

Delta Regional Authority 2015 Year in Review

ALABAMA - ARKANSAS - ILLINOIS - KENTUCKY - LOUISIANA - MISSISSIPPI - MISSOURI - TENNESSEE



About DRA

About Delta Regional Authority

The DRA is an independent federal agency created by Congress in the “Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000” that serves 252 counties and parishes in eight states. The direction provided by the Act was simple: the DRA would serve as a federal-state partnership, work with its local development districts, and utilize market-proven processes to grow economic outcomes and enhance the quality of life for the people in its region. The DRA makes strategic investments into economic and community development to support opportunities for Delta communities, businesses, and families.

About this Publication

This year was an important year in DRA history as the agency and its stakeholders continue to forge ahead in bringing new programs and opportunities to the Delta region. Collaborating with an array of agency partners at the federal, state, and local levels, DRA expanded existing programs in workforce development, entrepreneurship, and infrastructure, while launching new policy initiatives that address opportunities for the region like tourism as economic development and disaster recovery and economic resilience. Under the leadership of Federal Co-Chairman Chris Masingill, Alternate Federal Co-Chairman Mike Marshall, and working with States’ Co-Chairman Governor Phil Bryant and its board members, the DRA continues to support communities, businesses, and people in the Delta region. This publication highlights the DRA’s priority programs and investment accomplishments in the past year.

DRA Leadership



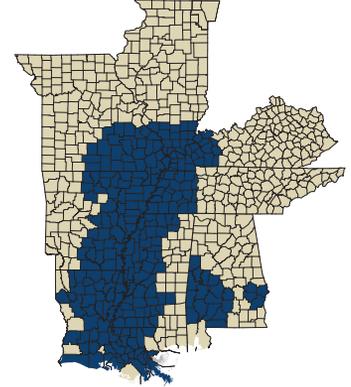
Chris Masingill
Federal Co-Chairman



Mike Marshall
Alternate Federal Co-Chairman



Governor Phil Bryant
Mississippi
States' Co-Chairman



ALABAMA



Governor
Robert Bentley

ARKANSAS



Governor
Asa Hutchinson

ILLINOIS



Governor
Bruce Rauner

KENTUCKY



Governor
Matt Bevin*

LOUISIANA



Governor
John Bel Edwards*

MISSOURI



Governor
Jay Nixon

TENNESSEE



Governor
Bill Haslam

**During DRA's 2015 program funding cycle, the Commonwealth of Kentucky was represented by former Governor Steve Beshear and the State of Louisiana was represented by former Governor Bobby Jindal on the DRA's Board of Governors.*

Board of Governors

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(615) 741-8806



**During 2015, Jimmy Lester (Alabama), Tony Wilder (Kentucky), Doyle Robinson (Louisiana), Chris Champion (Mississippi), and Pierce Moore (Mississippi) served on the DRA's Board of Governors as designees and alternates.*

Growing Small Businesses & Entrepreneurs



“To be able to host [the DEN Pitch Competition] in Selma is really enormous for our city, and it shows that there is an awareness that there is an entrepreneur movement going on in Selma [and around the region]. People are starting to take notice of that, and they want to partner with Selma in that.”

-Dane Shaw , President of Arsenal Place Accelerator

Delta Entrepreneurship Network

The Delta Entrepreneurship Network was launched to identify, connect, nurture, and grow entrepreneurs and support organizations from across the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions by addressing regional deficiencies in capital, training, and best practices through a connected infrastructure of support organizations, investors, and educators.

Delta Challenge Pitch Competitions

The Delta Entrepreneurship Network kicked off its second season of programming in Memphis, Tennessee, with the first of six Delta Challenge pitch competitions. Along with five additional Delta Challenge competitions held in Cleveland, MS, Murray, KY, Selma, AL, Little Rock, AR, and Lafayette, LA, the DEN identified the second class of DEN fellows with 22 entrepreneurs and 13 entrepreneurship support organizations, who will attend technical assistance workshops and participate in New Orleans Entrepreneur Week in March 2016.

Technical Assistance Workshops

DRA hosted two technical assistance workshops on entrepreneur development strategies for 2016 fellows. These workshops provide consultation services worth more than \$32,000 that cover topics such as marketing and branding, angel and VC investments, business development, and pitch development.

New Orleans Entrepreneur Week 2015

The inaugural class of DEN fellows convened at the New Orleans Entrepreneur Week for three days of special programming for the DEN. NOEW 2015 attracted more than 10,000 entrepreneurs, investors, professionals, students, and community leaders and allocated more than \$50,000 to business ideas. The ESOs participated in a roundtable conversation about how to build a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Delta region. Each entrepreneur pitched to a panel of judges, utilizing the training provided at the technical assistance workshop. Five of these entrepreneurs were selected to pitch at the inaugural DEN Demo Day, where investors from across the region listened to the ideas and business models of the DEN fellows.



Delta ★★★★★★
Entrepreneurship
Network a Program of the
Delta Regional Authority

Growing Small Businesses & Entrepreneurs



“Trade and investment are a crucial part of a community’s economic growth and stability. ITA is thrilled to partner with DRA to expand awareness and access to trade assistance and international opportunities throughout the Delta. We look forward to seeing the next 10 years of economic growth and development.”

-Under Secretary Stefan Selig, U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration

Made in Rural America

The Made in Rural America Export and Investment Initiative was announced on February 7, 2014, by President Obama as a directive to the White House Rural Council to develop a new initiative focused on rural exporting, bringing together federal resources to help rural businesses and community leaders take advantage of new investment opportunities and access new customers and markets abroad.

Delta Export Workshops

DRA partnered with the U.S. Department of Commerce and its regional District Export Councils to host Export 101 and 201 workshops for small and medium-sized businesses ready to begin exporting their goods to global markets and interested in expanding current export operations. Three workshops were held in New Orleans, LA, Memphis, TN, and Pine Bluff, AR.



Katrina 10 Commemoration Events

The workshop series kicked off in August as part of the Hurricane Katrina 10th anniversary commemoration events in New Orleans. Prior to the first workshop, DRA hosted a panel--*Connecting the Delta Region to the International Marketplace*--on the importance of international trade, empowering the region's businesses to export their goods and services to the global marketplace, and utilizing the Mississippi River and its ports as a hub for connecting businesses to international trade. All programming was livestreamed on DRA.gov to provide access to business owners throughout the region.

DRA's involvement in the weeklong K10 events was part of a larger conversation about economic resilience in the region and DRA's efforts to support local leadership in preparing for economic and natural disasters.

Reimagining the Delta Workforce



“The nationwide momentum we’ve already established for the ACT Work Ready Communities initiative will be strengthened by this partnership with the Delta Regional Authority. We share the same purpose-supporting job creation and economic development-so this partnership with DRA is a logical fit.”

