



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Goats Get Back to Work in Grand Junction for Spring Grazing**

**GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. March 31, 2023** – It's not an April Fools prank, the goats from Goat Vegetation Management Farm get back to work grazing along the Colorado River for the City of Grand Junction Saturday, April 1, 2023. The goats will begin their work to eliminate noxious weeds and overgrowth behind the city's maintenance shops and the recycling center on West Ave.

The goats will be contained by fencing and managed by a shepherd during the day. Each evening the goats will be herded to a safe place for a comfortable night's sleep. Depending on the size of the area there will be between 50-300 goats grazing in selected areas. The goats will be provided shelter during periods of extreme weather and a source of drinking water will also be provided.

“The goats offer a safe way to remove noxious weeds from areas of the city that are hard to access with mowers and other machinery,” stated Ken Sherbenou, Parks and Recreation director. “Depending on how close they are grazing to the trail, those biking, running, or rolling along the Riverfront trail can stop and say hello to these charismatic creatures who are helping the city reduce our use of chemical weed controls in order to help maintain the water quality of the Colorado River.”

This unique partnership is a collaboration between the city and Garrett and Chelsea River, owners of Goat Vegetation Management Farm. Their local goat herd began working with the city last year to remove noxious weeds and overgrowth along the Colorado River near the Blue Heron Boat Ramp.

Because of their unique digestive systems, goats, unlike many other livestock, can eat invasive weeds without redistributing the seeds in their waste. While grazing, the goat's hooves also prepare the soil as they fertilize so native grasses and other desirable vegetation can get reestablished. In addition to helping eradicate weeds, the grazing program will help eliminate the risk of wildfires in areas where there are dried weeds and high grasses.

The trend to use goats for grazing is an approach to farming called regenerative agriculture that focuses on improving and revitalizing soil health. This movement is gaining momentum as an alternative to chemical weed control as well as helping to amend soil to support the growth of native plants, fruits, and vegetables.

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