



Press Release

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ADEQ Awards \$275,000 Environmental Stewardship Grant for Oak Creek

Grant funds will support Oak Creek Water Quality Ambassadors' continued outreach.

PHOENIX (June 5, 2015) – The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) announced today that a \$275,000 grant has been awarded to the Oak Creek Watershed Council (OCWC) for continued educational outreach and cleanup efforts of the Water Quality Ambassadors program in Yavapai County.

ADEQ's third grant in support of the ambassadors program has two goals in addressing polluted runoff to Oak Creek: measure the positive outcomes from the prior two grant awards and establish the foundation for a self-sustaining program. Oak Creek, from its headwaters to its confluence with Spring Creek in Oak Creek Canyon, is listed as impaired for *E. coli*.

"ADEQ's role is not only to ensure compliance with environmental regulations but also to educate Arizona's citizens and its visitors about how they can make a positive impact," ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said. "The Water Quality Ambassadors program grant demonstrates our commitment to funding partnerships with local non-profit organizations to foster hands-on environmental education for Arizonans."

With this grant, ADEQ will fund eight ambassadors who will continue face-to-face educational outreach in the area, waste removal and volunteer coordination to solidify the program for the future. To date, the ambassadors program has removed nearly three tons of trash from frequently visited Oak Creek recreational areas.

ADEQ's Water Quality Improvement Grant program (WQIG) is funded through a partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act. Since it began in 2000, our WQIG program has funded more than 150 projects reducing polluted runoff from many different sources throughout the state and had a significant impact on improving the health of our waterways. 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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