-Debra Lyons, ACT Vice President for Community and Economic Development

ACT Work Ready Communities

The DRA launched a targeted regionwide initiative to empower rural communities to develop a connected regional workforce system inclusive of both business and industry and education systems through a series of eight state summits and a \$1.7 million capacity building and technical assistance program that has empowered community leaders to leverage programs like ACT to build and implement a local workforce strategy.

ACT Delta Academy

DRA partnered with ACT to bring its Work Ready Academy to Delta communities. This past year 34 counties participated in the ACT Delta Academy, a series of six sessions that walk community leadership teams through building a local workforce development strategy and bringing on the right partners in the public and private sectors to identify the area's skills gap and train its workforce for jobs that are, and will be, available in Delta communities.

The participating counties and parishes work towards becoming a Certified Work Ready Community. This certification requires local workers and students to obtain their National Career Readiness Certificate and brands Delta counties and parishes as having a skilled workforce. Each of the participating counties and parishes have kicked off their public campaign to achieve certification.



ACT[®] **Work Ready Communities**

Reimagining the Delta Workforce



“I think JAG is the best, proven program in the country for lowering the high school dropout rate, while simultaneously raising graduation rates among these students. I look forward to expanding it even further in the future.”

-Governor Phil Bryant, DRA States’ Co-Chairman and Chairman of the JAG National Board

Jobs for America's Graduates

The DRA has strengthened a direct national partnership since 2010 with Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc., the nation's largest and, arguably, the most successful school-to-work system for at-risk and disadvantaged youth. JAG focuses on keeping students in school through high school graduation, equipping them with the academic and technical skills necessary to improve their employability.

The partnership continues...

In what has become a long-standing partnership and investment in Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), DRA announced an additional \$300,000 investment into growing JAG's programs in six of the DRA's eight states. This investment caps a \$1 million commitment to supporting JAG in its mission to increase high school graduation rates for at-risk youth and better prepare these youth for post-secondary education and working opportunities.

Current DRA States' Co-Chairman Governor Phil Bryant of Mississippi serves as the chairman of JAG's National Board and former DRA States' Co-Chairman Governor Jay Nixon of Missouri is a past National Board chairman for JAG, emphasizing the importance of this partnership to DRA communities.

Phase 4 of the DRA-JAG partnership will bring more than 450 high-risk youth into the JAG program. Through funding from phases 2-4, JAG will work with more than 1,500 students in schools across six states during the 2015-2016 school year.

JAG produces remarkable results with a graduation rate of 93 percent, employment rate of 59 percent, and 72 percent of 2015 graduates obtaining full-time jobs.



Connecting the Delta to Quality Healthcare



Delta Doctors

To help address the health disparities and high levels of health professional shortage areas and to increase access to quality, affordable healthcare in the Delta region, the DRA's Delta Doctors program provides J-1 visa waivers for physicians trained in the U.S. to work in medically underserved communities in the eight-state region.

J-1 Visa Waiver Program

DRA's J-1 visa waiver program places foreign physicians who are trained in the U.S. to work in medically underserved areas of the Delta for three years continued to see exponential growth in interest and physicians placed. In 2015, applications were processed to place 101 physicians in communities across all eight states. Since the program's inception in 2008, DRA has helped to bring more than 400 new physicians to Delta communities, many of whom have begun the process to continue serving their communities beyond their three-year commitment. With this program, DRA has emerged as a major player in working with foreign physicians to place them in high-need areas.



Connecting the Delta to Quality Healthcare



“The lack of sufficient medical care is one of the major symptoms in preventing Alabama’s Black Belt region from reaching its full potential. Governor Robert Bentley and I are thankful for this program and the hosting communities. It means so much for so many Alabamians.”

-Jim Byard Jr., Director of Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs

Innovative Readiness Training

Through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense and military reserve forces, the DRA hosts the Innovative Readiness Training program in Delta communities to bring free medical, dental, and optical care to Delta residents that are uninsured or underinsured and in need of quality healthcare, while improving military readiness by providing trained military medical personnel with in-field emergency response training.

Summer 2015 Missions

The DRA's partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense and its military reserve forces kicked off a summer of Innovative Readiness Training medical missions in the Delta with a ten-day mission in nine communities of the Alabama Black Belt and Missouri Bootheel. Over the course of three medical missions, military reservists provided 15,000 patients with medical, dental, and optical care.

The missions in Clayton, Eufaula, and Tuskegee, AL, reached 6,000 Alabamians with more than 18,000 medical, dental, and optical procedures. West Alabama Care, which held clinics in Camden, Demopolis, and Selma, served another 4,000 patients, and the Missouri Bootheel mission in Dexter, Malden, and Sikeston reached approximately 4,000 residents.

Since 2009, the IRT program has served nearly 65,000 Delta residents. In recognition of this success, the National Rural Health Association awarded DRA and the U.S. Military with the 2015 Outstanding Rural Health Program award.



Empowering Delta Leadership



"The DRA is known for its investments into infrastructure and special projects, but one of the most important investments it makes is into its human capital and local leaders through the Delta Leadership Institute."

*-Brad Thompson, Director of Economic and Community Development for City of Martin, TN
Chair of Delta Leadership Network Regional Advisory Council*

Delta Leadership Institute

A corps of innovative leaders is needed to turn the tide in the Delta region and help it to compete in the global economy. The Delta Leadership Institute is designed to improve the decisions made by leaders across the region by strengthening leadership capacity and mutual understanding of regional, state, and local cultures and issues.

Executive Academy

The Delta Leadership Institute graduated 48 fellows from its tenth class of the Executive Academy during its final session in July that focused on transportation infrastructure. The graduates joined the now 400-strong Delta Leadership Network of DLI alumni that remain engaged in regional collaboration, information sharing, and participation with DRA initiatives through DLN and its newly created Regional Advisory Council, comprised of alumni representatives from each of the eight states.

In October, the eleventh class of the Executive Academy held orientation in Memphis, TN, for 52 new fellows that represent businesses, federal, state, and local governments, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and the faith community.

Delta Leadership Network

The Delta Leadership Network partnered with Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government to hold its second continuing education opportunity for DLN members. The program, designed and led by Harvard faculty, focuses on cultivating "authentic leadership" to move Delta communities forward.



Executive Academy Class XI (2015-2016)

Empowering Delta Leadership



"We know that natural and economic crises will strike whether we are prepared or not. This program will help educate our local leadership on how to better plan for post-disaster resilience, preparing for that immediate recovery phase that supports families, businesses, and communities in getting back to work."

-Federal Co-Chairman Chris Masingill, Delta Regional Authority

Leading Economically Competitive & Resilient Communities

Effective local leadership is critical to economic development, disaster resilience, and economic recovery activities in Delta communities. Recognizing this, DRA partnered with the International Economic Development Council and U.S. Economic Development Administration to host workshops across all eight states to train local elected officials in strategies that will help their communities survive, recover, and thrive.

