



State of Utah

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Environmental Quality

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**DEQ applauds ruling upholding EPA decision on Uinta ozone**

SALT LAKE CITY - The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will continue to work toward reasonable, successful science-based solutions to improve air quality in the Uinta Basin without a prescribed federal approach, thanks to a ruling from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. The ruling, issued yesterday, upholds the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "unclassifiable" designation for Utah's Uinta Basin in *WildEarth Guardians v. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*.

"The ruling is a significant win for Utah," said Alan Matheson, environmental advisor to Gov. Gary R. Herbert, who will take over as executive director for the DEQ, pending Senate confirmation. "We have been working for the past few years with key stakeholders to improve air quality in the Uinta Basin and this ruling allows that process to move forward. We feel we are making the right progress toward the right goal. This proactive and collaborative approach is how Utah best solves its air quality challenges."

In 2012, the Division of Air Quality (DAQ) launched a multi-year winter ozone study in cooperation with the EPA, U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), oil and gas producers and a number of university researchers to define the atmospheric chemistry leading to wintertime ozone formation. This study has produced information that has been used as the basis for upgrading the state's oil and gas permitting and compliance process as well as implementing new rules to cut emissions of volatile organic compounds, an important precursor to ozone formation.

DAQ is currently working with EPA, the Ute Tribe and the BLM to improve the emissions inventory for the oil and gas sources and develop a model to evaluate the efficacy of additional control strategies.

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**About DEQ**

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) mission is to safeguard public health and quality of life by protecting and enhancing the environment. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah's air, land and water. For more information, visit [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov), follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](https://www.facebook.com/utahdeq)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](https://twitter.com/UtahDEQ)), or call 1-800-458-0145.