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ADEQ Awards \$135,850 in Grants to Reduce Polluted Runoff into Upper San Pedro River [Tweet This](#)

PHOENIX (May 15, 2015) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) officials announced today two grant awards totaling \$135,850 to Curtis Ranch and Sands Ranch to undertake measures to protect the Upper San Pedro River in Cochise County.

The funds will be used to restore grassland and remove brush. The project work – enhancing more than 3000 acres – will improve ground cover, reduce soil erosion, increase water filtration, and slow runoff containing *E. coli*, which improves water quality. ADEQ’s models estimate an annual 40 percent reduction in sediments in runoff could be achieved through implementing these measures.

A 17-mile stretch of the Upper San Pedro River from the mouth of Babocomari Creek, a tributary of the San Pedro, to Dragoon Wash is listed as an impaired waterway by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency because of elevated levels of *E. coli*. Septic tanks and cattle grazing operations in the area are believed to be the source of this pollution.

“This grant money will help restore water quality in one of the most beautiful and important riparian areas in the state,” ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said.

Grant recipient, Curtis Ranch L.L.C. Managing Member Forrest Metz stated, “We welcome collaboration with ADEQ’s watershed initiative to support efforts to improve the water quality of the San Pedro River through the reduction of impairments.”

These grants are two of six in Arizona this year administered by ADEQ’s Water Quality Improvement Grant program (WQIG) to reduce polluted runoff from many different sources. ADEQ’s WQIG program is 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/wqig> or contact ADEQ Grant and Watershed Coordinator Samuel “Jake” Breedlove at sb12@azdeq.gov or (602) 771-4243.

About ADEQ

Established by the Arizona Legislature under the Environmental Quality Act of 1986, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality is the state’s regulatory agency for protecting and enhancing public health and the environment of Arizona.

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