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To: [Fogg, Mindy](#)
Subject: tamarisk - Soitec argument against RPO
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Based on the following information, it is proposed that tamarisk scrub should not be considered a wetland under the County jurisdiction. The RPO definition of an RPO wetland includes a vegetation community where “at least periodically, the land supports a predominance of hydrophytes (plants whose habitat is water or very wet places).” Tamarisk species are considered phreatophytes, which have deep roots to reach the water table and depend on groundwater for their water supply (DiTomaso 1996), rather than hydrophytes, which are plants that grow only in water or very moist soils (Dictionary.com 2012). Because tamarisk species are also able to grow in conditions where no groundwater is accessible, it is classified as a facultative phreatophyte rather than an obligate phreatophyte (Kerpez and Smith 1987, cited in DiTomaso 1996).

By definition, tamarisk scrub does not qualify as a County RPO wetland. Furthermore, the preservation of tamarisk is counter to the goals of the RPO, which strive to protect sensitive lands and prevent their degradation (County 2007). Tamarisk is also known to outcompete other vegetation due to its extensive lateral root system that can draw down the water table, and the allelopathic effect of the salt crystals that the leaves secrete, which can prevent other plants from growing around them (DiTomaso 1996).

I don't buy it – do you? What do you think?

**THANKS,
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