



State of Utah

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Environmental Quality

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NEWS RELEASE

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DEQ Invites Public to Listen to Tar Sands Appeal

Salt Lake City, Utah – The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will provide a live broadcast and live internet feed of the two-day administrative hearings to be held this Wednesday and Thursday related to an appeal of a permit for the PR Springs tar sands project in Uintah County.

The Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) will hold an evidentiary hearing on the Division of Water Quality's preliminary approval of a groundwater discharge permit issued to US Oil Sands Inc. for its PR Springs tar sands project. ALJ hearings are typically not public meetings, and are held only for the involved parties, their attorneys and witnesses.

“We recognize and appreciate the public interest in this issue. Considering the ALJ hearing is not open to public testimony and is a proceeding that requires the ALJ to focus on the complicated facts at hand, it is in the best interest of the parties and the ultimate goal of arriving at a correct, well developed ALJ recommended decision for this hearing,” said Amanda Smith, executive director of DEQ. “In the interest of transparency, for the first time DEQ will broadcast the hearing in the DEQ Board Room to accommodate the public and media while also providing an URL so people at home can access it in real time as well.”

The public is welcome to attend the broadcast in DEQ's Board Room (1015) located at 1950 West 195 North in the Multi-Agency State Office Building. The broadcast will begin at 10 a.m. and could run until 5 p.m. both days. The public is expected to be respectful to other members of the public and the facility during the hearing. DEQ reserves the right to remove individuals who are unable to respect these requirements.

The Water Quality Board will make the final permitting decision based on the ALJ's written recommendation. The Board's decision and oral argument by the parties will take place before the Water Quality Board at an open public meeting.

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