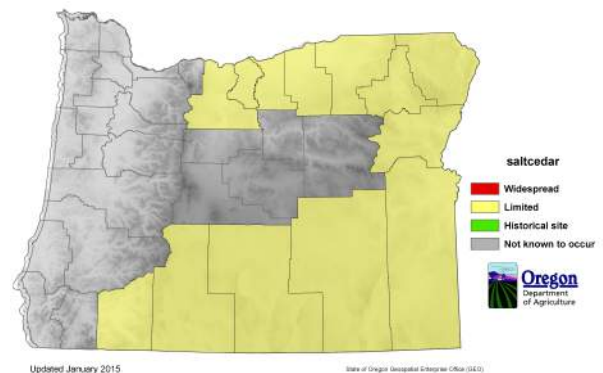
Saltcedar
Tamarix ramosissima

Other common names:
salt cedar, tamarisk

USDA symbol: TARA
ODA rating: B and T



Introduction: (*Tamarix ramosissima*, *T. chinensis*, or *T. gallica*) is a large shrub or small tree introduced to North America from the Middle East in the early 1800s. This weed has been used as an ornamental, for windbreaks and erosion control. By 1850, saltcedar had escaped from these plantings, infesting many river systems and drainages in the Southwest – often displacing native vegetation. By 1938, infestations of saltcedar could be found from Florida to California and as far north as Idaho. Saltcedar continues to spread rapidly and currently infests water drainages and wet areas in the United States. (courtesy Montana State University Extension.



Distribution: Malheur County hosts the highest densities of saltcedar especially along the Snake River and Owyhee Reservoir. Smaller outbreaks in other eastern Oregon Counties are targeted for eradication.

Description: Saltcedar species are spreading shrubs or small trees, 5-20 feet tall, with numerous slender branches and small, alternate, scale-like leaves. The pale pink to white flowers are small, perfect and regular, arranged in spike-like racemes. The distinct petals and sepals occur in fours or fives. The fruit is a capsule (Hitchcock and Cronquist 1961).

Impacts: Saltcedar is an aggressive invader of riversides, springs, creeks and gullies in the arid regions of the American west. It has an enormous water appetite causing springs and small waterways to dry up putting stress on many desert species. The plants provides no food for wildlife and little nesting cover.

Biological controls: The saltcedar leaf beetle, *Diorhabda elongata* is well established in eastern Oregon often causing complete defoliation of all plants in specific drainages.

