



DATE: July 21, 2010

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

---

## **ADEQ Awards \$70,791 Grant to Tonto Watershed Group to Improve Water Quality in Tonto, Christopher creeks**

PHOENIX (July 21, 2010) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today that a \$70,791 grant has been awarded to Tonto Watershed Improvement Group to improve water quality in the Tonto Creek and Christopher Creek areas near Payson.

Both creeks in recent times have had elevated levels of *E. coli*, phosphates and nitrates and problems with dissolved oxygen content in the water being too low, which negatively affects many desirable species of fish like trout.

The grant money will be used over the next two years to recruit a volunteer coordinator and train volunteers to become proficient in using water testing equipment, documenting results and developing techniques to improve the watershed.

After conducting tests and analyzing results, the volunteers will then conduct public presentations about pollutant sources within the watershed and will address ways to properly manage septic systems, how to develop sanitary districts and discuss proper land use techniques.

“Environmental stewardship and education about sediment pollution sources go hand-in-hand. ADEQ is pleased to provide this money to the Tonto Watershed group to increase awareness and prevent pollution in two of the most scenic waterways in the state,” ADEQ Director Benjamin H. Grumbles said.

ADEQ's Water Quality Improvement Grant program is funded through a partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act.

To receive press releases by email: <http://www.azdeq.gov/subscribe.html>  
Follow ADEQ on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/azdeq>  
Follow ADEQ on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/ArizonaADEQ>