



# The Delta Council REVIEW

Vol. 11, Issue No. 3

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF DELTA COUNCIL

OCTOBER 2015

## First District Congressman and Commodity Forecaster Headline Midyear Meeting

The Delta Council Midyear Directors' meeting will be held on Friday, November 6, in Stoneville, beginning at 9:30 a.m., in the Capps Center.

"We are quite fortunate that Congressman **Trent Kelly**, the newest member of the U.S. House Agriculture Committee, will serve as the Keynote for our luncheon crowd, following the Business Session of our Midyear Meeting," stated **Al Rankins**, the Washington County Delta Council leader who serves as President of



Kelly



Elmore

Delta Council this year.

The Midyear Directors' meeting will kick off at 9:30 a.m. in the Capps Center, with committee meetings on farm policy, highways and transportation, and workforce training.

Agricultural economist, **Steve Elmore**, a graduate of the University of Nebraska and World Outlook Economist for DuPont-Pioneer Companies, will be the highlight of the morning

MEETING *continued on page 7*

## Delta to Become Work Ready Community

The Delta made great progress in October in our effort to become a certified Work Community region.

**Fred McConnel** of ACT, Inc. and **Mike Mulvihill** of the MS Department of Education joined regional teams for meetings in Clarksdale, Indianola, Yazoo City, and Stoneville.

"We would like to give a big thank you to the team leaders in the participating counties — Tunica, Coahoma, Bolivar, Sunflower, Washington, and Yazoo — for assembling business, political, and educational leaders from their



Mulvihill



McConnel

communities to learn more about the Work Ready concept," said Delta Council Development Chairman **Tom Gresham** of Indianola.

"The response we received from our partners — industry, the four community colleges, the State Community College Board, WIN Centers/MDES, Delta WIA, Mississippi Development Authority, and the public and private high schools — on this results driven, measurable, and comprehensive training effort, was

WORK READY *continued on page 3*

### DELTA COUNCIL MID-YEAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Friday, November 6, 2015

Charles W. Capps, Jr. Entrepreneurial Center  
Stoneville, MS

9:30 a.m.

#### Farm Policy Committee Meeting

Room A  
Charles W. Capps, Jr. Entrepreneurial Center

#### Joint Meeting Highway and Transportation Committee and Development Department Directors

Room B  
Charles W. Capps, Jr. Entrepreneurial Center

11:15 a.m.

#### General Business Session

Introduction of Keynote Speaker  
Al Rankins, President

Keynote Address  
Congressman Trent Kelly  
1st District (MS)

12:00 p.m.

#### Noon Luncheon

1:15 p.m.

#### Adjournment

The Delta Council Mid-Year Board of Directors Meeting is sponsored by Cspire.




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## DELTA COUNCIL

### 2015-2016 Delta Council Officers

**President:** AL RANKINS, Greenville  
**Vice-President:** CURTIS BERRY, Robinsonville  
**Vice-President:** JOHN HOWARTH JR., Cleveland  
**Vice-President:** WADE LITTON, Greenwood  
**Vice-President:** JAMIE MURRELL, Arcola  
**Vice-President:** RANDY RANDALL, Indianola  
**Vice-President:** MIKE WAGNER, Sumner  
**Treasurer:** CLAY McWILLIAMS, Cleveland

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# Outlook

## Message From The President

We are really looking forward to having Congressman **Trent Kelly** and Special



**Rankins**

Guest **Steve Elmore** of Pioneer-DuPont headline our Midyear Directors' meeting on Friday, November 6, in Stoneville. We hope that Directors and Committee members will be in attendance to join us in welcoming them to the Mississippi Delta.

As all Delta Council members are aware, the Committees of Delta Council are where the action of this organization originates. We will have Committee meetings beginning at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, November 6, in Stoneville related to Highways and Transportation policies, Farm Policy, and the Development Department of Delta Council.

**Matt Schertz**, Senior Policy Advisor to the Committee on Agriculture in the U.S. House of Representatives, will meet with the Farm Policy Committee by video conference and give farmers and allied agricul-

tural business interests from the Delta an update on the Washington scene. Also, **Jim Aidala**, a former top ranking EPA official, who is currently working under contract for CropLife America, will brief Farm Policy members on the pressing challenges which are facing all existing and new crop protection and seed technologies.

