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\$2.05 MILLION TO KICK-START WATERSHED-WIDE ARUNDO ERADICATION

OVLC was recently awarded a \$2.05 million grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to kick start our efforts to completely eradicate invasive Arundo (*Arundo donax*) from the Ventura River Watershed!



In the past two years, OVLC has raised over \$1.1 million in grant funds to lay the foundation for eradicating Arundo from the Ventura River Watershed. We conducted initial treatment on 20 acres across San Antonio Creek and the mainstem of the Ventura River, used drones to map the spatial distribution of Arundo throughout the entire watershed, and we are now using this mapping to inform programmatic permits for removal at the watershed scale. Funding from CAL FIRE will enable us to immediately put these permits to work.

Arundo infestations are associated with a wide range of negative environmental impacts.

Arundo stands can grow up to 20-feet high, growing in dense monoculture stands that outcompete our native vegetation, consume massive amounts of water, alter river hydrology through increased erosion, contribute to flood hazards during storm events, and generate explosive fuel loads that contribute to wildfire risk.

CAL FIRE is especially focused on controlling this invasive species because it poses an extreme wildfire hazard. While healthy riparian corridors typically function as fuel breaks that change fire behavior, the biology and physical structure of Arundo facilitates the spread of large, high-intensity fires. Arundo is highly productive, meaning that it grows rapidly and forms tall, dense stands intermixed with large amounts of dead biomass, which can facilitate the spread of fire higher into the canopy and increase the risk of ignition by significant ember cast.

OVLC's vision is to lead the valley's response to climate change, and leading the watershed-wide effort to eradicate this noxious invasive species from the watershed is a critical component in our journey towards achieving this vision. While we acknowledge that the battle against Arundo will span decades, we are making significant progress toward that ultimate goal.

Vivon Crawford

Restoration Program Director

OVLC - RESTORATION - FALL - 2023 - ARUNDO