

[https://www.heraldextra.com/sanpete-county/news/utah-division-of-water-resources-director-retires-new-appointment/article\\_9c4c8361-10fb-56eb-b8dd-3117c6f18255.html](https://www.heraldextra.com/sanpete-county/news/utah-division-of-water-resources-director-retires-new-appointment/article_9c4c8361-10fb-56eb-b8dd-3117c6f18255.html)

# Utah Division of Water Resources director retires, new appointment

Dec 12, 2019



Eric Millis

SALT LAKE CITY– After serving as director of the Utah Division of Water Resources for the past six years, Eric Millis will retire from public service Dec. 16. Millis has spent nearly 32 years with the division working on a variety of projects that support the division’s mission to “plan, conserve, develop and protect Utah’s water resources.”

“We appreciate Eric’s years of service to the state. He is widely recognized both within the state and among our neighboring states as an expert on the Colorado River, which is a critical resource that provides water to about 40 million people in seven Western states,” said Department of Natural Resources Executive Director Brian Steed. “His leadership and friendship will be missed.”

Steed has appointed Todd Adams as the new division director. Adams has been serving as the division’s deputy director since 2013. He joined Water Resources in 1990 and holds a master’s degree in civil engineering from Utah State University.

“As we looked for someone to fill this position, Todd’s name continually rose to the top,” said Steed. “His years of experience have prepared him to lead the division. I anticipate a seamless transition.”

"We're not just losing the director of the division," said Adams. "We're losing a part of our division family. He's been a true friend, mentor and leader to all of us. I look forward to building on the good things Eric has put in place and working with our great staff."

Millis's water expertise has proved valuable to the long-term planning for Utah's water needs as he has provided input to the Legislature, the Governor's Drought Response team and while serving as a member of the Governor's Water Strategy Team and the Executive Water Finance Board.

He also served as Utah's interstate streams commissioner, where he acted as the Governor's representative on Bear River and Colorado River matters.

Early in his career, Millis spent many hours traveling around the state assisting with water development projects.

"Some of my favorite memories include sitting around a kitchen table and learning about the water challenges people were experiencing and then working together to find a solution," Millis said.

"These past 32 years have flown by. I've been honored to work with great people doing work that is important and satisfying."

Millis was appointed division director by former DNR Executive Director Mike Styler and approved by Gov. Gary Herbert in 2013.

#### **Additional background**

Recent accomplishments under Millis's direction include:

- Upper Colorado River Basin states (Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico and Colorado) received congressional approval to store water in Lake Powell through the federal drought contingency legislation (2019);
- Represented Utah in completing and signing Drought Contingency Plans that protect reservoir levels in Lake Powell and Lake Mead (2019);
- Minute 323 with Mexico that provides benefits and responsibilities in shortage sharing and continues environmental benefits in Mexico (2017);
- Green River Water Rights Exchange agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation that allows water from Flaming Gorge Dam to be used by certain water right holders in Utah and allows much of that water to run more than 400 river miles down to Lake Powell (2019);
- Navigated the lead agency change for the Lake Powell Pipeline from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to the Department of the Interior; Bureau of Reclamation (2019);
- Worked on the 20-year review of the Bear River Compact;
- 2015 Water Use Data Audit, 2017 Follow-up audit and 2017 Third-party review of the state's water use data;
- Worked on establishing Regional Water Conservation Goals (2019);
- Worked on the Bear River Feasibility Study (2019).

## **About Water Resources**

*The Utah Division of Water Resources is one of seven divisions housed under the Department of Natural Resources. Tasked with planning, conserving, developing and protecting Utah's water resources, the Division of Water Resources serves as Utah's water steward.*

*For more information about the division, visit <https://water.utah.gov/>.*