Workshop Series

DRA kicked off the Leading Economically Competitive and Resilience Communities (ECRC) workshop series to train local elected officials and economic developers in economic development strategies, disaster recovery, and economic resilience.

Six pilot workshops were held in five states educating more than 150 community leaders on how to make strategic investments in local infrastructure, make their community more attractive to economic development opportunities, plan for potential natural and economic disasters, and respond in the wake of a disaster to get their communities and businesses back to work. Twenty-six workshops will be held from January to August 2016 across the eight states.



— LEADING —
Economically Competitive
& Resilient Communities



Promoting Delta Tourism



GRAMMY
MUSEUM®
MISSISSIPPI



Tourism as Economic Development

In recognition of tourism as a major economic development opportunity for Delta communities, the DRA is investing resources into the infrastructure and small businesses that support visitors coming to the region and working with communities, businesses, and attractions to collectively promote the region as a great place to visit.

Mississippi River Geotourism Project

As a participant in National Geographic Society's Center for Sustainable Destinations and with the National Geographic designation as a geotourism destination, the DRA and its partner, Big River Strategic Initiative, is working with communities along the Mississippi River to sustain and enhance the geographical character of the region, supporting its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of residents.

Through town halls in each of the Delta states, the partnership is identifying businesses and attractions along the River that provide opportunities for unique Delta tourism to be featured on a Mississippi River Geotourism website and mapguide set to launch in Summer 2016. These online tools allow potential visitors to build trips throughout the Delta region.

Tourism Project Highlights

DRA is making targeted investments in local infrastructure for tourism-related industries.

A few examples:

- **Bridging the Blues:** Coordinated marketing campaign to educate international travelers on the month-long series of blues festivals in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee.
- **GRAMMY Museum:** The Cleveland Music Foundation utilized DRA funds to assist with the exhibit fabrication required for the interior of the GRAMMY Museum that was built at Delta State University in Cleveland, MS.
- **Selma Interpretive Center:** Structural repairs to second and third floors of building for expansion of educational exhibits and programming.
- **Vineyard Access Road:** Paving and elevating an access road to Walker's Bluff Vineyard in southern Illinois allowing visitors to access year-round.

Cultivating Innovative Partnerships



“The vision [of Tuskegee’s LFLP project] is multi-faceted to serve the members of the Macon County Food Pantry but also to create a range of creative economic opportunities through an incubator business model and to connect local farmers and local foods to their downtown market.”

-Jocelyn Zanzot, Co-Director of Mobile Studio and project partner for Tuskegee, AL LFLP Community

White House Rural Council

As an active member of the White House Rural Council, DRA works closely with fellow federal agencies to implement innovative programs and partnerships that support rural communities and specialize existing and future programs to the needs of Delta communities. These partnerships bring valuable resources, technical assistance, grant dollars, and programs to the region.

Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership

The Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP), a program of diverse federal agencies working with communities with sector-specific strengths to grow American manufacturing, announced its second round of community designations, which included two Delta communities: the Greater Memphis region and south Louisiana. The program encourages communities to develop comprehensive economic development strategies that strengthen their competitive edge for attracting global manufacturer and supply chain investments.

DRA will serve as a federal liaison for both of these communities to help them access the information and funding opportunities that will support their efforts to grow their respective industries. DRA still serves as federal liaison for South Alabama's IMCP consortium for the shipbuilding and aerospace industries which was announced in 2014.

Local Foods Local Places

As a part of the Local Foods, Local Places initiative, DRA works with five federal partners—the USDA, EPA, DOT, CDC, and ARC—to support communities in strengthening their local food systems, improving access to healthy food and connecting local farmers and entrepreneurs to main street revitalization. In 2016 five more communities in Lake Village, AR, Gainesville, MO, and Jackson, Martin, and Memphis, TN, joined seven 2015 LFLP communities working on projects that include creating a food innovation hub and a local-food-based job training program, and building community gardens, farmers markets in downtown districts, and shared space for food processing by local farmers.

Cultivating Innovative Partnerships

Invest in Rural America.
Move our country forward.



“We need to implement strong policies and investment strategies that unlock the potential of economic growth and an improved quality of life for rural children and families. This includes partnerships to promote job growth, access to health care, and quality education. Building strong rural communities are an international challenge with local solutions.”

-Secretary Tom Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture

White House Rural Council

DRA's participation in the White House Rural Council also affords the agency the opportunity to bring federal leaders to the region to meet with local community members and organizations, helping these leaders learn from Delta residents about the challenges and strategies used in the region, while also educating Delta communities on funding and program opportunities available to them.

OECD Rural Development Conference

In May 2015, the DRA co-hosted the tenth Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Rural Development Conference with USDA. The conference brought more than 400 foreign and domestic leaders to Memphis, TN, for a discussion around international strategies to address rural development. After the conference, the DRA facilitated four regional tours for international leaders to explore cities and communities within the Delta region and learn about the different industries that are helping these communities grow economically, including cultural tourism, innovation and entrepreneurship, and local food systems.

OECD is a global economic policy forum providing analysis and advice to both its 34 member governments and countries worldwide, and dedicated to promoting better policies for better lives. Within OECD, the Rural Development group researches and reports on rural policy worldwide.

Rural Opportunity Investment Conference

In partnership with the White House Rural Council and USDA, DRA hosted the first ROI conference outside of Washington, DC, in Memphis, TN. More than 150 leaders from the business community and financial institutions, senior government officials, rural economic development experts, and others from across the region and country discussed potential partnerships between public, private, and non-profit entities to invest in job creation, small business growth, and the development of important rural infrastructure. Sessions covered opportunities to invest in biofuels and energy, infrastructure, regional food systems, equity and impact investing, and tourism and cultural economies. Sessions were livestreamed on DRA.gov and watched by another 100 stakeholders throughout the region.

Investing in the Delta



“Partnering with the Delta Regional Authority is an important tool in fulfilling our economic development goals for Mississippi and bringing investment into communities throughout the Delta region.”

-Governor Phil Bryant, State of Mississippi and DRA States’ Co-Chairman

States' Economic Development Assistance Program

SEDAP is DRA's primary investment tool that allows DRA to make significant impacts in creating jobs, building communities, and improving lives in the Delta region. Through partnership with the region's 44 local planning and development district, DRA actively participates in the development of successful projects and makes the necessary connections between applicants and other funding partners.

New Application and Funding Portal

SEDAP opened its FY 15 application period in April with a new online funding and application portal, launched as the second phase of DRA.gov's website redesign. The new online portal eases an applicant's use of the application process and will better allow the DRA to track projects from initial application, review, approval, and monitoring and compliance. DRA staff held training webinars for local development district staff, regional stakeholders, and economic developers to ensure effective use of the new portal.

DRA staff continue to update the funding portal to ease the application process, help awardees manage their projects, and track investments.

