A photograph of a salt cedar tree in a dry, arid landscape. The tree is the central focus, with its characteristic silvery-green, needle-like leaves and a dense, rounded canopy. The ground is sandy and sparsely vegetated with other dry shrubs. The background shows a clear, light blue sky and a flat horizon line.

**SALT CEDAR: A non-native invasive plant in the Western US**

**CARL E. BELL**  
**REGIONAL ADVISOR –**  
**INVASIVE PLANTS**

# Where is saltcedar from?

- Genus *Tamarix* (Tamarisk), all from the old world
- 8 species imported into the US in early 1800's
- *T. aphylla* = Athel tree
- Saltcedars include *T. ramosissima*, *T. parviflora*, *T. chinensis*, *T. gallica*

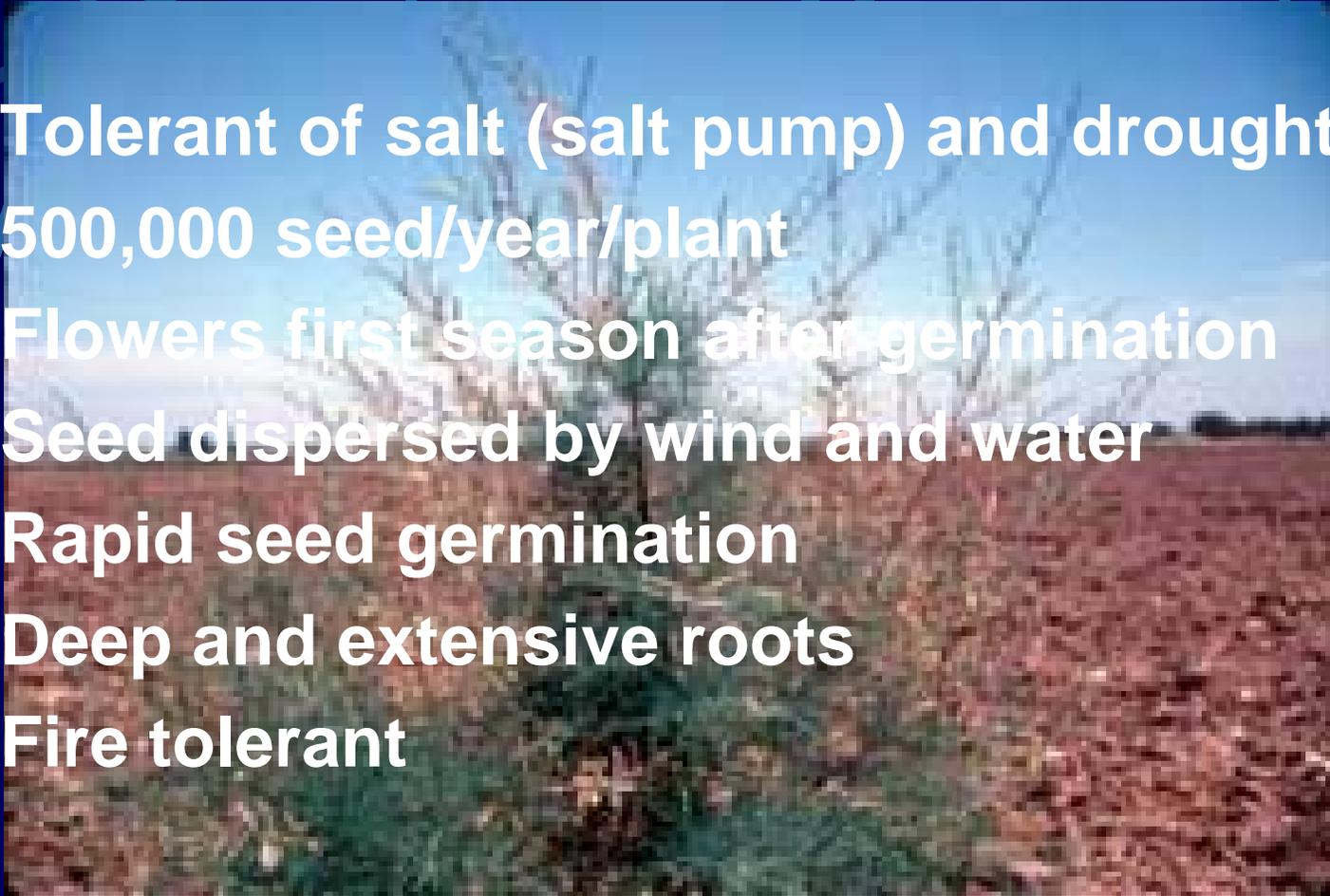
# Saltcedar in North America

- 1.5 million acres in US
- Mostly in southwest, but present in Washington, Montana, BC
- All major river drainages (Colorado, Pecos, Rio Grande, Gila)
- Spreading into Mexico



# Saltcedar weediness

- Tolerant of salt (salt pump) and drought
- 500,000 seed/year/plant
- Flowers first season after germination
- Seed dispersed by wind and water
- Rapid seed germination
- Deep and extensive roots
- Fire tolerant



# WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF SALT CEDAR ON NATURAL AREAS?

- Alter the biology of natural areas
- Do not support native insects
- Birds don't nest in these plants
- Are not eaten by larger herbivores



# PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

- **Clog river and stream channels**
- **Do not hold stream embankments**
- **Increases salinity**
- **Increases fire frequency**
- **High water use**



# Control methods for Saltcedar

- **Physical (cutting, burning, bulldozing, chaining)**
- **Herbicides**
- **Biological**

# HERBICIDES

- **Triclopyr, glyphosate, and imazapyr are the most commonly used**
- **Most used with special application methods: cut stump, basal bark**
- **Restrictions around water on most**

# BIOLOGICAL CONTROL

- **Best long-term approach**
- **Difficult to get approval**
- **Is being opposed by some environmental groups and federal agencies**
- **Saltcedar leaf beetle released in 2001, manna mealybug is next**

