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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**New LRAPA Interim Director Named**

At yesterday's LRAPA Board of Directors meeting, Merlyn Hough (pronounced Huff) LRAPA's operations manager, was named interim director, after Jim Johnson announced his departure from the agency, effective today, July 13. The board voted unanimously to appoint Hough to the position through January 2006, while the recruitment process continues.

The appointment came after Johnson reported other obligations were taking time away from LRAPA business. Johnson recommended the board appoint Hough, expressing full confidence in the appointment. "Hough will do an excellent job as the interim director of the agency," Johnson said.

Johnson had announced earlier that the candidate inline for the permanent director had withdrawn his application. The board decided to recruit for the permanent position at a later date.

Hough, a civil and environmental engineer, came to LRAPA in May, after serving 31 years with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. There he had held the position of Western Region's Tanks Manager and Eugene Office Manager for the past 11 years. Prior to that position he was the Senior Environmental Engineer in the Air Quality Division.

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