Tier Evaluation System

In order to ensure DRA investments address the program's main tenets of regionalism, multiple funding partners, and job creation, DRA's project development and management staff instituted a multi-tier evaluation system that assesses a project's achievement of these goals. With this new tier system, local development districts, economic developers, and state agencies have a clear understanding of what makes a project attractive for a DRA investment.

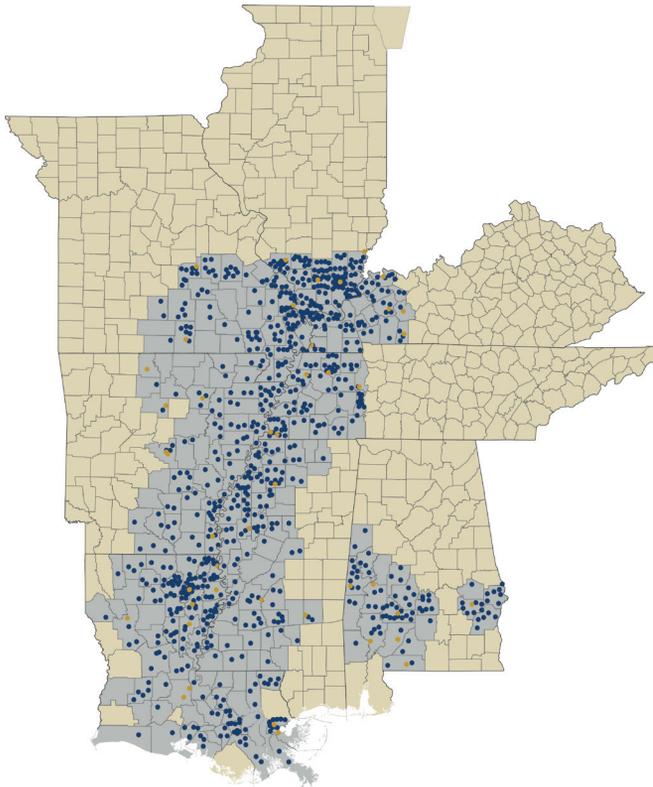
The new tier system helped DRA and its board select high-outcome projects while continuing to achieve its mandates of investing 75 percent of funding into distressed counties and parishes and 50 percent in transportation and public infrastructure projects.

**Basic Public Infrastructure - Business Development & Entrepreneurship - Healthcare
Transportation Infrastructure - Workforce Development - Disaster Recovery & Resilience**

Investing in the Delta



Cumulative Regional Benefits - FY 2002-2015



Investments

Total DRA projects	934
DRA Investment	\$138,358,642
Leveraged Public Investment	\$752,254,205
Private Capital Investment	\$2,208,673,037
Overall Total Investment	\$2,960,927,242
Investment Leverage Ratio	21.4 to 1

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	26,218
Individuals Trained for Jobs	7,202
Families Affected	64,831
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	20,319
Individuals to be Trained*	21,526
Families to be Affected*	36,109

Investing in the Delta



SEDAP Return on Investments



DRA LEVERAGE RATIO

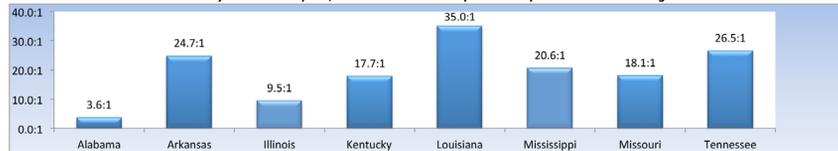
FISCAL YEARS 2002 THROUGH 2015

	DRA	% of total	Public	% of total	Private	% of total	Total	Ratio
Alabama	\$ 14,215,883	21.63%	\$ 28,305,684	43.07%	\$ 23,200,000	35.30%	\$ 65,721,567	3.6:1
Arkansas	\$ 22,210,884	3.89%	\$ 139,925,266	24.49%	\$ 409,189,500	71.62%	\$ 571,325,650	24.7:1
Illinois	\$ 11,402,304	9.56%	\$ 67,529,675	56.61%	\$ 40,358,746	33.83%	\$ 119,290,725	9.5:1
Kentucky	\$ 12,236,341	5.34%	\$ 89,579,760	39.12%	\$ 127,195,000	55.54%	\$ 229,011,101	17.7:1
Louisiana	\$ 24,840,889	2.78%	\$ 98,780,710	11.04%	\$ 771,075,000	86.18%	\$ 894,696,599	35.0:1
Mississippi	\$ 19,425,438	4.64%	\$ 99,499,130	23.75%	\$ 300,087,673	71.62%	\$ 419,012,241	20.6:1
Missouri	\$ 16,039,020	5.24%	\$ 67,591,412	22.09%	\$ 222,308,030	72.66%	\$ 305,938,462	18.1:1
Tennessee	\$ 17,987,883	3.64%	\$ 161,042,568	32.58%	\$ 315,259,088	63.78%	\$ 494,289,539	26.5:1

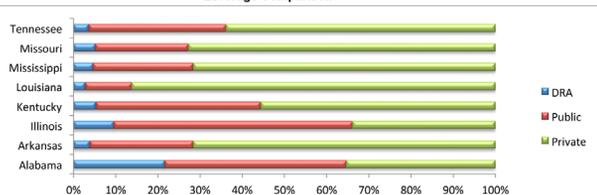
Cumulative Totals: FY02-FY15

DRA	\$ 138,358,642
Public	\$ 752,254,205
Private	\$ 2,208,673,037
Total	\$ 3,099,285,884
Total Projects	934

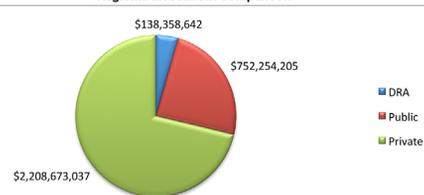
For every DRA dollar spent, how well were other public and private dollars leveraged?



