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CONTACT: Mark Shaffer, Director of Communications, (602) 771-2215

ADEQ Seeks Applications for Grants to Improve Conditions of Watersheds in Rural Arizona

PHOENIX (Sept. 12, 2008) -- Arizona Department of Environmental Quality Director Steve Owens announced today that ADEQ is accepting applications to allocate \$800,000 to develop Watershed Improvement Plans (WIPs) for three targeted watersheds in the state of Arizona. The grants are funded with federal dollars provided to ADEQ by the U.S. EPA.

Three watersheds – the Oak Creek drainage area near Sedona, the Granite Creek drainage area in and near Prescott, and the San Francisco River drainage area near Clifton -- were selected for WIPs because of E. coli bacteria and other pollutants.

ADEQ will hold one workshop devoted to each watershed. All workshops will be held at ADEQ's central office, 1110 W. Washington Street in Phoenix from 10 a.m. – noon as follows:

- Monday, Sept. 15: Oak Creek drainage (Sedona area)
- Tuesday, Sept. 16: Granite Creek drainage (Prescott area)
- Wednesday, Sept. 17: San Francisco River drainage (Clifton area)

Applicants must provide 40 percent in nonfederal matching funds to implement an “on-the-ground” project to improve water quality in Arizona by addressing a nonpoint source of water pollution. Nonpoint source pollution is the nation’s largest source of water quality problems. It occurs when rainfall, melting snow, or irrigation runoff picks up pollutants and deposits them in rivers, lakes or other ground water sources. Agriculture, forestry, grazing, septic systems, recreational boating, urban runoff and construction all contribute to nonpoint source pollution.

“The Watershed Improvement Program provides much-needed funding at the local level to implement creative approaches to improve watersheds,” said ADEQ Director Owens. “Through our partnerships with local communities, we are achieving cleaner and safer waters and ensuring the long-term sustainability of Arizona’s precious water resources.”

The deadline for the mandatory pre-proposal is Oct. 7, 2008 at 3 p.m. ADEQ will provide feedback on pre-proposals. The deadline for the final, completed grant application is Nov. 12, 2008 at 3 p.m. Grant awards will be announced in January 2009. More information and application forms can be found at:

<http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/watershed/improvement.html#target> For questions or to RSVP for one of the workshops, please contact Krista Osterberg, Grant Coordinator, at kol@azdeq.gov, or (602) 771-4635, (800) 234-5677, Ext. 771-4635.