ABSTRACT

TITLE:	Ambushed: Comparing Strategies for Mitigating Invasive Plant Species on the Animas River in Durango, Colorado
AUTHOR(S):	Klemperer, Colton
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ABSTRACT: On the Animas River in Southwestern Colorado, invasive plant species saltcedar tamarisk (Tamarix ramosissima), Russian-olive (Elaeagnus angustifolia), and Siberian elm (Ulmus pumila) have become abundant throughout the river corridor. These invasive species have a range of negative effects on the river's ecosystem, including the suppression of native species and altered natural habitats. This research examined the efforts of local land management experts in the town of Durango, Colorado, a municipality which relies on the river for water, recreation, and other benefits. Through interviews I found that a variety of mitigation efforts have been put into practice to manage these invasives, including chemical treatments and manual removal efforts. The "cut-and-treat" management technique, utilizing herbicidal treatment and manual removal, was the most widely discussed method by all experts, however, biological control methods should be further explored as a technique for invasives species management in this area due to the success of treating saltcedar tamarisk on other riparian ecosystems, including the Colorado River.