

Restoration Through Partnership

From Vision to Collaborative Action

It began with a vision—one that seemed all but impossible in the early 2000s. At that time, the Escalante River and its tributaries were overspread with dense, thorny, rapidly expanding Russian olive trees along hundreds of miles of riparian corridor. The vision? A river system free of invasive species, restored to its historic natural community composition.

That vision motivated an unprecedented partnership of public resource management agencies, municipal governments, local citizens and businesses, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions. Formed in 2009, the Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) is in the midst of fulfilling its founding vision, plus a whole lot more.



Amber Hughes

Imagine that a river that looks like THIS...

This vision launched the Escalante River Watershed Partnership. (Russian olive is the silver-green vegetation in the image above.)



Amber Hughes

could look like THIS.

Who are the Participants?

- Boulder Community Alliance
- Canyonlands Conservation District
- Color Country Cooperative Weed Management Area
- Dixie National Forest, US Forest Service
- Four Corners School/Canyon Country Youth Corps
- Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, National Park Service
- Grand Canyon Trust
- Grand Canyon Wildlands Council
- Grand Staircase–Escalante National Monument, Bureau of Land Management
- Grand Staircase–Escalante Partners
- Great Old Broads for Wilderness
- Individual private landowners
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- Rim to Rim Restoration
- Tamarisk Coalition
- Trout Unlimited
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service/Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program
- Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
- Utah Division of Water Quality
- Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
- Western Water Assessment
- Wild Utah Project
- Wilderness Volunteers

Beyond Invasives: Restoring Watershed Health

Though the spread of exotic plants through the Escalante canyons spurred formation of the ERWP, controlling invasives is just one part of the partnership's efforts. The ERWP's mission is to restore and maintain the natural ecological conditions of the Escalante River and its watershed and involve local communities in promoting and implementing sustainable land and water use practices.

To that end, the ERWP looks at the Escalante River watershed as a whole ecosystem—how it functions, how those functions are impaired, and how these problems might be remedied.

Nationally Recognized Effort

After just three years, the ERWP gained national recognition for its river conservation and restoration efforts. In 2012 and 2013, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar identified the ERWP as a model for how communities across America can restore and reconnect with their local rivers through the American Great Outdoors Initiative.



Amber Hughes

The ERWP engages and involves local community members and the general public through volunteer opportunities, public meetings, field trips, and festivals.



Barbara Brundell

Take part in a field trip.



Amber Hughes

Attend an ERWP meeting.



Kristina Waggoner

Join a volunteer restoration team.

How You Can Get Involved

Visit our webpage, www.gsenm/erwp or check ERWP's Facebook page for listings of upcoming meetings, field trips, and volunteer opportunities. All ERWP meetings are open to the public—join us. If you're not from this area, consider starting or joining a partnership in your community to address a pressing local issue.

