

SECTION 3

COMMUNITY PROFILE

This section of the Plan provides a general overview of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) District 7 Region. It consists of the following four subsections:

- 3.1 Geography and the Environment
- 3.2 Population and Demographics
- 3.3 Housing, Infrastructure, and Land Use
- 3.4 Employment and Industry

The county-specific annexes provide more detailed community profile information about each county.

3.1 GEOGRAPHY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The MEMA District 7 Region was named based on the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency districts lines and is one of nine MEMA regions throughout the state. The region is located in the southwestern portion of the state. It is bounded by the Mississippi/Louisiana State Line to the south and west. Interstate 55 runs north to south through the region, passing through Pike and Lincoln Counties. Other major roads include U.S. Highway 84, which runs east to west passing through Adams, Franklin, Lincoln, and Lawrence Counties and U.S. Highway 98 which east to west traveling through the Franklin, Lincoln, Pike, and Walthall Counties. The MEMA District 7 Region includes the counties of Adams, Amite, Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Pike, Walthall, and Wilkinson. An orientation map is provided as **Figure 3.1**.

MEMA District 7 is located adjacent to the Mississippi River supplying diverse recreational and cultural activities. The total area of each of the participating counties is presented in **Table 3.1**.

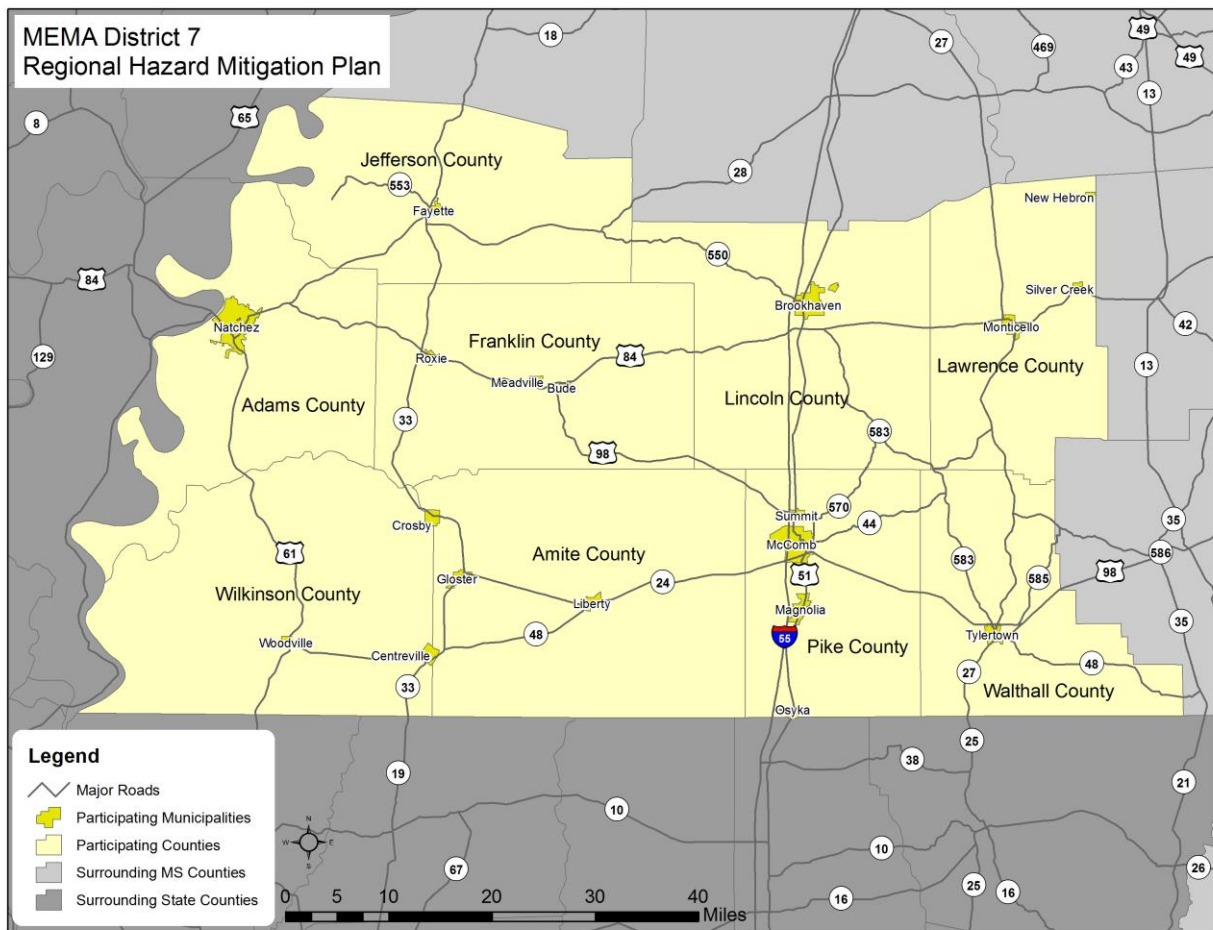
TABLE 3.1: TOTAL AREA OF PARTICIPATING COUNTIES

