

## RESTORATION ACTION ITEM

**DATE** April 11, 2002

**TITLE** Implementation of a coordinated restoration effort for the San Felipe Creek- San Sebastian Marsh watershed.

**ISSUE** The San Felipe Creek- San Sebastian Marsh watershed is currently infested with salt cedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*). Several agencies have been working independently to restore this important riparian habitat by removing salt cedar. A coordinated approach to restoration activities will increase restoration effectiveness, heighten project awareness, and make the project more competitive for additional grants or partnership.

### BACKGROUND/STATUS

Long before the creation of the Salton Sea, the San Sebastian Marsh and San Felipe Creek watershed and its associated marshes served as a primary stopover for migrating bird life. These creeks and marshes provide a lush riparian island, surrounded by the Colorado Desert. Eight threatened and endangered species and nine species of special concern inhabit the marsh system. Currently, salt cedar infests the marsh system. Salt cedar effectively out-competes native flora, provides little wildlife forage, uses massive amounts of water, and is often so dense that many animals cannot reach the associated water sources. The removal of salt cedar results in a tremendous increase in biological diversity due to the reestablishment of native plants and animal species.

### PROPOSED ACTION

- ▶ An ad hoc workgroup be formed to coordinate restoration of the San Sebastian Marsh- San Felipe Creek watershed. Leads should include: El Centro Field Office (Gavin Wright), Anza-Borrego State Park (Jim Dice), and California Fish and Game (unknown).
- ▶ Stakeholders, partners, and grant sources be identified and invited to participate in the project. Stakeholders might include: USFWS, BOR, RCD's, Salton Sea Authority, RC&D's, private land owners, and various NGO's.
- ▶ A work plan and an MOU between the principal partners be developed by next DMG meeting.
- ▶ Managers should consider other watershed or landscape-based projects for similar coordination.

### CONTACTS

Russell Scofield, DMG Habitat Restoration Coordinator, 760-365-0955  
Jim Dice, Senior Resource Ecologist Anza-Borrego State Park, 760-767-3074