As a former chairman of the Development Department of Delta Council and one who is vitally concerned with the deteriorating road and bridge infrastructure in Mississippi, I am looking forward to hearing from Committee Chairman **Walton Gresham** and those he has lined up for the Committee meeting on Highways and Transportation related to the need for a major road program to be addressed by the Mississippi Legislature in the near future. Mississippi Economic Council executive, **Scott Waller**, and State-Aid Road executive, **Carey Webb**, will give briefings on critical aspects of any major initiative to confront our failing infrastructure. **Dr. Mac Portera**, who has been associated with special projects of Delta Council over

the past 15 years, will brief Development Department leaders from the local communities on workforce preparedness initiatives which he is coordinating with the Development Department of Delta Council.

2015 has been a busy year for Delta Council since our new officers were elected and I am very pleased to see this organization so deeply involved with such a wide range of issues in so many different aspects of the Delta economy. At our recent Officers meeting where **Mike Wagner**, a Vice President of Delta Council from Sumner, served as host, we heard from numerous individuals who interact with Delta Council on a weekly basis regarding highway construction and maintenance needs, water supply, industrial expansions and new industry recruitment. Our Soil and Water Resources Committee leadership has been sharply focused on alternative water supply possibilities and the evaluation of alternative approaches toward

PRESIDENT *continued on page 3*

### GUEST COLUMN

## Delta Water Supplies

By **Kay Whittington**

*Office of Land & Water Resources, Director  
 Mississippi Dept. of Environmental Quality*



**Whittington**

The Delta is a land of rich cultural tradition with some of the most fertile soils in the world. For more than 150 years, the region has been a major supplier of cotton and more recently food to this country and the world. With its extraordinary land and water resources, and with the world's population growing exponentially, the Delta is poised to experience the greatest period of prosperity in its history, but only if it manages its water resources responsibly.

While the region is water rich with over 50 inches of rainfall annually, less than half of this falls during the growing season. Approximately two million acres in the Delta are irrigated, primarily with groundwater pumped from the Mississippi River Valley Alluvial Aquifer (MRVA).

Groundwater levels in the MRVA are declining as irrigation demands have increased. Increased irrigation demand over time has resulted in declines of water levels of almost one foot per year in some parts of the MRVA.

By law, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is charged with "conserving, managing, developing, and protecting" the state's water resources for current and future generations and ensuring responsible beneficial use. The Delta Sustainable Water Resources Task Force (Task Force) was originally organized in 2011 and was later formalized by an executive order of **Governor Bryant** in 2014. The Task Force promotes conservation measures, irrigation management practices, and implementation of alternative Delta surface and groundwater supplies; advises MDEQ on policies related to water resources; and promotes the implementation of strategies and plans developed through the Task Force to ensure the future sustainability of water resources in the Delta. MDEQ leads the Task Force which includes representatives from: Delta Council, Delta

F.A.R.M., Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation, Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Joint Water Management District.

Because irrigation is the driver of water level declines in the MRVA, the initial efforts of the Task Force focused on acquiring better information on irrigation withdrawals from the MRVA. Accurate water use data was essential to improve the science that informs policy decisions and to encourage more efficient water use. Moreover, it was decided that the best way to get this information was through fixed flow meters installed on at least 10% of MRVA wells with good geographic distribution throughout the Delta. Metered water use data could be used by the Task Force in evaluating water conservation scenarios; assessing the effectiveness of different irrigation management practices; and determining the need for additional surface water supplies. The meters would also give water users a tool to help them

GUEST *continued on page 3*

## The Moving Wall is coming to Yazoo County, Mississippi

nt  
n- *"In honor of the men and women of  
a- the Armed Forces of the United States  
he who served in the Vietnam War."*  
lta (Inscription on The Wall and The  
Moving Wall.)

lta The Moving Wall, the nation's  
t- original traveling Vietnam Veterans  
n- Memorial, will be in Yazoo County at  
de the new property of Baptist Yazoo at  
ts 1490 East Broadway Street. The  
fi- Yazoo County Chamber of Com-  
ce merce sponsors this honored visit.

er, **Jason Patterson**, Yazoo County  
us Chamber President, said, "I am so  
n- pleased that our community will have



this opportunity to show our appreci-  
ation for our veterans and honor those  
who gave their lives in service of our  
country."