County	Land Area (sq. mi.)	Water Area (sq. mi.)	Total Area (sq. mi.)
Adams County	462	25	488
Amite County	730	2	732
Franklin County	564	3	567
Jefferson County	520	7	527
Lawrence County	431	5	436
Lincoln County	586	2	588
Pike County	409	2	411
Walthall County	404	<1	404
Wilkinson County	678	10	688

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2010 Census

The MEMA District 7 Region enjoys four distinct seasons but the climate in the region is generally hot and humid compared to the rest of the United States given its latitude and relative proximity to the Gulf Coast. Precipitation is generally highest in winter months when the temperatures are moderately lower, but the likelihood of precipitation remains relatively constant throughout the year. Summers in the region can become fairly hot with average highs in the nineties and lows in the seventies. The region is also often susceptible to turbulent weather when warm, wet air from the Gulf of Mexico is pushed up into the region to mix with cooler air coming down from across the continent which can result in severe weather conditions. This is particularly true in the spring when seasons are changing and diverse weather patterns interact.

FIGURE 3.1: MEMA DISTRICT 7 REGION ORIENTATION MAP



3.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Although Amite County is the largest participating county by area, the largest population is found in Pike County. Between 2000 and 2015, a number of counties experienced population decline; however, Lincoln and Pike Counties experienced growth. Lincoln County had the highest rates of growth. County level population counts from the U.S. Census Bureau for 2000 and 2010 and from the American Community Survey for 2015 are presented in **Table 3.2**.

TABLE 3.2: POPULATION COUNTS FOR PARTICIPATING COUNTIES

Jurisdiction	2000 Census Population	2010 Census Population	2015 American Community Survey Estimate	% Change 2000-2015
Adams County	34,340	32,297	31,979	-6.9%
Amite County	13,599	13,131	12,840	-5.6%
Franklin County	8,448	8,118	7,857	-7.0%
Jefferson County	9,740	7,726	7,586	-22.1%
Lawrence County	13,258	12,929	12,586	-5.1%
Lincoln County	33,166	34,869	34,765	4.8%
Pike County	38,940	40,404	40,075	2.9%
Walthall County	15,156	15,443	14,978	-1.2%
Wilkinson County	10,312	9,878	9,345	-9.4%

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Based on the 2010 Census, the median age for residents of the participating counties ranges from 37 to 44 years with most counties around 37 to 39. The racial characteristics of the participating counties are presented in **Table 3.3**. Several counties in the region have majority white populations while others have majority black populations. Most of these counties have significant minority populations (whether white or black), with very small populations falling into any other racial categorization.

TABLE 3.3: DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPATING COUNTIES

Jurisdiction	White, Percent	Black or African American, Percent	American Indian or Alaska Native, Percent	Asian, Percent	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Percent	Other Race, Percent	Two or More Races, percent	Persons of Hispanic Origin, Percent*
Adams County	40.2%	55.5%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	3.1%	0.8%	5.9%
Amite County	57.6%	42.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%
Franklin County	63.6%	35.8%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.5%
Jefferson County	13.9%	85.9%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Lawrence County	66.3%	32.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	1.0%	0.6%
Lincoln County	68.2%	30.8%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	1.1%
Pike County	45.6%	52.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.5%	1.4%
Walthall County	53.2%	45.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.8%	1.8%
Wilkinson County	28.9%	70.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%

*Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories

Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

3.3 HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND LAND USE

3.3.1 Housing

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there are 80,422 housing units in the MEMA District 7 Region, most of which are single family homes. Housing information for the nine participating counties is presented in

Table 3.4. As shown in the table, several counties have relatively high percentages of seasonal housing units.

TABLE 3.4: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPATING COUNTIES

Jurisdiction	Housing Units (2000)	Housing Units (2010)	Seasonal Units, Percent (2010)	Median Home Value (2011-2015)
Adams County	15,175	14,656	2.7%	\$85,600
Amite County	6,446	6,635	7.9%	\$71,600
Franklin County	4,119	4,154	11.2%	\$73,200
Jefferson County	3,819	3,673	8.0%	\$60,500
Lawrence County	5,688	6,019	4.4%	\$86,800
Lincoln County	14,052	15,255	2.0%	\$85,300
Pike County	16,720	17,861	3.0%	\$83,300
Walthall County	6,418	7,132	5.0%	\$93,200
Wilkinson County	5,106	5,037	18.4%	\$59,600

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

3.3.2 Infrastructure

TRANSPORTATION

There are several major thoroughfares that traverse the MEMA District 7 Region. Interstate 55 is a major north-south interstate highway connecting through Lincoln and Pike Counties to areas around Memphis, Tennessee to the north and New Orleans, Louisiana to the south. U.S. Highway 84 runs east-west, more or less connecting Natchez and Brookhaven and U.S. Highway 98 runs northwest to southeast between Bude and McComb. Finally, U.S. Highway 61, a north-south highway, travels through Jefferson, Adams, and Wilkinson Counties, providing access to the north into Vicksburg and south into Louisiana. Various state highways operate within the region providing access to adjacent areas throughout the state.

