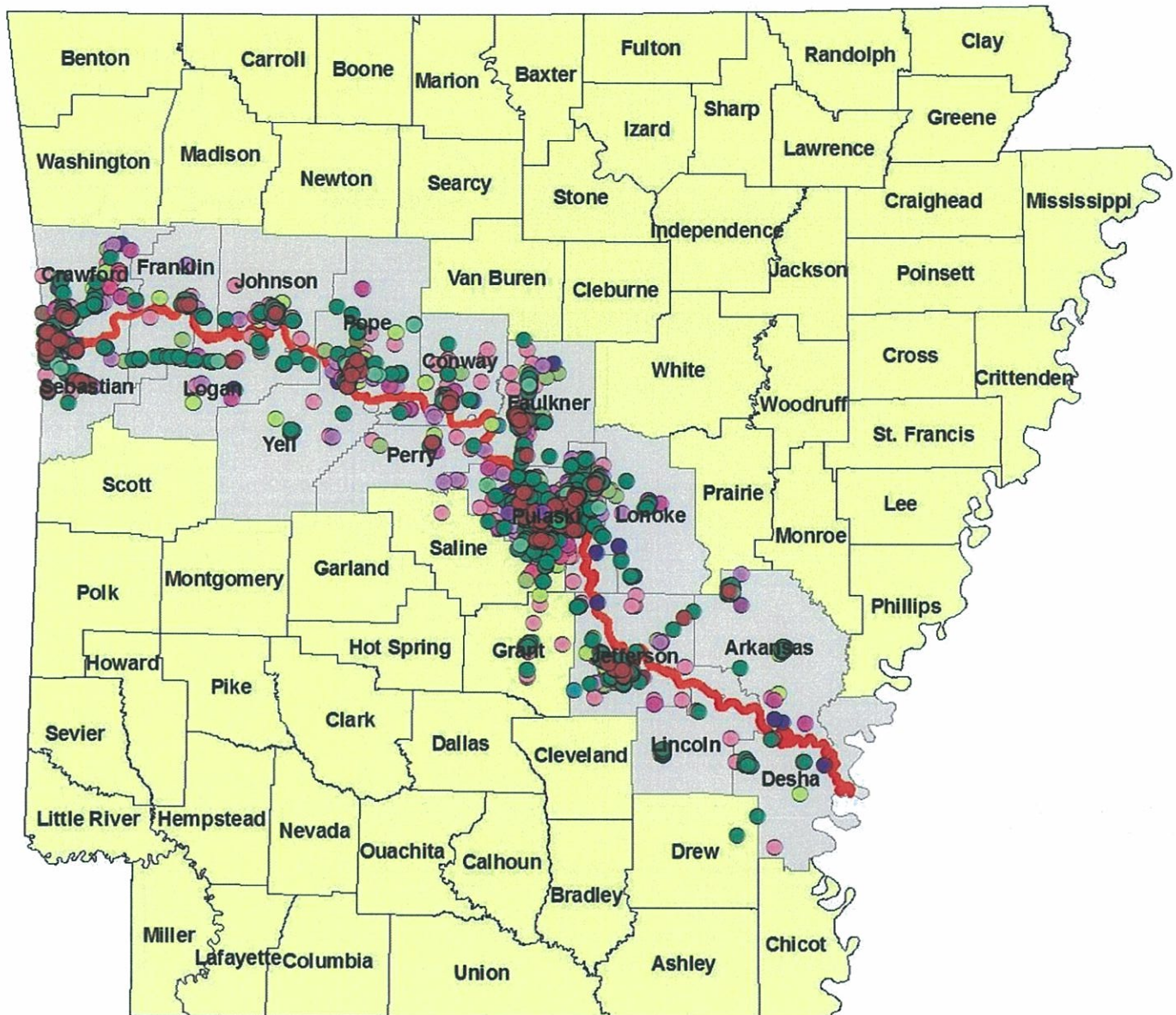


## Arkansas River Connection Busiensses Along the Arkansas River



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# ***Arkansas River Corridor - Phase I - Summary***

## **INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE**

The Arkansas River Commission is a non-profit association organized by like minded citizens in 2003 to promote river activity and tourism attractions along the Arkansas River throughout the state of Arkansas while endorsing the conservation, recreational, historic, and cultural amenities of the State. The river corridor stretches from the start of the Arkansas River at the historic Arkansas Post in Arkansas County to Fort Smith, Arkansas a distance of roughly 300 river miles. The identified river corridor adjoins 16 Arkansas counties and some 28 political jurisdictions. As a key and critical physical element the Arkansas River provides the vital link for cities and counties to the continuous economic development of the central regions of the state.