**John Devitt**, a former helicopter  
door gunner and Army veteran, creat-  
ed the "Moving Wall," which has  
moved millions of people. Today the  
wall tours the country every year. The  
Moving Wall measures 250 feet long,  
4 feet tall at each end and 6 feet tall  
in the center. The replica is now con-  
structed of aluminum with the 58,245  
names of the American dead in Viet-  
nam silk-screened upon black panels.

The Moving Wall visits between  
22 and 28 cities in the United States  
each year and 75,000 to 100,000 peo-  
ple come out to see the memorial dur-  
ing their weeklong appearances at  
each spot. The Moving Wall has been  
displayed from Hawaii to Alaska and  
in every state across the entire conti-  
nental United States as well as Cana-  
da. There is no admission fee charged  
to visit The Moving Wall. It will be  
open to the public, 24 hours a day,  
from setup on October 29th until late  
afternoon on November 2nd.

### PRESIDENT from page 2

reducing irrigation water use while protecting the  
ve yield potential of Delta land resources. **Dr. O.A.  
a- Cleveland**, an agricultural economist formerly with  
rd Mississippi State University, gave Officers his crop  
outlook report that was informative to those of us  
3 who do not farm and to those who do farm. The  
— Deputy Staff Director for Senate Committee on  
Environment and Public Works charged with reau-  
thorization of new highway legislation, **Alex Her-  
rgott**, briefed Officers and Presidential Directors on  
the status of pending federal highway legislation.  
d- The Senate bill holds promise for provisions that

will allow I-69 to be eligible for significant federal  
funding applied toward its eventual completion.

**In closing, I would like to encourage each  
member of Delta Council to attend the Midyear  
Committee meetings** and Directors' session which  
begins at 9:30 a.m. and concludes with a noon  
lunch on Friday, November 6. **Further, I would  
encourage you to consider bringing your son, your  
daughter, or any other family member or close  
business associate** so they can learn more about the  
activities ongoing in the Delta business community.  
We look forward to seeing you on November 6, and  
hope that you have a happy holiday season as it  
approaches the horizon of the next few months.

### DELTA COUNCIL OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT:** Al Rankins, Greenville  
**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Curtis Berry, Robinsonville  
**VICE-PRESIDENT:** John Howarth, Jr., Cleveland  
**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Wade Litton, Greenwood  
**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Jamie Murrell, Arcola  
**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Randy Randall, Indianola  
**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Mike Wagner, Sumner  
**TREASURER:** Clay McWilliams, Cleveland

### PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTORS

**Jesse Amos**, Leland  
**Andy Anderson**, Rolling Fork  
**David Arant**, Ruleville  
**Mark Bellipanni**, Belzoni  
**Parker England**, Greenville  
**Gene Hurt**, Greenwood  
**Justin Jefcoat**, Greenwood  
**Shaw Johnson III**, Clarksdale  
**Mike Mikell**, Port Gibson  
**Stephanie Patton**, Leland

2015-2016

### GUEST from page 2

better understand, more carefully manage, and  
of possibly reduce their water use.

In February 2013, MDEQ implemented the  
on Voluntary Metering Program. Task Force  
on members supported the program with the  
ite understanding that mandatory metering will be  
he implemented if the program's deadlines are not  
rd met.

Voluntary Metering Program Deadlines:

- **June 30, 2014** – fixed meter must be  
ed installed on 5% of all MRVA wells in each  
of county. This deadline was met.

- **February 1, 2015** – metered water use for

### WORK READY from page 1

of simply overwhelming."

"Perhaps the most exciting thing is the  
ial enthusiastic support and embrace we received  
ld from the Career and Technical Education  
m Directors at all of the high schools in these six  
counties," added **Gresham**. "**Mike's** leadership  
3 from the State was invaluable, and will continue

5% of the MRVA wells in each county must be  
reported to MDEQ. This deadline was also  
met.

- **December 31, 2015** – fixed meter must be  
installed on a total of 10% of the MRVA wells  
in each county.

- **February 1, 2016** (annually thereafter) –  
metered water use for the previous calendar year  
must be reported to MDEQ for each meter  
installed under the program. MDEQ developed  
an online reporting tool to report water use  
through MDEQ's website.

A guiding principle of the Task Force is to  
manage water as efficiently as possible, including  
using the suite of irrigation water management  
practices researched and documented by **Dr.**

to be moving forward as we integrate the Work  
Ready concept in all levels of training and  
employment."

