Current distribution and potential impacts of tamarisk beetle (*Diorhabda* spp.) across the Colorado River Basin

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The tamarisk beetle (*Diorhabda* spp.), a biological control agent introduced for *Tamarix* (tamarisk, saltcedar) control, has been spreading across the Colorado River Basin (CRB) for more than a decade. Due to environmental cues constraining the beetles in their place of origin, the species released in the upper CRB was originally expected to cease southward progress at or near the 37th parallel, roughly the Utah/Arizona border. However, the large beetle population sizes resulting from the massive monotypic tamarisk stands along the Colorado River allowed for evolutionary processes to unfold, resulting in a shift in the physiological limitations of distribution. This presentation will discuss the current distribution and extent of beetle populations within the CRB, including movements this season which saw the beetles reach Mexico. Observed and expected impacts to tamarisk throughout the CRB will also be discussed, as will potential restoration efforts to provide a live vegetation canopy in tamarisk-dominated systems affected by the beetle.