



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity

MISSISSIPPI

www.usda.gov/strikeforce

Mississippi Fast Facts - 2015

State's Child Poverty Rate:	32.5%
State's Overall Poverty Rate:	20.7%
StrikeForce State Since:	2010
Number of StrikeForce Counties:	66
Total Outreach Events:	158
Number of Community Partners:	130
Total USDA Projects:	5,377
Total USDA Investments:	\$378 million

Contacts

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Some of Our StrikeForce Community Partners

Alcorn State University and Cooperative Extension Program

Kellogg Foundation

Mississippi Association of Cooperatives

Mississippi Road Map to Health Equity

Mississippi State University Extension Service

North Delta Produce Growers Association

Tougaloo College

Winston County Self Help Cooperative

Currently, 85 percent of our country's persistent poverty counties are in rural America. More than one third of rural Americans, and one in four rural children live in poverty. Kids growing up in families earning twice the poverty threshold are nearly three times as likely as other children to have poor health, are more likely to finish two fewer years of school, and are more likely to earn half as much money in their adult lives.

Growing the economy by investing in rural communities and increasing opportunities for families is key to our Nation's future. In 2010, Secretary Vilsack established USDA's StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity to address the specific challenges associated with rural poverty. Since then, StrikeForce teams have collaborated with more than 1,500 community partners and public entities to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

These efforts have invested more than \$23.5 billion to create jobs, build homes, feed kids, assist farmers and conserve natural resources across more than twenty states. In 2016, StrikeForce expanded to include Florida, Missouri, Montana, and Ohio. Now, USDA StrikeForce teams will operate in 970 counties in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Each StrikeForce project is a commitment to America's economic future.

StrikeForce At Work

New Workforce Facility in Stonewall to Strengthen Labor Force

East Mississippi Electric Power Association approached Rural Development (RD) in early 2013 concerning the possibility of receiving leveraged funds through the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program for the construction of a workforce center in Stonewall, Mississippi.

Stonewall has a population of 1,088 residents and is located in Clarke, a StrikeForce county. Clarke has a total population of 17,333 and an unemployment rate of 10.4%. With the hopes of building a stronger workforce, the East Mississippi Electric Power Association submitted an application for a \$1 million Rural Economic Development Loan and a \$300,000 Rural Economic Development Grant to be lent to the Clarke County Board of Supervisors.

This allotment was leveraged with approximately \$1.2 million for the construction of a 10,000 square-foot workforce center to be operated by the Jones County Junior College. The facility is centrally located and is the only post-secondary training provider within the county. Prior to this project, the Jones County Community College was operating a welding class in borrowed space at the local VoTech building, various dual-credit classes at Quitman High School, and adult education classes at the Court House Annex facility.

The new facility consists of a welding lab, an oil well construction technology program, five classrooms, a computer lab, and several offices. Students will also have access to high-speed internet training connected directly back to the main campus. This facility will be a tremendous benefit for the residents of Clarke County. During the opening, Clarke County Supervisors and Jones County Junior College officials acknowledged that USDA was instrumental in making this project happen.

StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity in Mississippi

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5,377 Projects in 2015 = \$378 Million Invested



567
Jobs Created
or Saved



2,348,493
Summer
Meals for Kids



556
Farmers
Assisted



13,385
Home
Investments

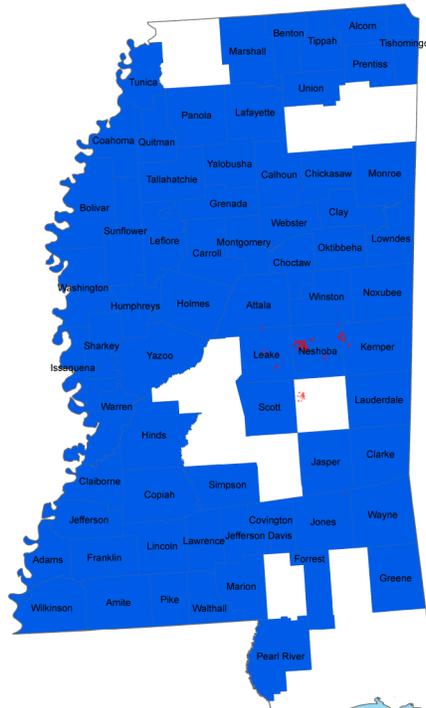


2,201
Conservation
Efforts



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

STRIKEFORCE MAP SERIES FINAL: Mississippi Persistent Poverty StrikeForce Counties with overlay of Native American Reservations



Legend

- State
- Tribal Reservations and Pueblos
- Counties

Data Sources May Contain Data From The Following Sources:
 ESRI World Physical Map Base Data Layers
 2000 CENSUS TRACES Data - CENSUS Tiger gdb
 2010 CENSUS TIGER Data - CENSUS Tiger gdb
 USGS National State Boundaries Data set
 N.C.E.S. 1995 PFD (1) Special Local Participation CORE Data
 From U.S. Department of Education National Center For Education Statistics - state & gov. website: stateedu.gov
 USDA/NDGOW Data Sets Reflecting RD Program Specific Data
 USAND RUS: 1995-1998, OMB/CDO Data Sources
 USDA/OCE/OWD Departmental Data Resources
 Housing and Urban Development Data
 Environmental Protection Agency Data
 Title Areas 2008

This map includes Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Areas as delineated by the U.S. Census Bureau. Although these areas are associated with particular tribes and tribes have certain jurisdictional authorities and treaty rights in these areas, many Rural Development investments in these areas only in part benefit American Indians, or in fact may not benefit any American Indians at all. Please contact Rural Development's Native American Coordinator or Rural Development Staff in Oklahoma to verify whether or not particular investments within Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Areas are indeed investments benefiting American Indians.

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0 20 40 80 120 160 Miles

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