



**YAMPA RIVER LEAFY SPURGE PROJECT**  
 “... working together to establish an effective program of integrated management for leafy spurge...”

**YAMPA RIVER LEAFY SPURGE PROJECT  
 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Biological Control in Moffat and Routt Counties**

1. In the second week of July volunteers traveled to Ashton, Idaho, to meet with Kim Ragotzkie (contractor with the Idaho Bureau of Land Management), and collect 17,000 *Aphthona* and 1,000 *Oberea* beetles.
2. Colorado Parks and Wildlife purchased 6,000 *Aphthona* and 300 *Oberea* from Montana.
3. Colorado Department of Agriculture supplied a total of 29,000 *Aphthona* and 370 *Oberea*.

The biocontrol insects were then released as follows:

| 2023 YRLSP Biocontrol Releases Summary |                 |               |         |                                |              |              |        |
|--|-----------------|---------------|---------|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------|
| Date                                   | <i>Aphthona</i> | <i>Oberea</i> | Source  | Approx Location                | Lead         | Event        | County |
| 29 June                                | 3,000           | 0             | CDA     | several Routt County locations | Routt County |              | Routt  |
| 30 June                                | 5,000           | 170           | CDA     | Camilletti                     | YRLSP        | ShowMe Float | Moffat |
| early July                             | 12,000          | 100           | CDA     | Yampa Canyon                   | NPS          |              | Moffat |
| 13 July                                | 1,000           | 100           | Idaho   | Deerlodge                      | NPS          |              | Moffat |
| 13 July                                | 16,000          | 900           | Idaho   | YRSWA                          | YRLSP        |              | Routt  |
| 13 July                                | 6,000           | 300           | Montana | YRSWA                          | CPW          |              | Routt  |
| 18-19 July                             | 4,000           | 100           | CDA     | YRSWA                          | YRLSP        | Youth        | Routt  |
| 19 July                                | 5,000           | 0             | CDA     | YRSWA                          | CDA          |              | Routt  |
| TOTAL                                  | 52,000          | 1,670         |         |                                |              |              |        |
|  | 53,670          |               |         |                                |              |              |        |

Total beetles released in 2023: 53,670

## **Inundative Biological Control Strategy Grant**

Emily Spencer, Dinosaur National Monument, applied for and received a grant with funds totaling over \$500,000 for a new multi-partner **Green and Yampa River Inundative Biocontrol Strategy Project**. Funded with Inflation Reduction Act dollars, the grant will underwrite biological control activities for the years 2024 through 2030. The project funding will be distributed in 2024, 2025, and 2026 to partners, including Friends of the Yampa and the CDA Palisade Insectary. These partners will then continue to work with Dinosaur National Monument to disburse the funds through 2030 to facilitate leafy spurge and Russian knapweed biocontrol in the Yampa Basin, Dinosaur National Monument, and other areas along the Green River.

## **Outreach and Education**

1. YRLSP volunteers organized the 2023 Show Me Float, held on June 30 from Dorsey Beach to Loudy Simpson Park. There were 17 participants. Activities included the release of 5,170 leafy spurge biological control beetles over four different locations on Darryl Camilletti properties upstream of the Yampa Valley Golf Course. (John Husband, Ben Beall)
2. YRLSP partners organized the 2023 Youth Outreach educational workshops, held over two days (July 7 and 8) on the Yampa River State Wildlife Area. Twenty kids, ages 9 to 12, and four counselors participated from Totally Kids Camp of Hayden and Yampatika Environmental Camp. The presenters were representatives from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Routt County Weed Program, Bureau of Land Management, and the Colorado Department of Agriculture. The kids learned about biocontrol and participated in leafy spurge beetle releases on both days. (Laurel Deitch, Tiffany Carlson, Chris Rhyne, Shane Talvacchio, John Kaltenbach.)

## **Community Presentations**

YRLSP members attended and/or updated the following organizations and events:

1. At the request of the Yampa White Green Basin Roundtable, Tamara provided short descriptions of past and ongoing work for inclusion of the YRLSP in the YWG list of projects in the Basin Implementation Plan.
2. YRLSP representatives updated the Routt County Board of County Commissioners on March 20 (Ben, Jenny, Shane, Tamara, Tiffany)
3. Tamara kept an information table at the Craig, State of the River meeting on March 22

4. Ben kept an information table at the Steamboat Springs State of the River meeting on March 23
5. John Husband updated the Moffat County Board of County Commissioners on March 28
6. Ben shared YRLSP handouts at the Yampa River Fest in Steamboat on June 3.

### **Website Administration**

The YRLSP website continues to be regularly updated with information about YRLSP sponsored events (Show Me Float and Youth Outreach), and the 2023 biocontrol release and monitoring data has been added to the Interactive Map and GIS Data pages (for public download). A new web page has been added to the Resources menu providing further information and some general guidelines for the integration of biological control with herbicide use in the treatment of leafy spurge.

### **Additional Partner Activities**

1. Dinosaur National Monument organized a leafy spurge pulling trip on the Yampa River within the monument (July 2 to July 7<sup>th</sup>), which included the release of 12,000 *Aphthona* and 100 *Oberea*.
2. Bureau of Land Management has developed plans for targeting leafy spurge with sheep grazing in Tepee Draw.
3. Routt County Weed Program continued management of leafy spurge in county rights-of-way and released 3,000 *Aphthona* beetles. The program also worked with the SMV Stetson Ranch, LLC, to ensure that a large infestation of leafy spurge above Stagecoach Reservoir does not enter the Yampa River.
4. Moffat County Weed and Pest continued to treat leafy spurge along county rights-of-way. They also participated in four partnerships involving leafy spurge management with county producers and the Bureau of Land Management. A new herbicide option, Venue, was tried in 2023 for the first year, with promising results. Follow-up monitoring will continue in the future.