There will be an official launch of this pro-  
gram in November so be looking for details. In  
addition to the six counties already in progress,  
the effort was bolstered by another county —  
Leflore — putting in their application to partic-  
ipate. They will undergo the same training in

**Jason Krutz**, an irrigation specialist with the  
MSU Delta Research and Extension Center,  
and others. NRCS has financial resources avail-  
able to help implement these practices that can  
also save farmers money by maximizing yields  
and minimizing energy costs. There is no single  
solution for, and no one group can solve, this  
problem on their own. However, the water,  
money, and time savings of some of these con-  
servation practices are well documented and  
should be as widely implemented throughout  
the Delta as possible.

The Task Force is also identifying ways to  
store water when it is plentiful for use when it is  
not and researching alternative solutions such as  
enhancing recharge through the transfer of

groundwater, transfers of surface water, and the  
use of in-stream weirs to make the availability of  
surface water more dependable. The injection of  
groundwater and the use of weirs in strategic  
locations can help increase recharge in critical  
areas. The use of surface water instead of  
groundwater can also help reduce pressure on  
the aquifer.

Mississippi is blessed with a lot of rainfall.  
Because of this, we often do not appreciate the  
vulnerability of our resources. However, if busi-  
ness continues as usual, the water that has always  
been so plentiful in the Delta will no longer be  
available. Progress must be made now with vol-  
untary conservation measures while all options  
continue to be investigated.

2016 as the other counties did in 2015 and be  
included in the launch in November.

"We want to thank our funding partner —  
Delta Regional Authority — and express grati-  
tude to our team leaders in the six counties who  
have put in countless hours getting us to this  
point — **Lyn Arnold, Ron Hudson, Judson  
Thigpen, Steve Shurden, Cary Karlson, and  
Whitney Hurt**," added **Gresham**. "**Margaret**

**Cotton** of the Delta Council staff, **Christie  
Sledge** of MDA Workforce, and **Mitzi Woods**  
of the Delta Workforce Investment Area have  
been invaluable in leading the regional team.  
We hope you will support this effort, both local-  
ly and regionally, and please contact **Frank  
Howell** at 662-686-3350 or fhowell@delta-  
council.org, if you have any questions or would  
like more information."

## Economic Impacts of Deer in Mississippi



By Delta Wildlife Staff

The Mississippi Delta only has three seasons: planting season, harvest season and hunting season. Planting and harvest seasons in the Delta generate over 2 billion dollars per year. Mississippi State University reports the value of hunting season to be \$1.14 billion dollars per year. And economists believe that the pursuit of white-tailed deer accounts for over 70% of that number.

There are many reasons why deer have become the most pursued game animal in Mississippi. Two such reasons include deer abundance, estimated 1.75 million in Mississippi, and the relative ease of people finding

a place to hunt. Another reason includes the ample opportunities offered by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) to hunt deer. In fact, the State's four month long deer season has arrived. Archers will take to the woods this month, followed by our youth, before adult rifle season, concluding with a primitive weapons season that closes the last day of January.

Hunting is certainly a significant economic generator in Mississippi, and a part of our heritage that has been recently protected by state law. However, it is not fair to only highlight the positive impacts of deer and deer hunting. Our most beloved

game animal also creates significant liability and cost for Mississippians before we spend a dime on assets, goods and services to hunt them.

Losses due to white-tailed deer in Mississippi have not been adequately enumerated. But one area where some data exists is vehicle collision records. A State Farm insurance report shows 2014-2015 deer collision claims in Mississippi reached 22,373. Another source reported the average claim for deer collisions to be \$3,305. This suggests that motorists sustained more than \$73 million worth of damage due to deer collisions in Mississippi last year. That doesn't include public service costs, medical costs, and other expenses.

Farmers are also well aware that deer are costing them money. Producers farming in proximity to deer know they are losing some of their profit potential. The question is, "How much?" Lenders have said many of their customers expect to lose 10% of their crop annually to deer in the South Delta, along the Bluff Hills and adjacent to any public conservation lands. That doesn't sound like much, but 1% of the Delta's annual crop production equals \$20M.

Fortunately, there are things we can do to minimize these negative impacts. For producers sustaining significant crop damage, MDWFP has a long history of working with those impacted by deer to find solutions to

localized problems. Furthermore, Wildlife biologists can work closely with multiple landowners to help them manage local populations and herds to achieve dual objectives for both hunting interests and farmers. As for vehicle collisions, a significant number of accidents could be avoided if motorists would exhibit a much higher degree of caution when driving in forested areas during the breeding season.

