
REGIONAL PLANNING
PART XII—ARKANSAS VALLEY

JUNE 1943

NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD

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This report was prepared in the Dallas Office of the Board by a special staff under the direction of Mr. Edwin R. Henson and with the collaboration and assistance of the Central Southwest Regional Planning Council, Arkansas and Red River Drainage Basin Committees, the Board's Denver Field Office for Region VII (on the Upper Basin Problems), the State planning agencies of Arkansas and Oklahoma, the Water Resources Committee, staff groups of the Board's Washington office, personnel and data from several other Federal agencies, and the individuals named on page ix.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD
WASHINGTON, D. C.

November 26, 1942.

THE PRESIDENT,
The White House.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: At your suggestion, we have brought together preliminary plans for the full use of the resources of the Arkansas Valley. The report, "Regional Planning, Part XII—Arkansas Valley," which we transmit herewith, contributes a long time approach to the development of the resources of the valley and to the improvement of the general well-being of some seven million citizens of seven States.

Within the Arkansas Valley are abundant resources: minerals, fuels, timber, agricultural products and manpower. At an early date, the readily available agricultural land was fully used and now the pressure on this resource limits the majority of farm families to the earnings from quite inadequate small farms. Industries did not afford sufficient alternate employment opportunities. The low income of the farming group is shared with the nonfarm group serving them, so that the purchasing power of all groups, is low. The unfilled needs of these people are tremendous and a great market for consumer goods, houses, furniture, clothing, etc., will come with the full efficient employment of the people.

The future opportunities for work are found in part in the proposed development of industry in the Valley. The abundant natural resources, the undeveloped power possibilities, the labor supply and the potential market are considered in planning for a great expansion in basic manufacturing industry and in service industries. The great need to protect the soil from erosion, to reforest land not suited for continued production of crops, to control floods, and to develop recreational facilities offer further assurance of necessary employment. All educational forces would be enlisted to assist the people of the Valley in making the best use of the resources of the area.

The report is confined to proposals of needed measures for full use of resources and does not concern itself with the choice of particular agencies or means for their accomplishment. The plan presented is designed ultimately to effect a combination of labor, land resources, capital, and power, which will give the people of the region full employment, utilize the resources, restore and maintain the fertility of the land, permit the region to make its full, rich contribution to the national wealth, and support the people at a level of living which will maintain a healthy and happy citizenry.

Sincerely yours,

FREDERIO A. DELANO, *Chairman.*
CHARLES E. MERRIAM
GEORGE F. YANTIS

NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD

FIELD OFFICE
DALLAS, TEXAS

September 24, 1948

Mr. CHARLES W. ELLIOT,
*Director, National Resources Planning Board,
North Interior Building,
Washington, D. C.*

DEAR MR. ELLIOT: This is a preliminary plan for development and conservation of the resources of the Arkansas and Red River Valleys. Its formulation has drawn heavily upon the material available from the research and planning efforts of people and agencies at the community, State, and Federal levels. It will be useful, it is hoped, in calling the attention of the residents of the area to the possibilities of a more satisfactory use of resources, and in focusing national attention on the potential contribution which may be expected from a fully-developed region.

In presenting this report, your directive that it should primarily be an outline of what should be done, not how or by whom it should be executed, was adhered to. However, to the end that the plan be workable, its various phases have received consideration as to their practical accomplishment. From this consideration it is evident that the achievement of this plan will require a degree of coordination of the efforts of people and local, State, and Federal agencies which does not now exist in the area.

Within the suggested framework for the development of the area effective use can be made of present opportunities for adjustment. Community, State, and regional projects and programs may be expedited as they are in accord with the objectives of the plan, and national programs may be modified to contribute more directly to these ends. Full participation of the people in business, labor, and agriculture, of the educational forces, and of the universities, colleges, and research institutions is necessary if the objectives are to be understood and realized. The State Boards or Commissions dealing with natural resources and the expanded Regional Council and Regional Committees working with the Field Offices of the National Resources Planning Board are organizations through which this participation may be obtained.

Very great changes are now being made in the area. The national needs for manpower, for food production, for timber and forest products, and for industrial production are pressing the people of the area toward adjustments which are proposed in the report and which are believed, in the long run, to be highly advantageous to the region.

Each Federal and State agency and each individual and institution asked to cooperate in the preparation of this plan has responded wholeheartedly. Pertinent available information has been furnished gladly, and the agencies have given generously of the time of some of their personnel. The interest and the enthusiasm with which the designated representatives have worked indicate a genuine belief in the need for programs and plans to guide the adjustments in the area.

Sincerely yours,

EDWIN R. HENSON,
Director, Arkansas Valley Planning Project.

FOREWORD

This report advances a plan or framework within which it is possible for the people of the Valley to improve their own well-being through knowledge of what they have to work with and through forethought. On that solid foundation private enterprise and community, State, regional, and Federal effort can cooperate to develop and use all resources most efficiently.

The emphasis is upon the people and their use of the resources of the Valley. While the report constitutes a series of recommendations and suggests projects in certain fields, it does not attempt to indicate by whom the projects should be undertaken, the source of their financing, or the order of their initiation. Programs of action and plans for projects require further studies at community, area, State, and regional levels; the responsible State and Federal agencies should evaluate them and be in accord on their effectiveness.

Although the report is in the form of a suggestive general plan, it necessarily considers certain aspects of the program by which the plan could be effected. The program will be broad in scope; portions of it will require large investments of capital. If the program is to be truly that of the people of the Valley, individuals, communities, and local and State governments must be expected to share its capital cost to a degree commensurate with the benefits that accrue to them.

Federal participation must be expected on a like basis and according to recognized Federal procedures.

To carry out the development by the democratic process will involve three principal and separate although related operations. First, the building of a background of public understanding of the potentialities of the region, through education and public participation in discussion and planning. Next, the correlation of all phases of development planning, so that the general plan and program are truly comprehensive, reflecting public participation, and eliminating conflicts as they arise. Finally, action programs springing from the planning efforts must be efficiently carried out. The first two steps, intelligently taken, will make easier the third.

Clearly, these steps can be taken successfully through several possible administrative procedures. The administration could be achieved by existing agencies, by a regional authority, or by other intermediate means. It is not intended that this report shall imply which is the most desirable method for this area. However, it is evident that further correlation of the activities of existing agencies or the creation of new coordinating machinery is necessary to translate the plan herein presented into a program of practical accomplishment.

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REGIONAL PLANNING—PART XII

ARKANSAS VALLEY

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