

Authority for Conducting Saltcedar Removal on Public Land

El Paso Natural Gas / Boss Reclamation Fuel Reduction Project

EA No. NM-066-2002-0058

Based on the analysis of the proposal contained in the above referenced Categorical Exclusion, I have determined that the mechanical removal of saltcedar on public land in the vicinity of the El Paso Natural Gas Pipeline and the Pecos River is within the scope of 516 DM 6.5.

I authorize the removal of saltcedar on portions of public land in the following area (refer to the map):

T. 8 S., R. 25 E., Section 1 SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ and Section 12 NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, New Mexico Principle Meridian

Saltcedar will be entirely removed from approximately 20 acres of previously disturbed public land within the floodplain of the Pecos River in the vicinity of the El Paso Natural Gas Pipeline and Pecos River. Saltcedar will be mechanically cleared in an area approximately 500 feet on either side of the aerial pipeline to alleviate the damage to the aerial pipeline structure or the danger of a catastrophic explosion resulting from wildfire. Removal will include raking and piling saltcedar on public land a sufficient distance away from the pipeline for subsequent burning by the BLM.

Actual saltcedar removal will be conducted by Boss Reclamation contracted by El Paso Natural Gas (see Boss Reclamation Fuel Reduction Proposal). A BLM resource advisor will monitor the project.

The decision to authorize removal of saltcedar does not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation, and will assist in the protection of facilities located at the Pecos River crossing from wildfire. The action is consistent with planned actions presented in the Roswell Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision, October 1997.

/s/ T R Kreager

T. R. Kreager
Assistant Field Office Manager - Resources

4/8/02

Date