With benefits come some risk. But the economic impact of white-tailed deer and hunting in Mississippi is certainly positive. So get out this fall and winter and help support Mississippi's economy by doing what you love...hunting!

## Emerging Delta Work Ready Communities Meet in Little Rock



From left: Steve Shurden, Sunflower County Economic Development District; Margaret Cotton, Delta Council; Christie Sledge, MS Development Authority; Judson Thigpen, Cleveland/Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce; Chris Masingill, Delta Regional Authority; Whitney Hurt, Yazoo County Economic Development District; Mitzi Woods, South Delta Planning and Development District; Lyn Arnold, Tunica MS Chamber and Economic Development District; Cary Karlson, Washington County Economic Alliance; Shirlaurence Fair, Clarksdale Municipal School District; and Ron Hudson, Economic Development Authority of Coahoma County.

Representatives across the Delta attended the third ACT Work Ready Community Academy recently in Little Rock. In partnership with Delta Regional Authority, Delta Council Development Department along with leadership from Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, Tunica, Washington and Yazoo Counties are participating in ACT's Certified Work Ready Communities (WRC) initiative. ACT Work Ready Communities empower states, regions and counties with data, process and tools that drive economic growth. Participants are leveraging the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC™) to measure and close the skills gap — and building common frameworks that link, align and match their workforce development efforts. Visit <http://workreadycommunities.org> for more information about Work Ready Communities.

## Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Visits Stoneville



Commissioner of Ag Cindy Hyde-Smith at a recent field tour in Stoneville.

Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce, **Cindy Hyde-Smith** spent a day at the Stoneville Research Station reviewing Delta agriculture programs and future challenges facing the 2 billion dollar Delta industry. "Commissioner **Smith** is an extremely astute public official, in so far as Mississippi Agriculture is concerned, and her background as both a legislative leader in agriculture, as well as her current service to agriculture on a state-wide basis, gives her a broad reach over farmers and landowners issues," stated **Gibb Steele** the Washington County Farm Leader, who served as one of her hosts at the meeting.



A recent Soil and Water Resources Meeting in Stoneville.



From l to r: David Arant (Pres. Dir., Ruleville), Randy Randall (VP, Indianola), Mike Wagner (VP, Sumner), Al Rankins (Pres., Greenville), and Jesse Amos (Pres. Dir., Leland) attending a DC officer's meeting in Sumner.



Dr. Malcolm Portera addresses Delta Council Membership in a recent Meeting regarding workforce.



From l to r: Ron Cassada (Indianola) and Glenn Donald (Moorhead) at a recent meeting on State-Aid roads with Director Carey Webb, State Aid Engineer of Mississippi Department of Transportation.



From left: Dr. Terry Barr (Senior Director, CoBank) and MS Governor Phil Bryant at 5th Annual Future Delta Event held at Warfield Park in Greenville.



Dr O A Cleveland, retired MSU economist, speaks at officers meeting on issues and challenges facing the region.



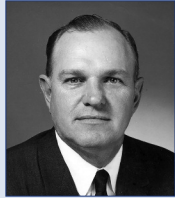
Johnny McRight, Tommy Hart, and Tommy Goodwin at a recent Mississippi Delta Development Association meeting.



From l to r: Whitney Hurt (Yazoo City) and Mitzi Woods (Cleveland) attending a recent Work Ready Community meeting in Stoneville.

**IN MEMORY: DELTA COUNCIL PAST  
PRESIDENT SON HOOD**

**Edgar "Son" Hood, Jr.**, died August 30, 2015 at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis at the age of 93. He is survived by his wife of 72 years, **Janet G. Hood** and his brother-in-law, **Neil Block** of Tunica. He leaves his son, **Edgar M. Hood III**; his daughter, **Carolyn H. Garaway (Charles)**; **C. Riley Hood (Jane)**; and **Douglas F. Hood**. He leaves to cherish his memory 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. **Edgar** was a graduate of the Baylor School, Chattanooga TN and Mississippi State University, where he was a member of Kappa Sigma Fraternity. He served as a 1st Lieutenant in the US Army in the Pacific Theater during WWII. He was a member of the Al Chymia Shrine Temple and the Delta Scottish Rite. **Edgar** was a past president of Delta Council where he served for many years on the Board of Directors. Also, he served on the Mississippi Seed Improvement Association, Coahoma Electric Power Association and Staplcoth Board of Directors. He was a member of the Tunica United Methodist Church.