This report is the initial phase of a comprehensive assessment of the Arkansas River corridor within the State of Arkansas and a prelude to a pending long-term development plan which is intended to serve as a guideline for prudent public investment and infrastructure improvements as well as private development throughout and along this vital river corridor.

As part of a pending long-range comprehensive plan for physical, social, and economic corridor improvements ***this initial phase is devoted primarily to collecting and assembling a detailed data base of various existing tourist attractions, commercial facilities, and related enterprises along the river corridor.*** Such updated inventory is to be made available to all public and private entities to assist in the development of new and expanded projects for designated areas within the corridor and to support and enhance tourism and increase economic development statewide. Such data base will be made available in an appropriate electronic format for future application by selected users. The secondary focus of this initial phase is to ***identify selected best case studies of similar river related projects*** found throughout the US that have been deemed successful in promoting tourism and adopting policies for attracting development associated with river corridors and/or river communities.

## **STUDY INITIATION**

The Arkansas River Commission selected the consulting team of C&A/UALR in early 2007 to undertake the preparation of a long-range phased development plan for the Arkansas River Corridor. In March of 2010, with limited funding in hand, the commission authorized the initial phase of the assignment focusing on the existing conditions and inventories of all related tourist facilities/amenities near the river corridor. The initial phase also sought to bring together major stakeholders in the planning process in order to compile a meaningful data base document for various state and local officials that will aid in promoting growth and tourism development throughout the corridor.



## **BACKGROUND**

The Arkansas River, the longest tributary of the Mississippi River with 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of its length within the State of Arkansas is the key physical component of the study effort. This river system was made navigable by the completion of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS) in 1968.

Some 300 miles of the MKARNS river channel are located in Arkansas. Public ports are located at Pine Bluff, Little Rock, and Fort Smith. Today MKARNS, a 445-mile US Corps of Engineers navigational system is comprised of 13 locks and dams along with a series of elongated navigational pools. The navigable portion of the Arkansas River is a vital commercial and flood control inland water system linking the Tulsa Port of Catoosa, to the Mississippi River. Over this stretch of the river a difference in elevation of 420' exists and a typical channel width of 250-300 feet and is maintained by the Corps. at a minimum depth of roughly 9 feet. Nine of the 13 locks and dams are located within the State of Arkansas and consist of locks measuring 110' x 600'. The elevation difference between navigational pools fluctuate between 14-54 feet.

The reported normal flow velocity of the Arkansas River within the study area is reported at about 2-5 mph. The river, depending on location and seasonal variations, can be found to have average flows calculated at approximately 70,000 cfs.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – PHASE I**

The collection and updating of the database throughout the corridor has been undertaken by the UALR Bureau of Economic Research.

The Arkansas River Connection Database allows users to easily search for business listings, tourist attractions, recreational venues, and other tourism related information for locations near the Arkansas River. This system provides various ways to look for and export particular business listings, such as search by geographic variables (address, city, county, zip code), industry type following the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS), employee size ranges, and of course the name of the business. Tourist attraction like museums, art and music centers, theaters, and parks are also included in the database and can be searched by name, location, and activity.

For similar best case study scenarios nearly two dozen river cities/corridors across the US were analyzed and investigated. Of these, **ten** were selected as best examples most comparable to the Arkansas River Corridor based on similar river features, rural and urban complexities, and emphasis on tourism development.

