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Recommended Guideline for the Removal of Tamarisk/Salt Cedar, Desert Broom & Chinese Chamomile

The Town of Cave Creek is uniquely situated at the southern boundary of vast open space within the Tonto National Forrest and understands the threat to private property as a result of wildfires. Establishing proper defensible space by identifying and removing a wide variety of Invasive Plants has become a high priority. Recently the City of Scottsdale worked with a local research group to conduct a series of tests related to our more troublesome and aggressive invasive plant species. Their tests and further evaluations indicated that Dow Chemical's Pathfinder*II, Milestone and Milestone VM were especially effective in low concentrations on Tamarisk/Salt Cedar, Desert Broom and other invasive woody plants. These products were also found to be relatively benign to the surrounding environment in lower concentrations. Specifically, the Tamarisk/Salt Cedar and Desert Broom plants have shown to be very aggressive and both have the ability to completely overtake areas of the desert, while at the same time negatively impacting other native plant species. These large, woody desert plants are almost always green and can quickly grow to more than 10 ft tall. Both the Tamarisk/Salt Cedar and Desert Broom can burn fiercely, which also dramatically increases the intensity of wildland fires, are a recognized threat to nearby structures along with the local, natural desert environment. Both the Tamarisk/Salt Cedar and Desert Broom have proven to be very difficult plants to address and effectively remove from areas once they have become established. **The preferred (and best) method of removing these particular invasive plants is to address them while they are still small plants and to pull them out by the roots.** However, this is not feasible for the larger plants. The recommendation for the medium and larger plants is to cut them off at the base, parallel with the ground and then almost immediately using a direct application method, apply the referenced materials to the remaining plant stumps. This method will kill off the individual plants, leave the existing dead root structure in the ground to help with potential erosion issues and not harm the surrounding desert vegetation. If the branches from larger plants are just cut off and removed, the plant will in short order regrow itself and once again become a dominant player in the local environment.

Chinese Chamomile is a new threat to the community and with the increased winter and spring rains has proved to be truly invasive. The preferred and best method of removing this particular invasive weed is to pull them out by the roots prior to the high temperatures of ninety to ninety-five degrees as that is when they disperse their seeds. If you have missed that window and are staring at swaths of brownish weeds it is recommended that at least using a weed-whacker or similar method to knock them down in order to reduce the fire hazard (although raking up the cut down chamomile remains and disposing of it is best).