**GUTTER NAMED AS DUPONT GOVERNMENT  
AFFAIRS MANAGER**

DuPont is adding a seasoned D.C. veteran and former Deputy Undersecretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services (FFAS), **Karis T. Gutter**, to its Government Affairs team. Gutter will be a Government Affairs Manager. He will be putting his experience to work for all the DuPont businesses with a particular focus on our agricultural and nutrition businesses. "**Karis** will be a strong addition to our federal affairs team in Washington, D.C.," said **Barry M. Granger**, vice president of DuPont Government Affairs. "**Karis'** background and experience in the military, on Capitol Hill and with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will add an excellent foundation of knowledge to our Washington federal team," added

**Granger.**

**Gutter** is a native of Terry, Miss.

**LT. GOVERNOR REEVES MAKES APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS OF EDUCATION,  
CONTRACT REVIEW**

Lt. Gov. **Tate Reeves** recently appointed a workforce development expert to the Board of Education.

**Reeves** appointed Madison business leader **Jason Dean** to the State Board of Education.



The Board of Education sets policy for Mississippi public schools and oversees the Department of Education. **Dean** has extensive experience in the areas of education, workforce training and economic development.

"**Jason** knows what companies expect from today's workforce and has the knowledge to help Mississippi schools prepare students for college and a job," Lt. Gov. **Reeves** said. "I appreciate his commitment and passion for improving our public schools for all kids in Mississippi."

The Senate will consider **Dean's** appointment when the Legislature convenes in 2016. Board members serve for nine years.

**Dean** is vice president for program development at Tenax Aerospace LLC.

**U.S. SENATE AG APPROPRIATIONS STAFF VISIT  
DELTA**

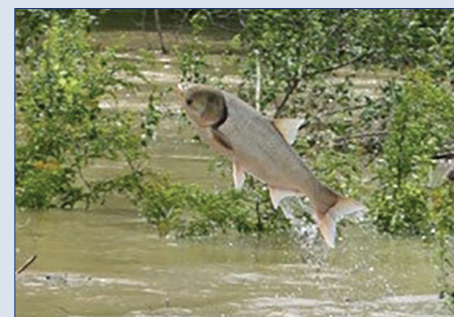
From (l to r) Jason Krutz, Irrigation Specialist DREC, talks to U.S. Senate Agriculture Appropriations staff members Patrick Carroll, Carlisle Clarke, and Rachael Santos, and J.R. Rigby of the ARS Sedimentation Lab in Oxford, to review Delta water conservation options that save money, utilize irrigation more efficiently, maintain production yields, and conserve water.

U.S. Senate Agriculture Appropriations Staff Members focused on numerous issues and made site visits, including the development and release of a new catfish vaccine; USDA efforts to manage populations of fish-eating birds which prey on the U.S. catfish industry; Southern Hardwoods research challenges; and the need to establish a stronger Mid-South presence in terms of water resources research at Stoneville.

**NEW RAIL SERVICE PURCHASE**

The North Central Mississippi Regional Railroad Authority (NCMRRRA) has completed the acquisition of the Grenada Railway, LLC. (GRYR) and all of the assets of the Grenada Line, extending between milepost 403.0 in Southaven and milepost 703.8 near Canton, MS and the Water Valley Branch (10.42 miles) located between milepost 604.0 at Water Valley Junction and Milepost 614.42 at Bruce Junction (Coffeeville).

The authority also announced the signing of a 15-year lease operating agreement with a subsidiary of Iowa Pacific Holdings, one of the largest short line operators in the Country, to operate and develop new businesses on the line. The new operator will continue to do business under the name Grenada Railway LLC.

**DELTA FISHERIES MEETING**

Delta Wildlife will be hosting a fisheries meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, November 13 in the Capps Building at the Delta Research & Experiment Station in Stoneville, MS. Delta Wildlife members, area fishermen, boaters, lakefront home owners, and conservationists interested in learning more about the current state of native fisheries in the Delta, the effects of extreme river stages and Asian carp are encouraged to attend.

