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CONTACT: Mark Shaffer, Director of Media Relations, (602) 771-2215 (o);
(480) 433-9551 (cell)

ADEQ Officials Announce Issuance of Air Quality Permit for Proposed American West Potash Mine Near Holbrook

PHOENIX (Oct. 2, 2013) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today that an air quality permit has been issued to American West Potash, the first permit to be issued for a large, proposed potash mining operation 30 miles southeast of Holbrook in Navajo County.

The permit incorporates all applicable state and federal regulations and all appropriate pollution control requirements, monitoring and record keeping provisions to ensure protection of human health and the environment. While not required by air quality regulations, American West Potash addressed ADEQ's request to work with the United States Forest Service and the National Park Service to document that the project would not adversely impact air quality at Petrified Forest National Park, which is located in close proximity to the project site.

American West Potash expects to begin construction of the mine in early 2015 and hopes to begin potash production in late 2017 or early 2018. The company anticipates creating more than 750 full-time positions and another nearly 200 jobs are expected to be created by outside businesses that will provide goods and services for mine operations.

“This mine could add nearly 1,000 much needed jobs to northeast Arizona’s economy and our air quality permit is highly protective of human health and the environment,” said ADEQ Director Henry Darwin. “This is an excellent example of how all parties can work together to protect the environment and grow the economy.”

American West Potash LLC, headquartered in Denver, Co., owns mineral claims covering an area of 32,000 acres in the Holbrook Basin. The company has estimated that as many as 2.5 billion tons of potash could be extracted in the next 60 years from the region. Potash contains potassium in water soluble form that is used in fertilizers throughout the world.

In addition to the air quality permit, American West Potash is expected to need an aquifer protection permit, an Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (AZPDES) permit and possibly other permits from ADEQ before construction activities can begin.

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