

Subject: Invasive Species Cause Big Problems

Story Summary: They're called "invasive species" and though not as bad as the "Attack of the Killer Tomatoes," they can wreak havoc. We take a look at one example, salt cedar, which is causing major water supply problems in the Southwest.

TRT: 1:55

Suggested Lead: They may sound like the name of the latest sci-fi thriller, but invasive species are really an enormous problem, costing the nation scary amounts of money and land. Johnna Miller reports.

Suggested Supers: Tom Green County, Texas
@ :07

Marty Acton
Texas Rancher
@ :11

Donnie Dippel
National Invasive Species Control Committee
@ :54

Johnna Miller
Reporting
@ 1:48

Tag: Experts say invasive species have contributed to the decline of 42 percent of the endangered and threatened species in the United States.

Invasive Species Cause Big Problems
Johnna Miller Reporting
July 24, 2003

<p>Shot of salt cedar trees</p> <p>C/u of flowers</p> <p>Shot of trees along river bank</p> <p>Tom Green County, Texas</p>	<p>VO/ THESE LITTLE TREES, WITH THEIR FEATHERY PINK FLOWERS, MAY LOOK HARMLESS...BUT DON'T BE FOOLED. SALT CEDAR TREES ARE FAST-SPREADING WATER POACHERS.</p>
<p>Marty Acton Texas Rancher</p>	<p>SOT/ IN WEST TEXAS SALT CEDAR IS YOUR ENEMY. IT JUST TAKES WATER AWAY FROM THE RIVER AND LAKE BEDS AND WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT OR WE'RE GOING TO RUN OUT OF WATER.</p>
<p>Cows in a pasture</p> <p>Pan to couple walking into shot</p>	<p>VO/ AND IN AN AREA WHERE WATER IS ALREADY SCARCE, THAT'S A LEGITIMATE CONCERN. FARMERS AND RANCHERS LIKE MARTY ACTON AND HIS WIFE, DAY, HAVE SEEN IT GO FROM BAD TO WORSE.</p>
<p>SOT</p>	<p>SOT/ I'VE WATCHED THE PECOS RIVER, WHERE IT USED TO FLOW, NOW IT'S DOWN TO A TRICKLE. USED TO BE WIDE ENOUGH YOU COULDN'T CROSS IT. NOW YOU CAN STEP OVER IT.</p>
<p>Wide shot of "reservoir"</p> <p>pan from storm to lake</p> <p>closeup of bank</p>	<p>VO/ THIS SHOULD BE A RESERVOIR, (NAT OF THUNDER) BUT RAINSTORMS ARE NO MATCH WHEN EACH TREE CAN GUZZLE UP TO 200 GALLONS OF WATER A DAY. AND IF THAT'S NOT BAD ENOUGH...</p>

<p>Donnie Dippel National Invasive Species Control Committee</p>	<p>SOT/ AS IT TAKES WATER UP IT ALSO PULLS SALT UP AND DISTRIBUTES THAT SALT ON TO OF THE GROUND WHICH ALLOWS NOTHING ELSE TO GROW EXCEPT SALT CEDAR.</p>
<p>Acton & wife looking at trees, walking out of shot</p> <p>More shots of salt cedar</p>	<p>(Nat – “Taste the leaf. Can you taste the salt?”)</p> <p>VO/ SALT CEDAR IS JUST ONE IN A LONG LIST OF INVASIVE SPECIES THAT CAUSE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL HARM. EXPERTS SAY THEY COST THE NATION MORE THAN \$100 BILLION A YEAR. THESE NON-NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS OFTEN FACE NO NATURAL ENEMIES SO THEY CAN SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE. THAT’S CERTAINLY BEEN THE CASE WITH SALT CEDAR.</p>
<p>SOT</p>	<p>SOT/ IT CHOKES OUT EVERYTHING AND IS SO THICK THAT THE LIVESTOCK AND WILDLIFE LIKE DEER CAN’T GET THROUGH TO GET A DRINK.</p>
<p>More of trees</p> <p>Shot of small town</p>	<p>VO/ LIKE GIANT SPONGES, THESE TREES ARE STARTING TO LEAVE CITIES AND TOWNS HIGH AND DRY.</p>
<p>SOT</p>	<p>SOT/ THERE ARE CITIES IN THE WEST THAT ARE JUST RUNNING OUT OF WATER AND THEY HAVE TO HAVE THE WATER THAT SALT CEDAR IS TAKING EACH DAY.</p>

More trees	VO/ BUT TAMING INVASIVE INTRUDERS IS AN UPHILL BATTLE THAT MORE AREAS MAY SOON BE FIGHTING.
Closeup of pink flower	VO/ IN TOM GREEN COUNTY, TEXAS, I'M JOHNNA MILLER.