**DELTA COUNCIL ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM ON THE MOVE**

The Delta Council Adult Literacy program, which is a free one-on-one tutored program offered throughout the Mississippi Delta, this year crossed the 300 mark of residents trained to read. Since its incep-



tion in 2002, almost 340 individuals have been taught how to read, some of which have obtained their GED. Through the sponsorship of BankPlus, Delta Pine and Land Company, Delta Regional Authority, Dollar General, Field Co-operative Association, Guaranty Bank, Monsanto, Planters Bank, and StaplCoth, the lives of Deltans have been enhanced.



## Voluntary Metering Update

Installed Meter Numbers as of 10-21-15

County	Installed	Total meters needed for 10% installed	% of 10% installed	# remaining to reach 10% installed	# added since 10-7-15
Sunflower	197	270	73%	73	3
Bolivar	256	300	85%	44	10
Humphreys	70	108	65%	38	0
Leflore	131	160	82%	29	11
Tallahatchie	71	96	74%	25	0
Quitman	60	84	71%	24	0
Coahoma	97	118	82%	21	0
Tunica	74	92	80%	18	0
Panola	14	20	70%	6	0
Sharkey	63	68	93%	5	1
Carroll	5	8	63%	3	0
Issaquena	29	30	97%	1	0
Holmes	30	30	100%	complete	complete
Warren	4	4	100%	complete	complete
Tate	2	2	100%	complete	complete
Washington	225	220	102%	complete	complete
Yazoo	54	40	135%	complete	complete
Grenada	8	6	133%	complete	complete
Desoto	15	10	150%	complete	complete
	1405			287	25

“The Goal is for 10% of the agriculture irrigation wells in each county to have a meter installed by January 1, 2016 and report 2015 water use by February 1, 2016. We have co-signed an agreement with other organizations to work to reach this goal voluntarily and we urge every farmer and landowner to help us reach this goal.”

**Travis Satterfield**, Chairman, Farm Policy Committee

**Gibb Steele**, Chairman, Rice Committee

**Mike Sturdivant**, Vice-Chairman, Farm Policy Committee

**Rob Coker**, Chairman, Soybean, Wheat and Feed Grains Committee

## MDOT Holds Highway 6 Meeting

Below are excerpts from the printed documents that were handed out in Batesville recently at the Mississippi Department of Transportation's Open Forum Public Meeting on State Route 6/US 278 between I-55 in Batesville to Clarksdale in Coahoma County.

### Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide a safe transportation facility with traffic capacity that is adequate for present and future needs.

### Environmental Assessment

An environmental assessment was performed for a four-lane highway that would follow the route of existing SR 6 / US 278 between Clarksdale and Batesville.

### Four-Laning SR 6 / US 278

In order to meet the mandates of the Mississippi

Legislature's Vision 21 program, the Mississippi Department of Transportation intends to widen SR6/US278 from two-lanes to a four-lane divided highway with a bypass in Marks. However, **based on the current fiscal constraints under which MDOT is working, the work will not be started in the near future.**

### Bridge Replacements

The Mississippi Department of Transportation is currently developing plans for the replacement of 14 bridges along SR6/US278 between Clarksdale and Batesville.

### Removal of the Batesville Bypass

Based on a re-evaluation of the traffic projections it has been determined that a bypass of Batesville is no longer needed to handle the traffic in Batesville.

### MEETING *from page 1*

Business Session and offer his insights into the U.S. and world commodity outlook for the 2016 crop season.

“Delta agriculture has produced some of the

largest crops on record over the past five years, but we are facing a cost-price squeeze which is almost certain to take its toll on the bottom line of many farming operations this year,” stated **Travis Satterfield**, Chairman of the Farm Policy Committee of Delta Council.

**DELTA  
COUNCIL  
MEMBER  
FOCUS**

**MIKE  
WAGNER**

**Wagner**

### BUSINESS:

**Mike** owns and operates Twobrooks Farm, a rice and soybean conservation farm that is situated in Tallahatchie and Leflore Counties. He, also, owns and operates farmland, timberland, and pasture in Sunflower and Yalobusha Counties. He is associated with the Sumner Grille.

