



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON

SEP 29 2004

The Honorable Bill Richardson  
Governor of New Mexico  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Dear Governor Richardson:

*Bill*

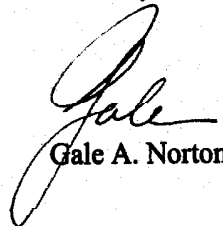
On March 31, 2004, an important three-day conference began in Albuquerque, New Mexico, about the invasive plant tamarisk. I was honored to participate in the conference through a taped video presentation. Rebecca Watson, Assistant Secretary - Land and Minerals Management, personally represented me at the conference. Sponsors of the conference included the Department of Agriculture, the National Invasive Species Council, the National Association of Counties, the Nature Conservancy, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Sandia National Laboratories, the Los Alamos National Laboratory, as well as the Department of the Interior and numerous other organizations.

One purpose of the conference was to develop a set of guiding principles for the development and implementation of a coordinated regional approach to tamarisk control in the West. I am pleased to report that the conference participants have accomplished that goal, as well as the forming of Team Tamarisk, an inclusive alliance of cooperating agencies, tribes, diverse organizations, and individuals across the West, devoted to the control of tamarisk and associated nonnative invasive plants. Enclosed please find the Team Tamarisk Guiding Principles. These principles reflect the common perspectives of the nearly 400 diverse participating members of Team Tamarisk. For effective resource management, the principles are strong, credible, and comprehensive.

We at the Department embrace these principles and plan to use them to guide our own tamarisk control work on Federal lands and our partnerships with others on their lands. We encourage you, as Governor of New Mexico, to embrace the principles established by Team Tamarisk and join us in cooperative projects. We are also encouraging tribal and local governments to actively consider the ways in which they may adopt and implement the principles.

The need for a strategic regional approach to tamarisk control in a coordinated, partnership-based, outcome-oriented framework is clear. I am certain that by working together, we can make progress addressing our invasive species challenges.

Sincerely,

  
Gale A. Norton

Enclosure

cc: Western Governors' Association