


RI PARI AN RESTORATI ON with CEE CEE THE COELOPHYSIS

Natural Resources Conservation Service





HELPING PEOPLE
HELP THE LAND




DON'T LET THE
BOSQUE BECOME
A DINOSAUR
LIKE ME!

Meet Cee Cee the Coelophysis (pronounced SEE-low-FIE-sis). Cee Cee's cool!

Coelophysis have been named the New Mexico State Dinosaur. Cee Cee stands for Conservation Coelophysis, and Cee Cee is curious about the riparian restoration people in New Mexico are doing in the bosque (which is the forest along many of our rivers and streams.)


Do you know what riparian restoration is? Let's find out.



LOOK AT THIS
MESS! IT'S
WORSE THAN
MY BEDROOM!


Salt cedar was used years ago to hold the soil in place along rivers and streams in New Mexico. The people who planted salt cedars and Russian olives back then did not know that these trees would take over and soak up huge amounts of water that are needed for people, cattle, and crops.

These trees have grown so thick along New Mexico rivers and streams that in places it is impossible to walk between them.



GOATS CAN BE
LEAN, MEAN,
EATIN' MACHINES.

Many New Mexico groups have been alarmed by the loss of water these trees cause, and are taking steps to solve the problem. They are doing this in a number of ways. Sometimes the trees are being removed by heavy machines. Other times the trees are being treated so they die. And, when the trees are just saplings (very young, short, and tender) they can be eaten by goats.



SOME PEOPLE WHO PROTECT THE LAND, LIKE THIS FARMER, ARE CALLED CONSERVATIONISTS.



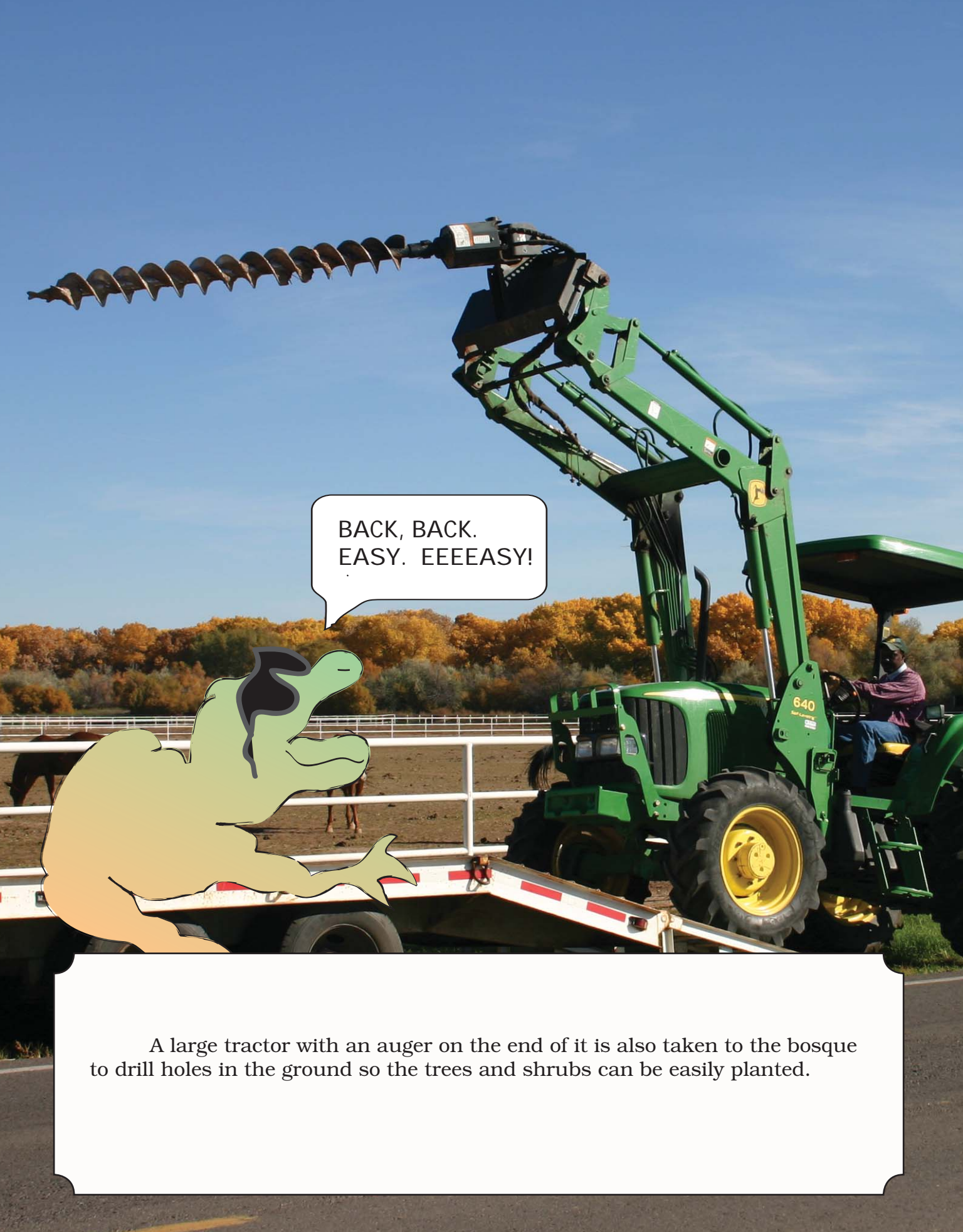
New Mexico's state government, private groups, the United States government, soil and water conservation districts, and others are all helping to rid the forests along our rivers and streams of these pests. Soil and water conservation districts are local people who work to protect our land from soil erosion and activities that would harm the environment. Many are farmers and ranchers who support the best ways to manage our land, water, wildlife, and other resources.