### HOMETOWN:

**Mike** lives on Cassidy Bayou in Sumner, Miss. He and his wife **Charlotte** have one son, **Lawrence**, who is a senior playing his last football season at Mississippi State University while studying Agricultural Economics, and one daughter, **Abbey**, who is a senior at Delta State University study-

ing marketing. They attend Episcopal Church of the Advent in Sumner where he is currently serving as 2nd term Senior Warden. **Mike** says, “I am very proud of our small town, and the caring, thoughtful people who diligently work together to maintain its old fashioned viability as a great place to safely raise one's family, it's business atmosphere, it's civic mindedness, and its quiet Delta leadership on racial reconciliation matters that is channeled through the Emmett Till Interpretive Center and good, old common sense.”

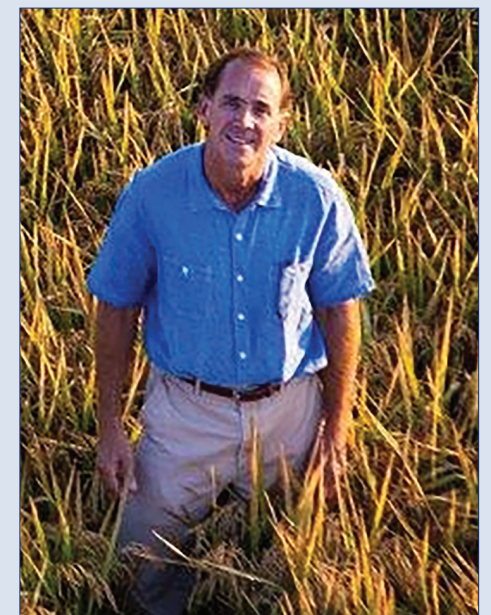
### AFFILIATIONS:

**Mike** currently serves as a Vice President of Delta Council, Mississippi Rice Council Board Member (having served as

past vice president and president), an alternate to the Mississippi Rice Promotion Board, vice president of the Tallahatchie County Farm Bureau (having served as past president), a member of the Farm Bureau Rice Advisory Committee, past board member of the United States Rice Producers Association, past co-chairman of the United States Rice Producers Association International Promotions Committee, current Advisory Board member of Planters Bank and Trust, and board member of the Emmett Till Memorial Commission.

### WHAT PEOPLE SAY:

“**Mike** is a progressive farmer who has provided valuable leadership in agricultural



and conservation challenges throughout his farming career. Also, what is so special about **Mike** is that he has that same leadership commitment to the community he lives in,” says **Travis Satterfield**, Delta Council Past-President and Benoit rice and soybean farmer.

# Delta Council

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## DELTAN ON THE MOVE: Chris Champion

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

**Chris** is a native Deltan who was born and raised in Greenwood, MS, before graduating from University of Mississippi (Ole Miss). He graduated from Ole Miss with a Bachelor of Business Administration, Banking, and Finance. After Ole Miss, he lived in Birmingham, AL for three years, before moving to Washington, D.C. to work for Senator **Roger Wicker**. In 2012, he and his wife **Olivia** moved to Jackson, MS where he went to work for Governor **Phil Bryant**, most recently serving as his Policy Director. He and **Olivia** have two children, Amelia and Worth. They are members of Northminster Baptist Church in Jackson. **Chris Champion** says, "While most of our time is spent raising our two kids, we enjoy traveling and spending time in Oxford."



### CURRENT JOB TITLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

In July 2015, **Chris** made the decision to leave public service and join Cornerstone Government Affairs, where he holds the position of Vice President in the Mississippi office along with **Joe Sims** and **Camille Young**. Cornerstone Government Affairs is a full-service, bipartisan public affairs firm specializing in government relations and lobbying on the state and federal level. The firm was founded in Washington, D.C. in 2002 and now has ten offices across the country. **Chris** spends his time assisting clients with a variety of decisions and putting the experience he gained while working in both the federal and state governments to use.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

"The private sector has definitely been different than my work as a staffer in the Senate and Governor's Office. In the time I have been with Cornerstone, I have truly enjoyed helping organizations reach their goals and make strategic decisions on how to navigate the government process. Our firm represents a wide variety of clients that I am exposed to such a diverse group of issues on a daily basis, and I appreciate that."

### WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT CHRIS?

"The Delta is proud of **Chris Champion**. In a short amount of time, **Chris** has been a pivotal player in Senator **Wicker's** office, leading Governor **Bryant's** policy efforts, and now working for one of the pre-eminent government relations firms in the country," says **Walton Gresham** a Sunflower County businessman and past Delta Council president.

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