Leverage Comparison



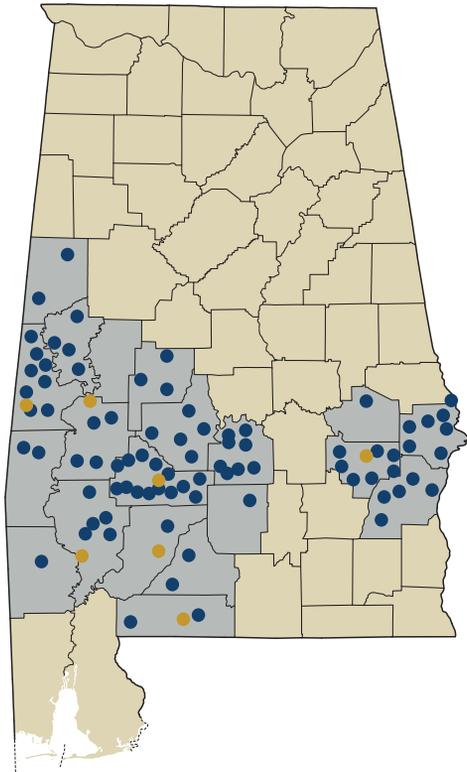
Regional Investment Comparison





State and Federal Investments

ALABAMA



Investments | FY 2002 - 2015

Total DRA projects	91
DRA Investment	\$13,963,736
Leveraged Public Investment	\$28,305,684
Private Capital Investment	\$23,200,000
Overall Total Investment	\$65,469,420
Investment Leverage Ratio	3.69 to 1

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	3,234
Individuals Trained for Jobs	28
Families Affected	2,865
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	1,787
Individuals to be Trained*	266
Families to be Affected*	7,040



“Alabama’s partnership with the Delta Regional Authority is important to the citizens of the Black Belt Region. There is a great need for improvements of infrastructure, workforce development and healthcare access in the region. We can leverage a minimal amount of state dollars and receive major federal investment dollars for our state.”

-Governor Robert Bentley, State of Alabama

State and Federal Investments

ALABAMA

Investments | FY 2015

Total DRA projects	9
DRA Investment	\$1,106,966
Leveraged Public Investment	\$940,070
Private Capital Investment	\$9,500,000
Overall Total Investment	\$11,547,036
Investment Leverage Ratio	9.4 to 1



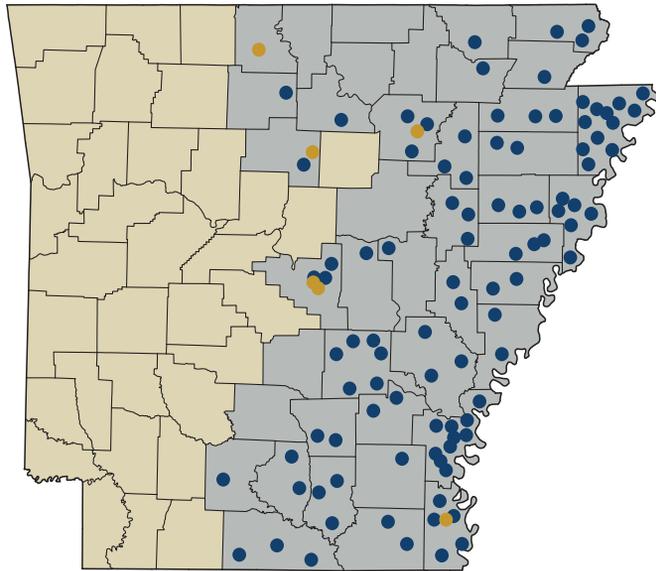
Outcomes

Jobs to be Created & Retained*	1,006
Individuals to be Trained*	280
Families to be Affected*	400



State and Federal Investments

ARKANSAS



Investments | FY 2002 - 2015

Total DRA projects	113
DRA Investment	\$22,260,884
Leveraged Public Investment	\$137,000,266
Private Capital Investment	\$627,179,000
Overall Total Investment	\$786,440,150
Investment Leverage Ratio	34.33 to 1

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	3,943
Individuals Trained for Jobs	2,689
Families Affected	4,114
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	2,782



"I'm especially pleased that we're investing in the basics — infrastructure, workforce training and education — that will create and retain jobs and businesses and lead to more economic development."

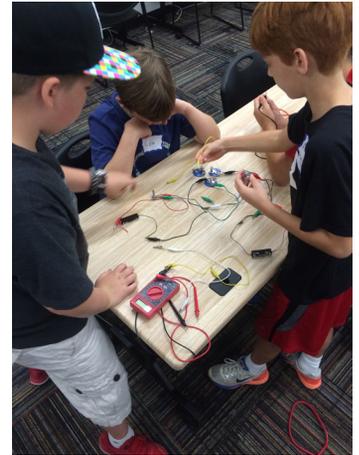
-Governor Asa Hutchinson, State of Arkansas

State and Federal Investments

ARKANSAS

Investments | FY 2015

Total DRA projects	9
DRA Investment	\$1,434,397
Leveraged Public Investment	\$23,914,147
Private Capital Investment	\$313,589,500
Overall Total Investment	\$338,938,044
Investment Leverage Ratio	235.3 to 1



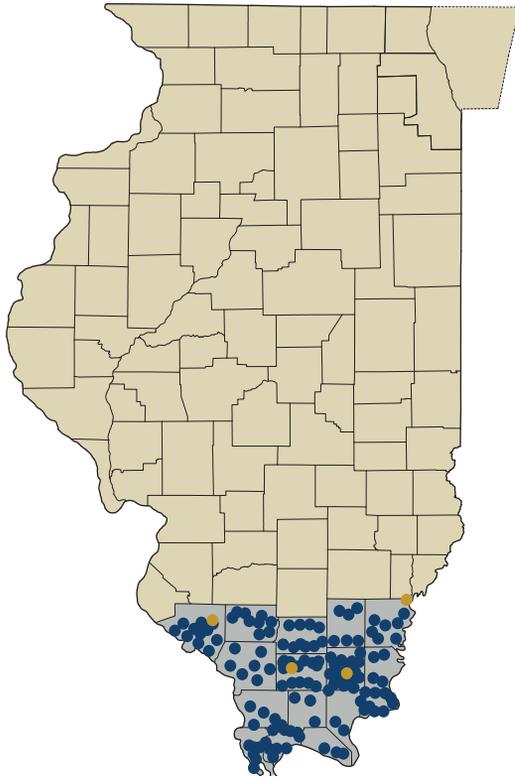
Outcomes

Jobs to be Created & Retained*	969
Individuals to be Trained*	600



State and Federal Investments

ILLINOIS



Investments | FY 2002 - 2015

Total DRA projects	133
DRA Investment	\$11,402,304
Leveraged Public Investment	\$67,156,425
Private Capital Investment	\$40,358,746
Overall Total Investment	\$118,917,475
Investment Leverage Ratio	9.43 to 1

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	2,201
Individuals Trained for Jobs	274
Families Affected	8,382
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	2,036
Individuals to be Trained*	8,013
Families to be Affected*	6,633



These investments by the Delta Regional Authority can spark the investment of substantially more public funds and private capital to make southern Illinois a more attractive place for businesses to locate, expand, and create jobs for hard-working Illinoisans.”

