ADEQ Arizona Department of Environmental Quality **News Release**

1110 West Washington Street • Phoenix, Arizona 85007 • azdeq.gov

DATE: July 9, 2008
CONTACT: Mark Shaffer, Director of Communications, (602) 771-2215

ADEQ Director Owens Announces $176,150 Grant to the University of Arizona's Master Watershed Steward Program

PHOENIX (July 9, 2008) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) Director Steve Owens announced today that ADEQ has awarded a $176,150 Water Quality Improvement Education Grant to the University of Arizona's Master Watershed Steward Program (MWSP) to enhance watershed education statewide.

MWSP was created to educate and train Arizona residents to serve as volunteers in protecting, restoring, monitoring and conserving watersheds. The grant will bring in more partners and expand the scope of the program throughout Arizona.

The program offers more than 50 hours of coursework on basic watershed science and covers general information about what watersheds are and how they function. The stewards learn about hydrology, geology and soil types, Arizona's climate, water quality and quantity, water management and mapping.

"The University of Arizona is doing a terrific job training volunteers to protect our precious water resources through the Master Watershed Steward Program," Director Owens said. "We are very pleased to continue our support for this extremely important effort."

ADEQ has funded MWSP continuously since its inception in 2004 but this is the first year that MWSP has been funded through ADEQ's competitive grant program. In prior years, the program was funded through an Interagency Service Agreement.

ADEQ's Water Quality Improvement Grant Program administers funds from the federal Environmental Protection Agency for implementation of education projects such as the Master Watershed Stewards Program, which ultimately reduces non-point source pollution in Arizona.

Non-point source pollution is polluted runoff from many different sources and remains the nation's largest source of water quality problems. It occurs when rainfall, snowmelt or irrigation runs over land through the ground, picks up pollutants and deposits them into rivers, lakes and coastal waters or introduces them into the ground.

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