



DATE: July 22, 2008

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ADEQ Director Owens Announces \$35,000 Grant to Hualapai Tribe to Protect Grand Canyon Waters

PHOENIX (July 22, 2008) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality Director Steve Owens announced today that ADEQ is awarding a \$35,000 grant to the Hualapai Tribe in Mohave County to protect Diamond Creek, which flows into the Colorado River on the tribe's northwestern Arizona reservation.

The funds will be used to reduce soil erosion that occurs when drivers on the unpaved Diamond Creek Road cross the creek in an area of about one-third of a mile where the creek and road are in close proximity. Sediment traps will be constructed at smaller crossings along the length of the road. Diamond Creek Road is about 12 miles long.

“We are pleased to work with the Hualapai Tribe to support this important effort,” Director Owens said. “It will help to reduce potential pollution to a main tributary of the Colorado River and help protect the Colorado River itself, which is vital to Arizona and the West.”

The road begins in Peach Springs and is the only road access point to the river between Lees Ferry in northern Coconino County and Lake Mead. An estimated 2,400 vehicles traveled the road last year, and more are expected in years to come because of the anticipated growth of the river-tour industry.

The project will divert water from the road. Sediment traps also will help reduce erosion into Diamond Creek and the Colorado River. Water quality and aquatic insects will be monitored and education efforts will be directed to drivers and river visitors.

Both volunteers and paid employees will work on the project.

The grant is funded with federal dollars provided to ADEQ under the Clean Water Act.