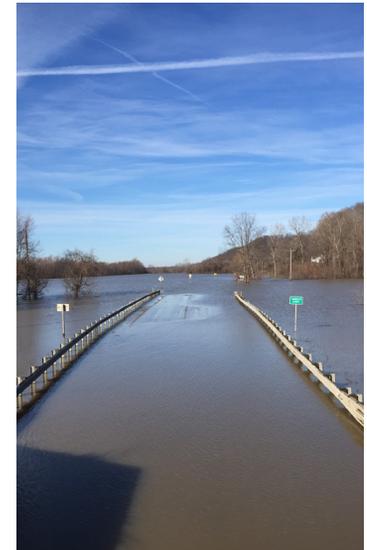
-Director Jim Schultz, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

State and Federal Investments

ILLINOIS

Investments | FY 2015

Total DRA projects	4
DRA Investment	\$773,722
Leveraged Public Investment	\$695,000
Private Capital Investment	\$5,700,00
Overall Total Investment	\$7,168,722
Investment Leverage Ratio	8.3 to 1



Outcomes

Jobs to be Created & Retained*	38
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State and Federal Investments

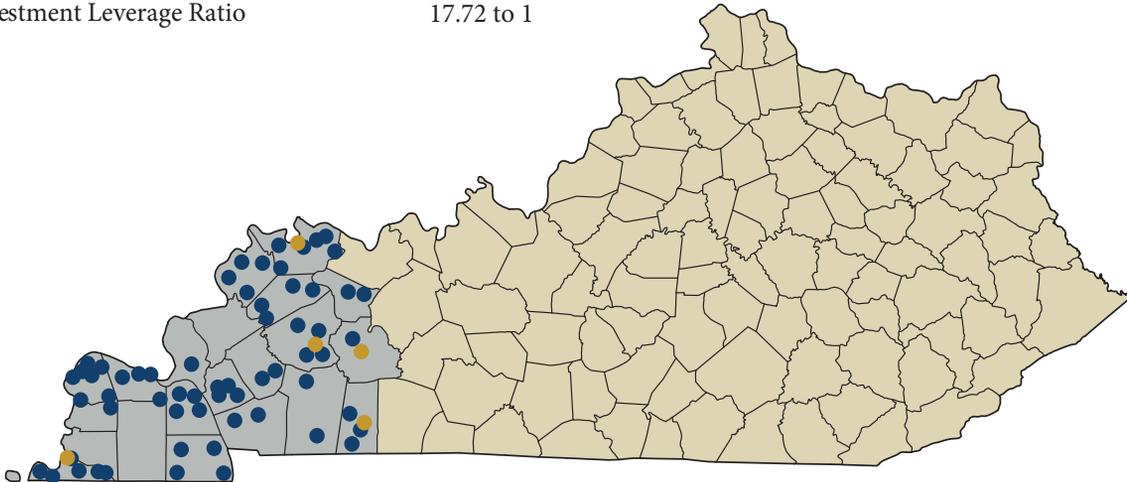
KENTUCKY

Investments | FY 2002 - 2015

Total DRA projects	69
DRA Investment	\$12,236,341
Leveraged Public Investment	\$89,579,760
Private Capital Investment	\$127,195,000
Overall Total Investment	\$229,011,101
Investment Leverage Ratio	17.72 to 1

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	1,679
Individuals Trained for Jobs	204
Families Affected	4,109
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	1,150





“The Delta Regional Authority plays an integral role in supporting projects in our western Kentucky communities that will boost both short-term and long-term economic growth and development.”

-Governor Steve Beshear, Commonwealth of Kentucky

State and Federal Investments

KENTUCKY

Investments | FY 2015

Total DRA projects	4
DRA Investment	\$874,446
Leveraged Public Investment	\$1,470,000
Overall Total Investment	\$2,344,446
Investment Leverage Ratio	1.7 to 1

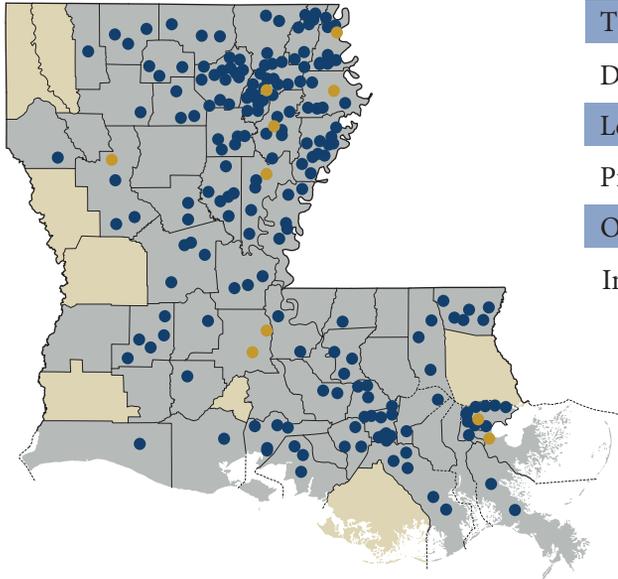
Outcomes

Jobs to be Created & Retained*	167
Families to be Affected*	80



State and Federal Investments

LOUISIANA



Investments | FY 2002 - 2015

Total DRA projects	198
DRA Investment	\$24,802,123
Leveraged Public Investment	\$98,505,710
Private Capital Investment	\$771,025,000
Overall Total Investment	\$894,332,833
Investment Leverage Ratio	35.06 to 1

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	3,425
Individuals Trained for Jobs	1,214
Families Affected	26,520
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	6,100
Families to be Affected*	9,320



“Louisiana can’t have a thriving economy with an aging infrastructure and an ill-equipped workforce. These important programs will give areas along the Mississippi Delta a fighting chance at attracting new jobs, opening new businesses, and growing our rural economy in Louisiana.”

-Congressman Ralph Abraham, U.S. House of Representatives LA-5

State and Federal Investments

LOUISIANA

Investments | FY 2015

Total DRA projects	13
DRA Investment	\$1,594,208
Leveraged Public Investment	\$2,819,853
Private Capital Investment	\$5,625,000
Overall Total Investment	\$10,039,061

Investment Leverage Ratio 5.3 to 1



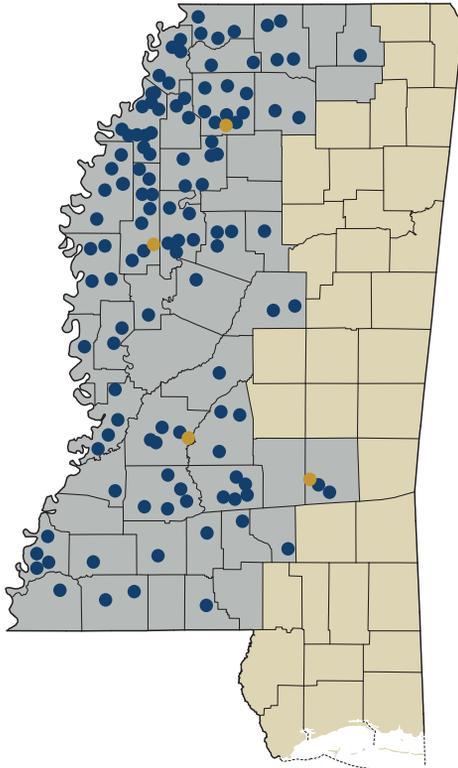
Outcomes

Jobs to be Created & Retained*	170
Individuals to be Trained*	117
Families to be Affected*	3,173



State and Federal Investments

MISSISSIPPI



Investments | FY 2002 - 2015

Total DRA projects	125
DRA Investment	\$19,475,438
Leveraged Public Investment	\$99,274,263
Private Capital Investment	\$299,703,848
Overall Total Investment	\$418,453,549
Investment Leverage Ratio	20.49

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	2,222
Individuals Trained for Jobs	215
Families Affected	3,863
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	2,449
Individuals to be Trained*	13,198
Families to be Affected*	9,488



“Building a stronger job base in Mississippi is a goal that requires sustained effort and determination. These investments characterize multiyear efforts to put infrastructure in place to support additional jobs.”