The best case studies referred to herein are:

- Paducah, Kentucky - Paducah Riverfront Development Plan
- Newport, Kentucky – (Cincinnati MSA) – Urban Riverfront Development (2006)
- Mississippi River Corridor, TN; - (Memphis TN to Dyersburg, KY)
- Arkansas River Corridor Master Plan (Phase I; Vision Plan) Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Upper Mississippi River Corridor (Illinois & Iowa)
- Grand Excursion “2004” - upper reaches Mississippi River (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa)
- Trinity River Corridor Project; Dallas Texas
- Lower Saluda River Corridor Plan; Lower Saluda River, South Carolina
- Salmon River Greenway Corridor Community Enhancement & Development Plan - Salomon River; Oswego County, New York
- Mystic River Corridor Strategy Project, Lower Mystic River Corridor; Boston MSA, Boston, MA

Resource linkages to selected case study web-sites are noted on respective case study profile sheets.

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

Numerous public and private entities as well as interested tourism organizations throughout the state and river corridor will benefit or have contributed to the on-going Arkansas River Corridor effort . These entities include but are not limited to the following:

### *Federal Agencies*

- US Corps of Engineers
- National Park Service
- US National Wildlife

### *Cities*

- Fort Smith
- Van Buren
- Ozark
- Russellville
- Morrilton
- Conway
- Maumelle
- North Little Rock
- Little Rock
- Pine Bluff
- Dumas
- Dewitt

### *Counties*

- Crawford
- Franklin
- Johnson
- Sebastian
- Logan
- Yell
- Pope
- Conway
- Perry
- Faulkner
- Pulaski
- Lonoke
- Jefferson
- Lincoln
- Arkansas
- Desha

### *Multimodal Facilities*

- Little Rock Intermodal Facility
- Van Buren Intermodal Facility
- Russellville River Valley Regional Intermodal Facility

*Other state agencies, commissions, and various boards*

A&P Commissions  
Arkansas Economic and Development Districts  
Arkansas Economic Development Commission  
Arkansas Hospitality Association  
Arkansas Marina Association  
Arkansas Port Authorities  
Arkansas State Parks and Tourism Department  
Arkansas Waterways Commission  
Association of County Governments  
Central Arkansas Metropolitan Planning Agencies  
Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas  
METROPLAN  
Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
State Chamber of Commerce of Arkansas

**RESOURCES:**

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/>  
<http://www.incog.org>  
[http://www.macp.org/sites/default/files/Final Mystic Report June 2009 with appendices.pdf](http://www.macp.org/sites/default/files/Final%20Mystic%20Report%20June%202009%20with%20appendices.pdf)  
<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/metroboston/mystic.htm>  
[www.batesline.com](http://www.batesline.com)  
[www.co.oswego.ny.us/tourism](http://www.co.oswego.ny.us/tourism)  
[www.dnr.sc.gov/water/envaff/river/pdf/LowerSaludaPlanComplete.pdf](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/water/envaff/river/pdf/LowerSaludaPlanComplete.pdf)  
[www.grandexcursion.com](http://www.grandexcursion.com)  
[www.msriver.org](http://www.msriver.org)  
[www.msrivertn.org](http://www.msrivertn.org)  
[www.paducah.travel.com](http://www.paducah.travel.com)  
[www.riverfrontpaducah.com](http://www.riverfrontpaducah.com)  
[www.tmapc.org](http://www.tmapc.org)  
[www.TravelMississippiRiver.org](http://www.TravelMississippiRiver.org)  
[www.trinityrivercorridor.com/pdf/Master.pdf](http://www.trinityrivercorridor.com/pdf/Master.pdf)



State of Arkansas

88th General Assembly

Regular Session, 2011

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1864

By: Representative Post

Filed with: Interim House Committee on Public Transportation  
pursuant to A.C.A. §10-3-217.

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW RELATED TO RAILROADS TO  
REMOVE BARRIERS FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY AND CREATE  
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

TO AMEND THE LAW RELATED TO RAILROADS TO  
REMOVE BARRIERS FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY  
AND CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. The purpose of this act is to amend the law related to  
railroads to remove barriers for business and industry and create economic  
opportunities; and for other purposes.

Referred by the Arkansas House of Representatives

Prepared by: JSE/VJF