



U PROFESSOR NAMED STATE EPSCOR DIRECTOR

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University of Utah professor Paul Brooks, from the Department of Geology and Geophysics, has been named as the new program director of the Utah Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (<http://utepscor.org/>) (EPSCoR).

“Utah is poised to take a leading role in both basic research, to generate new knowledge, and in applied research, putting that knowledge to work addressing critical issues facing the economic development and environmental sustainability of the state in the future,” said Brooks.

Utah was designated a National Science Foundation (NSF) EPSCoR (<http://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/programs/epscor/index.jsp>) jurisdiction in 2009.

This designation provides funding opportunities to help the state build research personnel and infrastructure in critical scientific areas. Utah EPSCoR’s primary focus is to maintain a reliable water supply and high quality air as the state’s population grows.

Brooks has an extensive background working with academic, government and nongovernment agencies, including crossing disciplines between hydrology, biology, chemistry, engineering and geology. Before moving to the University of Utah in 2014 he was a professor in hydrology and water resources at the University of Arizona and director of the NSF Science and Technology Center for the Sustainability of semi-Arid Hydrology and Riparian Areas.

“Professor Paul Brooks is a distinguished geochemist and internationally recognized expert on hydrology,” said Thomas Parks, vice president for Research at the University of Utah. “The University of Utah was fortunate to recruit Dr. Brooks from the University of Arizona.”

“My role,” Brooks said, “is to strengthen and build upon the connections that have been made in recent years. The infrastructure and the facilities that have been developed across our public and private universities are a tremendous asset to the state fostering rapid progress as individuals from diverse backgrounds work in the same place with the same datasets.”

Brooks is familiar with the issues facing the state, having served in a leadership role in iUTAH (<http://iutahepscor.org/>), an EPSCoR NSF-funded project integrating research, training and education aimed at strengthening science for Utah’s water future. “Beyond research,” he said, “we have the responsibility to provide the best possible training and education for our students, so as they develop into leaders in the state and nation, they will be prepared to make well-informed decisions to ensure the quality of air and water for future generations.”

Brooks received his doctorate in biogeochemistry from the University of Colorado, and was a National Academy of Science/National Research Council postdoctoral fellow with the U.S. Geological Survey’s National Research Program.