-Senator Thad Cochran, U.S. Senate

State and Federal Investments

MISSISSIPPI

Investments | FY 2015

Total DRA projects	9
DRA Investment	\$1,383,363
Leveraged Public Investment	\$13,029,471
Private Capital Investment	\$33,290,979
Overall Total Investment	\$47,703,813
Investment Leverage Ratio	33.5 to 1



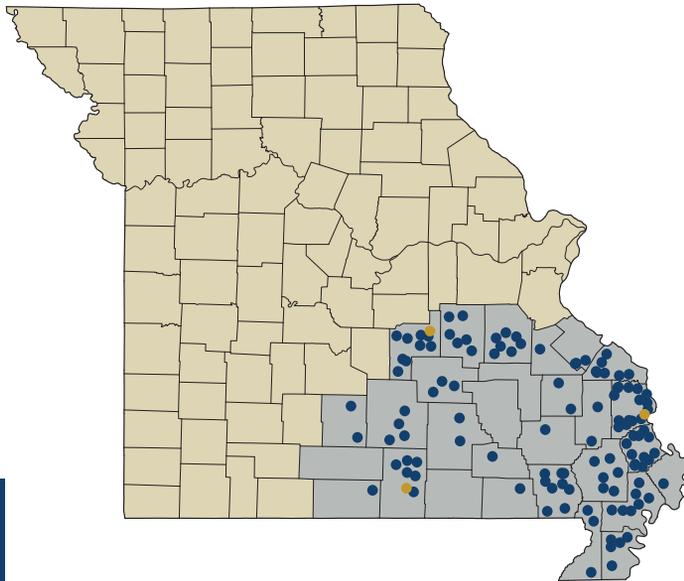
Outcomes

Jobs to be Created & Retained*	165
Individuals to be Trained*	92
Families to be Affected*	64



State and Federal Investments

MISSOURI



Investments | FY 2002 - 2015

Total DRA projects	119
DRA Investment	\$16,039,020
Leveraged Public Investment	\$67,591,413
Private Capital Investment	\$222,308,030
Overall Total Investment	\$305,938,463
Investment Leverage Ratio	18.07

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	7,628
Individuals Trained for Jobs	2,377
Families Affected	4,973
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	730



“With all the damages from the flood and the small amount of funding our city has, this [investment] really helped, and we really appreciate from the DRA and Meramec Regional Planning Commission.”

-Mayor James Poucher, City of Newburg, MO

State and Federal Investments

MISSOURI

Investments| FY 2015

Total DRA projects	4
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DRA Investment	\$1,087,955
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Leveraged Public Investment	\$5,960,749
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Private Capital Investment	\$3,840,000
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Overall Total Investment	\$10,888,704
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Investment Leverage Ratio	9.0 to 1
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Outcomes

Jobs to be Created & Retained*	622
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Individuals to be Trained*	100
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State and Federal Investments

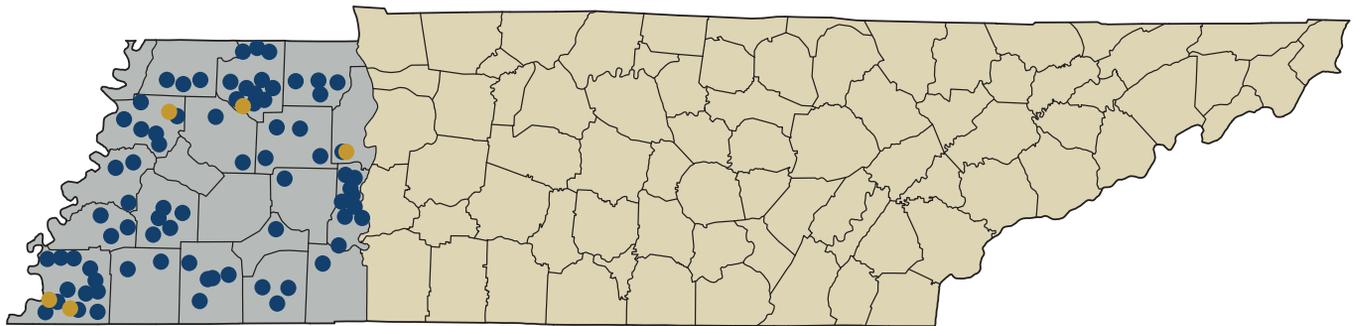
TENNESSEE

Investments | FY 2002 - 2015

Total DRA projects	86
DRA Investment	\$17,743,127
Leveraged Public Investment	\$161,003,568
Private Capital Investment	\$311,014,776
Overall Total Investment	\$489,761,471
Investment Leverage Ratio	26.6 to 1

Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	1,886
Individuals Trained for Jobs	201
Families Affected	10,005
Jobs to be Created & Retained*	3,847
Individuals to be Trained*	1,561
Families to be Affected*	2,327





“Tennessee’s partnership with the Delta Regional Authority is essential as these investments help strengthen infrastructure and boost job growth in many West Tennessee communities. We are focused on aligning our efforts to develop and maintain an educated and well-trained workforce, and with the continued support of the DRA, these efforts are made possible.”

-Commissioner Randy Boyd, TN Department of Economic and Community Development

State and Federal Investments

TENNESSEE

Investments | FY 2015

Total DRA projects	10
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DRA Investment	\$1,345,045
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Leveraged Public Investment	\$690,575
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Private Capital Investment	\$19,246,270
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Overall Total Investment	\$21,281,890
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Investment Leverage Ratio	14.8 to 1
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Outcomes

Jobs Created & Retained	396
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Individuals Trained for Jobs	1,385
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Ensuring Transparent and Effective Government



Project Monitoring & Compliance

Accountability is vital to the success of DRA investments in local communities and to sustain DRA's partnerships with local development districts across the region. DRA implemented a comprehensive plan to work directly with local development districts to visit and evaluate active projects receiving DRA investment to ensure greater compliance and identify problem areas for funded projects.