One United States government agency that is helping is the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Once the salt cedar and Russian olive have been removed, the bosque frequently needs to be restored. The bosque can be a beautiful place with the salt cedar and Russian olive removed, but it needs a variety of shrubs as well as trees if it is to be the best area for wildlife possible. NRCS has worked on many riparian restoration projects using plants that are grown at the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center south of Albuquerque. Riparian means that area along a stream or river.



Shrubs and young trees are started at the plant nursery in pots at the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center. When NRCS helps restore an area the pots are loaded on to trucks to take to the bosque where they will be planted. Plants with very long stems are selected because they will be planted deep in the ground.



BACK, BACK.
EASY. EEEEEASY!

A large tractor with an auger on the end of it is also taken to the bosque to drill holes in the ground so the trees and shrubs can be easily planted.



People like Keith White operate the auger ...



... to dig very deep holes to plant the shrubs with long stems. By using plants with long stems and putting them in deep holes, the roots will be in the water table and not need irrigating. The water table is the area underground that is saturated with water.

Most plants would die if you planted them in such deep holes, but riparian plants normally live in these kind of conditions so they survive.



Workers follow the auger and plant the shrubs in the deep holes the auger has dug.



The tiny shrubs will grow up and make a good place for birds, reptiles, and mammals.

A man wearing a white polo shirt, a white cowboy hat, and grey trousers is standing on rocks in a stream. He is holding a fishing rod in his right hand and a woven basket in his left. The stream is surrounded by dense green brush and trees. The water is clear and flowing over the rocks.

AWESOME!!



So that is what riparian restoration is - the restoring of our areas along our streams and rivers that have been taken over by trees and brush that are pests and rob us of water. We live in a desert, and water is precious to our wildlife, cities, farmers, ranchers, and all New Mexicans.



New Mexico is a beautiful place to live and many of your friends and neighbors, including NRCS and the soil and water conservation districts, are working to keep it that way.

For more information about the United States
Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources
Conservation Service in New Mexico go to
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