

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2015

Contact: Spencer Lucker

slucker@dra.gov, (501) 416-3789

NEWS: Delta Regional Authority, state and local partners invest \$108 million into the Arkansas Delta economy

Delta Regional Authority leverages public, private investments to help grow economic opportunity in the Arkansas Delta

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – The Delta Regional Authority and its partners are investing more than \$108 million in federal, state, and local resources to support small business owners and entrepreneurs, workers and their families by improving economic development, workforce training, and job creation in the Arkansas Delta, Delta Regional Authority Federal Co-Chairman Chris Masingill and Governor Asa Hutchinson announced today.

“The DRA is excited to announce another year of investing into the people, small businesses, and infrastructure that make the Arkansas Delta a great place to create jobs, grow business, and raise a family,” Chairman Masingill said. “These investments strategically leverage funding for projects that will help to address the training and public service needs of our communities while driving economic development and growing small businesses and entrepreneurs.”

The nine new investments, including a renovation and expansion to a training center and infrastructure improvements that support economic development, leverage \$1.3 million in DRA resources into \$7 million in total public investment and \$100 million in private investment for Arkansas’ Delta communities, their residents, and their economies.

These investments are expected to help create and retain nearly 1,000 jobs for local residents and train 600 residents for jobs in their communities.

State	# of Projects	DRA Resources	Leveraged Funds	Total Investment
Arkansas	9	\$1,278,531	\$106,654,280	\$107,932,811

The investments are made through the DRA States’ Economic Development Assistance Program, the agency’s main federal funding program that invests in basic public infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, workforce development, and small business and entrepreneurship, and health access projects in the 252 counties and parishes of the eight-state Delta region. DRA coordinates directly with

Arkansas' six planning and development districts in the region for program funding implementation.

Governor Asa Hutchinson said, "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."

DRA leadership works closely with the governor of each state and his board designee to identify projects to receive SEDAP investments, which are aligned with state economic development goals.

These federal investments require a minimal investment of state funds that can bring a large return in DRA and other agency funding and result in a great economic impact for the Delta region of Arkansas.

"The Delta Regional Authority plays an important role in improving economic opportunity in our state. These investments in Arkansas's infrastructure, communities and workforce will help improve the quality of life for Arkansas families," U.S. Senator John Boozman said.

"Our local economies need steady access to a flexible, skilled workforce and the infrastructure that allows businesses and commerce to grow," U.S. Congressman Rick Crawford. "These critical investments solidly support both workforce development and infrastructure improvements across the 1st District in ways that will boost entrepreneurial spirit and allow our communities to flourish."

"The jobs created and retained from this investment by the Delta Regional Authority is a boon for our local economy. This summer, I visited one of the facilities included in the project investments, Our House Learning Center in Little Rock. The work being done at this essential facility plays a significant role in helping the community in central Arkansas provide quality help, shelter, job training, and child care to our homeless and nearly homeless citizens," U.S. Congressman French Hill said.

"I am truly excited today for the City of Yellville," U.S. Congressman Steve Womack said. "This is the first project in Marion County to receive DRA funding, and it will allow the only publicly-accessible rail spur on the Missouri and Northern Arkansas Railroad to reopen, restore employment to those who lost jobs in the area due to the rail spur's closure last year, create new jobs and generate additional economic development opportunities in the future. I'm grateful for the leadership that the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District and Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson provided to bring this project to the DRA for consideration."

"I am excited to see this investment being made at home to Arkansas. Without strong infrastructure, we cannot expect our economy to grow. This investment will help Arkansas communities add jobs and opportunity," U.S. Congressman Bruce Westerman said.

2015 SEDAP INVESTMENTS

- 1. Be Pro. Be Proud, Regionwide (AR-1, 2, 3, 4):** Initiative will educate 9-12th grade students, parents, teachers and other key influencers across the state about the value of technical skilled professions with emphasis on workforce development. DRA Investment: \$250,000; Leveraged Public Investment: \$245,700.
- 2. Chicot County Waterline Extension, Lake Village (AR-1):** Extension of the water line that will accommodate the Loves Travel Stops and Country Store that is locating in Lake Village (15 jobs to be created). DRA Investment: \$65,069; Private Investment: \$4,000,000.
- 3. Helena Harbor Rail Improvements, Helena (AR-1):** Necessary improvements to the rail system serving Phillips County, AR, and specifically the Helena Port area, in order to reopen the rail line and retain industry (115 jobs to be retained). DRA Investment: \$155,500; Leveraged Public Investment: \$500,000.
- 4. Independence County Ozark Mountain Poultry Feed Mill, Magness (AR-1):** Infrastructure improvements including concrete paving of an access road and the construction of rail lines to support the expansion of a feed mill for Ozark Mountain Poultry (225 jobs to be created and 247 jobs to be retained). DRA Investment: \$150,000; Leveraged Public Investment: \$3,492,520; Private Investment: \$35,000,000.
- 5. Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum Expansion, North Little Rock (AR-2):** Expansion of the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum to enlarge the space in which historical artifacts can be displayed and to enhance the daily activities of the museum for the tourists and visitors to the USS Razorback (2 jobs to be created). DRA Investment: \$150,000; Leveraged Public Investment: \$20,000.
- 6. Fairfield Bay Highway 16 Sewer Extension, Fairfield Bay (AR-2):** Extension of sewer line from existing manhole south of the Presbyterian Church on Dave Creek Parkway to businesses on highway 16 that are currently on septic system (10 jobs to be retained). DRA Investment: \$133,266; Leveraged Public Investment: \$50,000.
- 7. North Little Rock EDC Equipment Purchase, North Little Rock (AR-2):** Purchase and installation of equipment to be used by the City of North Little Rock, North Little Rock Electric Department, and Ben. E. Keith Foods, a food distribution company (82 jobs to be created and 256 jobs to be retained). DRA Investment: \$150,000; Leveraged Public Investment: \$2,120,000; Private Investment: \$60,000,000.
- 8. Our House Learning Center Renovation, Little Rock (AR-2):** Renovation of Our House's Learning Center, which equips homeless adults with full-time jobs each year, for a new roof, electrical and HVA systems, flooring, and exterior drainage systems as well as redesign of computer lab, classroom space, and other amenities for students (12 jobs to be created and retained, 600 individuals to be trained). DRA Investment: \$100,000; Leveraged Public Investment: \$679,690; Private Investment: \$600,000.

9. **Yellville Rail Spur, Yellville (AR-3):** Improvements for reopening of the only publicly accessible rail spur on the Missouri Northern Arkansas Railroad (MNA) as well as road, electricity, and water service between industrial park and the rail spur (5 jobs to be created and 15 jobs to be retained). DRA Investment: \$124,696; Leveraged Public Investment: \$45,000.

About the Delta Regional Authority

The Delta Regional Authority is a federal-state partnership created by Congress in 2000 to help create jobs, build communities, and improve lives through strategic investments in economic development in 252 counties and parishes across eight states. Through the past thirteen investment cycles of the DRA's States Economic Development Assistance Program, DRA investments have leveraged \$2.7 billion in other public and private investment into projects that are helping to create and retain 42,000 jobs, train 13,000 for a 21st century workforce, and provide more than 82,000 families access to clean water and sewer services. Learn more at dra.gov.

###