Project Site Visits

DRA saw further success in the second year of its project monitoring and compliance program and has been elevated to its own division within the agency. In FY 2015, 54 additional site visits were completed, doubling the goal of projects reviewed. Through January 2016, 112 projects have been reviewed, helping DRA hold project partners and staff accountable for the agency's investments of federal funding. Added staff capacity will help this program further expand this fiscal year.



Increasing Outreach and Awareness



Today's Delta

A Research Tool for the Region

ARKANSAS

SECOND EDITION
FEBRUARY 2015

ALABAMA

MISSISSIPPI

"Thank you for making our jobs a lot easier by making this kind of resource available."

"Providing a useful tool for all is an excellent return for tax payer dollars."

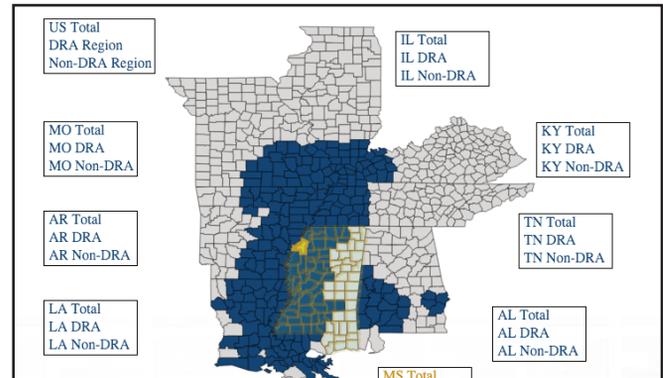
"Good to see other agencies understanding the importance of using GIS to interpret data."

Today's Delta

To further stakeholder engagement and make relevant research available to Delta leaders, DRA is helping its communities access information that helps further their economic development goals. *Today's Delta* provides an updated database of county-level data that allows for comparison across state, regional, and national indicators. The database is made available to the public through a printed publication and online research tool.

Today's Delta Online Research Tool

As part of the new website, DRA launched the *Today's Delta* online research tool as a follow-up to the written publication that was released in April 2015. The new online tool allows users to access and compare demographic and economic data for each of the DRA's 252 counties and parishes as well as regional and state geographies. The tool improves much-needed access to the research and data that help economic developers, community leaders, policy makers, educators, and students understand the challenges and opportunities of the region, make strategic decisions towards economic development, and tell the story of their community and the Delta region. DRA staff hosted demonstration webinars to ensure regional stakeholders know how to effectively use the tool and to gather feedback on further updates. The DRA will continue to maintain the research database with updated data at no cost to the public.



Increasing Outreach and Awareness



"The Delta has a strong resource of public and private institutions that have the capacity to provide research and innovation to address the social and economic opportunities and challenges we face. We look forward to bringing these partners together to engage in meaningful collaborations that will positively impact our region and our nation." -Dr. Andy Sustich, Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Studies, Arkansas State University

THURSDAY
WELCOME &
INTRODUCTIONS
OVERVIEW
STRATEGICAL VISION
INTERIM WORKSHOP
BEST TEAMS
RESULTS
WITH THE DRC
NEXT STEPS
NEXT GROUPS
NEXT STEPS
LEAD COOPERATION
TRUST
POSSIBILITY
CREATIVE &
OF MANY
GENERAL
ING &
TRAIL

Delta Research Consortium

In recognition of the need for better and more directed research in the economic, cultural, and social challenges, successes, and opportunities of Delta communities, DRA has partnered with regional institutions of higher education to develop a consortium of colleges and universities to focus research endeavors on the Delta and utilize shared capacity for research and innovation that can inform policies and development efforts.

Leadership Summit

In an ongoing effort to engage diverse stakeholders in economic development efforts in the Delta, DRA brought together 23 universities across the Delta for a kickoff leadership summit to form the Delta Research Consortium with a mission of maximizing funding and collaboration for solutions-driven research that explains the reality of Delta communities and drives the cultivation of ideas to address the challenges the region faces. The summit-held in April 2015-featured a facilitated working group of high-level research staff and leadership of colleges and universities. Topical focus groups formed from the summit allow faculty to share research interests and data across institutions. The summit also laid out preliminary goals and identified possible next steps for its development. The Consortium now includes institutions of higher education from each of the eight states of the Delta.

Presidents Roundtable

The Consortium then hosted a Presidents Roundtable in October 2015 that secured buy-in from 20 institutions and helped to outline next steps for the Consortium including development of a Memorandum of Understanding for participating institutions. Presidents, chancellors, and vice presidents/provosts of research confirmed their commitment to building the Consortium and have identified staff or faculty to support the Consortium's development.



Administration and Operations



Regional Development Plan III

DRA updated its strategic plan and invited local and regional stakeholders to participate in the process through a series of listening sessions that went to each of the eight states and virtual webinars. RDP III builds and expands upon RDP II, the strategic plan which has guided the agency's priorities and actions since 2008, and it will guide the region's economic growth over the next five years.

Listening Sessions and Report

In RDP III, DRA included extensive stakeholder input gained through 12 listening sessions (10 in-person and 2 online) held during June and July 2015 with nearly 400 public-sector, private-sector, and academic leaders from across the region. At least one in-person listening session was held in each state, with two held in Louisiana and Mississippi (to cover the northern and southern halves of each state). Two online listening sessions were conducted: one with the Delta Leadership Institute and one with the local development districts. The listening sessions provided a wealth of qualitative insights from stakeholders, documented regional assets, challenges, and opportunities, and specific advice for the DRA.

RDP III Goals

- **Improved Workforce Competitiveness:** Advance the productivity and economic competitiveness of the Delta workforce
- **Strengthened Infrastructure:** Strengthen the Delta's physical, digital, and capital connections to the global economy
- **Increased Community Capacity:** Facilitate local capacity building within Delta communities, organizations, and businesses



Administration and Operations





Accountability and Operational Excellence

DRA has always taken seriously the responsibility it has to be a good steward of taxpayers' dollars. It recognizes its institutional focus to be fiscally responsible and effective in making investments into Delta projects while it works to help create jobs, build communities, and improve lives in the Delta region.

DRA conducts yearly independent audits each year and has earned an unmodified report—a “clean opinion”—from independent financial auditor BKD, LLP, a consistent trend since its initial audit in FY 2001. In FY 2015, DRA had zero reportable weaknesses or deficiencies in its reviewed structures, and in terms of compliance testing, had zero exceptions from the 239 attributes tested by BKD. During the past four audit cycles (FY 2012-2015), BKD has tested for 1,055 attributes, all with zero compliance exceptions.

Additionally, DRA has expanded its monitoring and compliance efforts to ensure that projects and award recipients are properly utilizing DRA funds. DRA is committed to ensuring that funding partners receive the support they need to succeed. In looking toward the coming year, the DRA will continue its progress in ensuring strong accountability and transparency.

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