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ADEQ Announces \$387,800 Water Quality Improvement Grant to Address Sediment Runoff to Little Colorado River

PHOENIX (April 23, 2013) – The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality announced today that a \$387,800 grant has been awarded to Pioneer Irrigation Company Inc. of Springerville to construct 6,000 feet of additional piping to help control sedimentation into the Little Colorado River.

The grant is one of four in Arizona this year administered by ADEQ's water quality improvement grant program (WQIG) to address polluted runoff from many different sources.

The piping project will be in the Big Ditch, a drainage area for the Little Colorado River which has been impacted by heavy erosion. The West Fork of the Little Colorado is currently listed as impaired for turbidity, which means there is a high level of suspended particles in the water.

"These funds will help restore water quality in one of the state's most important mountain watersheds," ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said. "Our program has funded more than 100 projects throughout the state and has had a significant impact on improving the health of our waterways."

The Big Ditch Piping Project will add more than a mile of the 36-inch pipe to an earlier WQIG piping project in the area in 2000, addressing existing erosion issues in areas where the ditch runs parallel to the Little Colorado River. In addition, the grant funding will pay for an evaluation of pollution control in the watershed.