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ADEQ Awards \$311,603 Grant to Oak Creek Canyon Task Force to Reduce E. Coli Bacteria in Creek Watershed

PHOENIX (Sept. 18, 2009) -- The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has awarded a \$311,603 grant to the Oak Creek Canyon Task Force to reduce the level of E. coli bacteria in the Oak Creek Watershed.

The grant will be used to plan and complete projects to identify and clean up sources of *E. coli* bacteria in the Oak Creek Watershed. The grant money also will develop a watershed improvement plan. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency listed the creek as "impaired," or seriously polluted, under the Clean Water Act.

The grant is being awarded under ADEQ's new Targeted Watershed Improvement Grant program for projects where surface water cleanup is needed and where strong community support is anticipated for completing the project. The grant includes a one-year planning phase and cleanup projects to be implemented the following year.

"These funds will help restore water quality in one of the state's most beautiful and cherished watersheds," said ADEQ Director Benjamin H. Grumbles.

The grant is funded with federal dollars provided to ADEQ under the Clean Water Act.

In May, two other Targeted Watershed Improvement Grants were awarded to address impaired water bodies in Arizona, one for \$299,961 to the Prescott Creeks Preservation Association to reduce the level of pollutants in the Granite Creek Watershed and the other for \$188,436 to the Gila Watershed Partnership of Arizona to reduce the level of E. coli bacteria in the San Francisco River.

For more information on the grant program, visit our Web page:

<http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/water/watershed/improvement.html#target>

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