



**SAND  
CREEK  
REGIONAL  
GREENWAY**  
Wilderness In the City

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**OCTOBER 9, 2006**

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**VOLUNTEERS ERADICATE INVASIVE PLANTS**  
NEARLY 400 TAMARISK REMOVED ALONG SAND CREEK

**COMMERCE CITY – OCTOBER 6-7, 2006** –Xcel Energy Foundation, the City of Commerce City, over 40 volunteers, and the Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership joined forces on Friday and Saturday, October 6 & 7, to remove invasive tamarisk from the Sand Creek Regional Greenway in Commerce City.

A survey of Sand Creek this summer found over 100 tamarisk plants. Tamarisk, also called saltcedar, is a highly invasive weed that takes over creeks and streams all across the west. Each tamarisk consumes 300 gallons of water a day. They do not provide habitat for wildlife and choke out native plants species such as willows. Once established, tamarisk is almost impossible to remove.

Xcel Energy Foundation provided a major grant to the Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership last spring to work on restoration of habitat along Sand Creek. After a survey of all invasive weeds, tamarisk was identified as the number one priority for immediate removal.

“The restoration of the Sand Creek corridor as a healthy ecosystem and recreation area is a priority in our community,” stated Jim Rhodes of Xcel Energy Foundation. “We are proud to support this effort both financially and with volunteer labor.”

The volunteers worked extremely hard – doing the backbreaking work of sawing down the tamarisk and dragging off the trunks and branches.

An energetic group of AmeriCorps volunteers, most of whom work in literacy in Commerce City schools, pitched in on Friday, removing large, long-established tamarisk from nearly 2 miles along Sand Creek just east of the Dahlia trailhead in Commerce City.



AmeriCorps volunteers on Oct 6

*A cooperative project of  
Aurora  
Commerce City  
Denver  
Sand Creek Regional  
Greenway Partnership  
Stapleton Development  
Corporation*



From left Nick Pizzuti, Laurie Wagner, Dana Prince and Diana Bayes work as a team to remove established tamarisk

Saturday, another crew of volunteers from Xcel Energy, local neighbors, Commerce City Parks and Recreation, and the Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership completed the job, removing of over 300 tamarisks in a highly infested one mile section further downstream in the Pepper Riparian Area in Commerce City.

Special thanks goes to Xcel Energy Foundation for financial and volunteer support, AmeriCorps for great volunteers and enthusiasm, to Thomas Brothers Coffee and Chai, Wal-Mart and King Soopers for refreshments, and to all the hard workers who made a huge difference along the Sand Creek Regional Greenway this year.

Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership is a non-profit organization responsible for managing the development, operation and use of the 14-mile public greenway along Sand Creek. The Greenway links the High Line Canal to the Platte River Greenway, completing a 50-mile loop of off-street urban trails in the northeast metro area. Sand Creek Regional Greenway is a cooperative project of the cities of Aurora, Denver and Commerce City and non-profits Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership and Stapleton Development Corporation.

For more information visit [www.sandcreekgreenway.org](http://www.sandcreekgreenway.org).

High resolution photographs available for print at [http://www.sendcreekgreenway.org/Tamarisk Removal.htm](http://www.sendcreekgreenway.org/Tamarisk%20Removal.htm)

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