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ADEQ Announces More Than \$300,000 in Grants to Improve Water Quality in Little Colorado River in Apache County

PHOENIX (Oct. 23, 2014) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today two grants totaling \$327,000 have been awarded to address polluted runoff into the Little Colorado River in the White Mountains area of Apache County.

The grants are two of eight in Arizona this year administered by ADEQ's Water Quality Improvement Grant program (WQIG) to address polluted runoff from many different sources. 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.

A total of \$300,000 of the grant money was awarded to Apache Natural Resource Conservation District of Springerville to identify and begin projects to reduce sedimentation from Coyote Creek, Nutrioso Creek, Canero Creek and the South Fork of the Little Colorado River. The grant funding also will provide outreach in the region about the importance of reducing sediment for improved water quality.

The second grant, for \$27,000, was awarded to the Arizona Game and Fish Department to exclude livestock and large wildlife from Stamp Spring and provide them with water away from the site. By eliminating livestock and wildlife use at the spring, this project will improve riparian habitat, increase riparian vegetation and reduce erosion.

“These funds will help restore water quality in one of the state’s most important mountain watersheds,” ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said. “Our Water Quality Improvement Grant program has had a significant impact on improving the health of our waterways throughout the state.”

ADEQ's WQIG program funded through a partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act. For more information about the program, visit <http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/watershed/index.html#wqig>.

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