



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 1, 2019

ADEQ LAUNCHES THE NATURAL STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

NORTH LITTLE ROCK—Today, the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) launched the Natural State Environmental Program. The program, known as Arkansas NStEP, is a voluntary environmental stewardship program that recognizes and rewards organizations for their commitment to environmental leadership. Membership is open to all Arkansas organizations with a minimum of twenty full-time employees, including manufacturers, institutions of higher education, municipalities, government agencies, and non-profits.

NStEP, which was mandated by Arkansas Act 858, has four membership levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. The member organizations commit to complete one to three environmental improvement projects, depending on their membership level. The projects can range from internal improvements use to the restoration of wildlife habit or serving as an environmental mentor for another organization.

In return for the members' commitment to the protection of Arkansas's environment, they will receive recognition and incentives from ADEQ. Recognition includes the use of the NStEP logo on their website and documents, a window decal indicating membership level, a press release announcing their membership, a certificate to display, and being listed on ADEQ's website. Regulatory incentives include a dedicated ombudsman at ADEQ for regulatory questions, inspection notice for non-complaint-based inspections, given priority for permit modifications to the extent possible under statutory limitations, reduced inspection frequency for routine, non-complaint-based inspections for programs without a frequency specified in statute rule, and inclusion in a meeting with ADEQ executive leadership to discuss agency priorities and initiatives.

More information is available on ADEQ's website at www.adeq.state.ar.us/NStEP.

CONTACT: Press@adeq.state.ar.us

###