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Subject: Greetings from Granite Camp in Grand Canyon National Park!

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To: Lynn Hamilton <gcr@infomagic.net>

Greetings from Granite Camp in Grand Canyon National Park!

The Vegetation Crew from Grand Canyon National Park along with many partners and volunteers has been busy with the first phase of tamarisk removal for the Granite Camp and Monument Creek Watershed Stewardship Project and we wanted to provide you with a brief update of work completed. We also want to share some photographs that show the amazing transition of the site, the conceptual illustration for 5 years from now, and let you know the plans for 2013.

This past fall, we conducted two 8 day backpacking trips with over 20 people participating in one or both trips. The first trip was in mid- November and focused on removing the tamarisk that were below or near the 42,000 CFS line in anticipation of the High Flow event that took place at the end of November. During that first trip we removed 362 tamarisk trees from the site! The next trip was in early December and our goal was to remove the tamarisk included in our planting zones in preparation for February and April planting trips. We removed an additional 409 trees on that trip for a grand total of 771 trees removed!

The next phase of the project begins in a couple of weeks when we go to Bright Angel Creek for 5 days to collect coyote willow poles. Now that most of the tamarisk has been removed, we will begin replacing some of those trees with native species. We will be collecting the dormant poles along the creek from Phantom on up and then hauling the poles back downstream where we will bundle them in groups of 10-15 and soak them in the creek for 12 days. The idea is to have the poles soak up as much water as possible before they get planted into the sand at Granite Camp. We will leave the poles soaking in the creek, hike out and a few days later, launch on a river trip from Lees Ferry. We will be spending 5 days on the river and will be collecting cottonwood and Goodding's willow pole cuttings along the way. Once we arrive at Phantom, we will pick up the bundles of coyote willow collected 2 weeks earlier and rig them onto our boats, run through Horn Creek Rapid and arrive at Granite Camp. We have 8 volunteers hiking into Granite Camp and we will spend the next week planting the poles (coyote willow, Goodding's willow and cottonwoods) along the bank, finishing up the tamarisk removal and conducting our post-removal vegetation monitoring.

There will be one more planting phase to be completed sometime this spring when we bring the plants currently growing in the nursery down the river to Granite camp. We have been working with Fred Phillips Consulting on the planting design and it will be available on the park's website soon. <http://www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/granite.htm>

We are looking forward to continuing our partnerships and working with fabulous stewards of the canyon. If you are interested in volunteering to spend a few days at the camp and water plants, please let us know.

Enjoy the photos attached and feel free to contact me with questions. We are very excited about this pilot project and look forward to sharing our continued successes and challenges as we progress.

<http://www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/granite.htm>

Best,
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