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Former Perry policy aide to serve as state environmental agency commissioner

By Asher Price

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Governor Rick Perry has appointed Zak Covar, a former aide, to become a member of the three-member Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, state officials announced Monday.

The posting is the latest in a swift climb for the 38-year-old Covar, who has served as TCEQ Executive Director since 2012. Prior to joining the agency in 2007, he advised Perry on environmental policy.

“Texas is blessed with an abundance of natural resources that need to be treasured and protected,” Covar, who has a bachelor’s degree in poultry science from Texas A&M University, said in a statement released Monday. “I understand and respect that responsibility, and will work tirelessly to take care of the environment in a manner that also sustains our robust Texas economy.”

During Covar’s tenure as executive director, the Texas agency locked horns with federal regulators on a variety of environmental issues.

“Zak is driven by the law, science, and common sense and will serve the people of Texas well,” said TCEQ Commissioner Toby Baker.

Covar is filling a seat left vacant by Carlos Rubinstein, who now chairs the Texas Water Development Board.