RUSSIAN OLIVE

From top: A mature Russian olive; Russian olive leaves; an olive stump after cut-stump treatment. The blue liquid is herbicide with dye added.

Scientific name: Elaeagnus angustifolia

Identification

Trees that can grow up to 40' tall with soft, silvery leaves and piercing thorns. As a ladder fuel, Russian olive boughs extend from tree canopies all the way to the ground. Can form dense, impenetrable thickets in riparian areas.

Why they're an issue

Russian olive elevates fire risk by dominating riparian corridors. As a "ladder fuel," it creates dry, dense fuels that connect ground fuels to tree canopies. It can also exacerbate flood risk by creating "debris dams" that block and unpredictably redirect flood flows. Finally, Russian olive also crowds out native plants by hoarding water, light, and nutrients.

Initial treatment

Russian olive trees can first be dealt with via cut-stump treatments, where trees are cut nearly flush with the ground and herbicide is carefully applied to the stump's cambium (living outer layer). Soon after treatment, stumps will generally begin to grow respouts, which will have soft, silvery leaves and whitish, downy bark. Resprouts, which can rapidly grow into three-foot bushes, will also have small thorns.

Retreatment *(instructions on back)*

Landowners should remove resprouts from stumps and carefully re-apply herbicide where new plant tissue was exposed. In addition, any new saplings growing from the ground should be pulled by hand/weed wrench or mowed. This is best done in late summer or early fall, when plants are actively growing.

RUSSIAN OLIVE *RETREATMENT*

1. For **resprouts:** Remove & treat

Why we recommend this method
This treatment method is relatively low-effort, and uses little herbicide. It's effective at stopping resprouts before they grow too much, and discourages their growth in the future.

Timing
The best time is **late summer or early fall**, when trees are actively pulling nutrients into their roots. Late spring is an OK backup.

Materials
Herbicide, dye, applicator, small cutting device like pruners, personal protective equipment, trash bag or safe location for burning

At-a-Glance Instructions*

1. **Prune** resprouts coming up on or around stumps
2. Within 5 minutes, apply **herbicide** to the cut surfaces
3. **Dispose** of biomass or **pile to burn**. Do not scatter!

2. For **saplings:** Pull or mow

Why we recommend these methods
They are straightforward and require minimal equipment. They neutralize saplings before they become a bigger issue!

Timing
Anytime. At least once a year; frequently enough that saplings are less than 1" in diameter (for mowing) or 2" (for pulling). Pulling is easiest when soils are moist.

Materials
Shovel/weed wrench or mower (optional); trash bag or safe location for burning *(not in Moab City)*

Instructions

1. **Mow or pull** saplings, either by hand or with a wrench. Make sure to remove entire root system.
2. **Dispose** of biomass or **pile to burn.** Do not scatter!

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