



State of Utah

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Environmental Quality

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**May 18, 2011**

**Contact:**

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**Division of Air Quality Director**

## **Bird Appointed Air Director; Deputy Director for Air Sought**

Salt Lake City, Utah – Executive Director Amanda Smith has appointed Bryce Bird to head the Division of Air Quality (DAQ) while creating a new position of Deputy Director for Air to specifically focus on air issues in rural Utah.

Bird, the planning branch manager for DAQ the past 4 years, will assume the Air Quality Director effective today. He replaces Cheryl Heying who left in April.

“Bryce has the proven experience and leadership abilities to move us forward to meeting our extensive air quality challenges,” Smith said. “Those challenges include a pro-active approach to curbing air pollution in rural areas like the Uinta Basin under an individual devoted to that task.”

Smith plans to hire a Deputy Director of Air Quality to work in partnership with federal, tribal and local governments to develop strategies that maintain rural Utah’s pristine air before it becomes polluted enough to be designated under the Clean Air Act as out of attainment.

As manager of DAQ’s Planning Branch, Bird has an extensive history in working to resolve issues that impact groups with differing points of view in developing a state implementation plan for very fine particles known as particulate matter 2.5 (PM 2.5). That plan is expected to be completed by December 2012.

“Our focus moving forward is working with stakeholders and the Environmental Protection Agency that results in a plan that meets federal standards, considers economic vitality while actively seeking controls that are effective and appropriate for Utah,” said Bird. Additionally, EPA is expected to revise its standards for ozone pollution this summer that may result in air quality attainment concerns statewide.

Bird, 44, began his career at DEQ in 1991, after completing a degree in biology at the University of Utah. He worked as a compliance inspector for seven years, then later as the manager of the Hazardous Air Pollutants Section and Compliance Branch before being appointed to head the Planning Branch in 2007.

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Bird also serves in the Utah National Guard where he has been a member of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Army Band for 24 years. He and his wife Tanya have four children and live in Kaysville.

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