



State of Utah

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## Department of Environmental Quality

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## NEWS RELEASE

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# DEQ Appoints New Water Quality Director

SALT LAKE CITY – Utah Department of Environmental Quality Executive Director Alan Matheson has appointed Erica Gaddis as the director of Water Quality, effective June 26. She replaces Walt Baker who retired in May after serving 32 years – 12 years as director.

“I have confidence in Erica’s ability to work in collaboration with stakeholders to find practical solutions that protect and enhance the health and well-being of Utahns and our environment,” said Matheson.

A Utah native, Gaddis came to DEQ in 2014 to serve as the assistant Water Quality director, overseeing the planning and assessment branch. During that time, she led the response team and coordination with other agencies in the Gold King Mine spill in August 2015 and last year’s massive algal bloom that shut down Utah Lake, and prompted advisories at other popular reservoirs. Gaddis also helped to develop and implement new policies to protect water quality, most notable the development of a technology-based phosphorus rule, as part of a statewide nutrient strategy.

Prior to DEQ, Gaddis worked in the private sector as a consultant on water quality plans for various Utah reservoirs. She received her doctorate degree in natural resources, emphasis in water resources at the University of Vermont, her Master’s degree from Central European University as a Fulbright Scholar in Budapest, Hungary, and her undergraduate degree in biology and environmental science at Willamette University in Salem, Ore.

“It is an exciting and challenging time to have the opportunity to serve the state of Utah in this role. Water quality is integral to a healthy and prosperous Utah. Our growing communities require strategic investment in water infrastructure and thoughtful stewardship of our water resources,” Gaddis said. “It is a privilege to lead the qualified and dedicated professionals at the Division of Water Quality.”

Gaddis lives in Salt Lake City with her husband, Benjamin Gaddis, and three boys.

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### About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) mission is to safeguard and improve Utah’s air, land and water through balanced regulation. 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-

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