



NEWS RELEASE

Oak Creek Watershed Council
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For Immediate Release

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MANURE SHARING PROGRAM LAUNCHED ON WATERSHED WEBSITE

The Oak Creek Watershed Council offers a free online module to all Arizona residents to "share" their excess manure with the community

Sedona, AZ – Sharing in the state of Arizona just got a little easier, for manure anyway. The Oak Creek Watershed Council launched its free web-based Manure Share Program on September 14. The online module allows any resident of Arizona the opportunity to share or find free manure across the state. Participants may choose from a multitude of manure types, including cow, horse, chicken, llama and duck to name a few. The site includes proper composting techniques for livestock manure, a helpful glossary of terms for the novice, and a great community hub to share a viable resource – free fertilizer!

"We are really excited about the possibilities this program can offer to the Oak Creek Watershed and the surrounding Arizona communities," said Executive Director Marie McCormick, "mobilizing the state into responsible action takes time and dedication – and we hope that this program will make a positive contribution to the reduction of *E. coli* bacteria in our waterways."

The Manure Share web service brings people searching for organic materials for use in field applications together with livestock owners who have excess manure. This ultimately benefits the water quality in Oak Creek and across Arizona by safely removing excess nutrients from the land and effectively lowering the amount of commercial fertilizer needed by gardeners and landscapers.

"If each household has a material that is regularly disposed of, and, instead, it's given to an interested party, that pollution just became a solution" stated Ryan Matson, OCWC Board member and Technical Manager for the Settlers Rest project. "This manure sharing tool closes a nutrient cycle locally, and helps accumulate beneficial organic materials where they are needed, rather than disposed of when they aren't."

The module effectively allows communities across Arizona the opportunity to tackle non-point

source pollution one household at a time.

“The web module’s design is meant to be very user friendly” stated McCormick. “We hope to reach a multitude of potential users – everyone from the backyard gardener, Master Gardener groups, landscapers, to university clubs and beyond.”

First time users will decide if they have manure to share or want manure in their gardens. Users create a basic account that details what they can share or what they would like to get.

"Using this online interface for the Manure Share Program harnesses the accessibility of Internet platforms to act as a 'round-the-clock go-between.' In doing so, it reduces personal time demand down to a simple email or phone conversation, without a lot of extra guess-work," shared Matson.

Non-point source pollution like dog and horse waste eventually ends up in Oak Creek, and this community-based watershed stewardship is an effort to address recreational impacts in the Oak Creek Watershed before they reach the creek.

Funded by a grant from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality through its Water Quality Improvement Grant program, this manure sharing program is the next step in the reduction of localized non-point source pollution, helping keep Oak Creek clean of bacteria found in manure.

Oak Creek has been on the “non-attaining” list due to the persistence of the indicator fecal coliform bacteria *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) suggesting fecal contamination. *This is a potential health issue that is only going to get worse if we all do not become more aware of it and do something about it.*

For information about how residents and visitors can learn more about the stewardship of Oak Creek and to sign up for the Manure Share Program, visit <http://www.oakcreekwatershed.org>.

For more information about the program please email Marie McCormick at marie@oakcreekwatershed.org or call (248) 444-0756.

The Oak Creek Watershed Council is a nonprofit 501 (c) (3). It is dedicated to maintaining a standard of excellence for watershed stewardship, as well as preserving the integrity of Oak Creek, and its tributaries.

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/environ/water/watershed/index.html#wqig> or contact ADEQ Grant and Watershed Coordinator Samuel “Jake” Breedlove at sb12@azdeq.gov or (602) 771-4243.

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