There are several small general aviation airports within the MEMA District 7 Region, including one in nearly every county. The most prominent are Natchez-Adams County Airport (Hardy-Anders Field) and McComb-Pike County Airport (John E. Lewis Field). A list of all the airports within MEMA District 7 can be found in **Table 3.5**.

TABLE 3.5: AIRPORTS LOCATED IN MEMA DISTRICT 7

County	Airports
Adams County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natchez-Adams County Airport
Amite County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crosby Municipal Airport McGehee Air Park Airport
Franklin County	<i>None Identified</i>
Jefferson County	<i>None Identified</i>
Lawrence County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clay Airport
Lincoln County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brookhaven-Lincoln County Airport
Pike County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McComb-Pike County Airport Southwest Regional Medical Center Heliport

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Walthall County	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paul Pittman Memorial Airport
Wilkinson County	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forest Home Airport• Fred Netterville Lumber Company/Wilkinson Community Airport• Green Acres Airport

Source: Toll Free Airline

Multiple freight rail lines operate within the MEMA District 7 Region. Canadian National Railway, Natchez Railway, Inc., and Gloster Southern Railway travel throughout the area. Business and industries rely on and are bisected by these various rail lines within the MEMA District 7 Region.

UTILITIES

Electric power in the MEMA District 7 Region is provided by several electricity cooperatives. Southwest Mississippi Electric Power Association serves residents throughout the western part of the region. Magnolia Electric Power Cooperative is present throughout much of the eastern part of the region, including many rural areas. Entergy is focused primarily on urban areas in Pike, Lincoln, and Walthall Counties, but also serves areas of Franklin, Amite, and Adams Counties. Much of Lawrence County is served by Southern Pine Electric Power Association and relatively small portions of Lawrence County and Walthall County are served by Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association.

Water and sewer service is provided by participating jurisdictions and/or community based associations in many of the urban areas, but unincorporated areas often rely on septic systems and wells in the MEMA District 7 Region.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

There are numerous public buildings and community facilities located throughout the MEMA District 7 Region. According to the data collected for the vulnerability assessment (Section 6.4.1), there are 67 fire stations, 31 police stations, and 74 schools located within the study area.

Forty-two hospitals and medical care facilities are located in the MEMA District 7 Region. These include several notable short term acute care facilities: Merit Health Natchez, a 179-bed facility located in Natchez; Southwest Mississippi Regional Medical Center, a 160-bed facility located in McComb; King's Daughter Medical Center, a 99-bed facility located in Brookhaven; Beecham Memorial Hospital, a 37-bed facility located in Magnolia; and Jefferson County Hospital, a 30-bed facility located in Fayette. There are also several additional medical care facilities located throughout the region as outlined in the vulnerability assessment (Section 6.4.1).

Several educational institutions are found in the MEMA District 7 Region. Alcorn State University has a location in Natchez and is a four-year undergraduate institution with several graduate programs. Southwest Mississippi Community College is a two-year community college located in Summit. Copiah-Lincoln Community College is also a two-year community college and has a location Natchez.

Museums based around the history and culture of MEMA District 7 Region are prevalent throughout the area. For example, in Centreville, the Camp Van Dorn World War II Museum highlights the achievements of soldiers who were trained at Camp Van Dorn during the war. The Jerry Clower Museum in Liberty chronicles the life and works of comedian Jerry Clower. In McComb, the Railroad Depot Museum

contains one of the best preserved collections of railroad history in the country. The Natchez Museum of African American History and Culture tells the story of African American culture in the southern United States and is dedicated to exploring the societal contributions of people of African origin and descent.

Recreational opportunities exist throughout the MEMA District 7 Region. The Homochitto National Forest comprises almost 200,000 acres of land located within a few the MEMA District 7 counties. Visitors can camp, hike, hunt, and fish in the forest. In addition, St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge sits on roughly 25,000 acres and functions as a habitat for migratory waterfowl, birds, and other wildlife. Another prominent feature of the region is the Natchez Trace Parkway which begins in the City of Natchez and runs northeast to Nashville, Tennessee. This parkway commemorates the Old Natchez Trace which is an historic trail that was followed by Native Americans who were tracing bison along their migratory routes from the grazing pastures of central and western Mississippi to the salt licks of Tennessee.

The Mississippi River, which runs along the western border of the region, has played an integral part in the history of the region, especially in Adams, Jefferson, and Wilkinson Counties. The river acted as a major conduit for trade in the 19th century as plantations produced significant quantities of cotton that could be easily shipped down to ports such as New Orleans. Today, the river is still an important part of the local economy as products are shipped worldwide out of the Natchez port. Apart from the Mississippi River there are multiple water based refuges, activities, and recreational features focused on local water bodies. For instance, in Adams County, the Old River, Lake St. John, and Lake Concordia all offer excellent boating opportunities. In Wilkinson County, Lake Mary is an oxbow lake formed by the Mississippi River and well-known for boating, fishing, and hunting. Fishing is also a major draw for visitors to Percy Quin State Park located in Pike County. This park contains Lake Tangipahoa which has experienced a boom in recreational tourism since it was re-opened in 2016 after Hurricane Isaac forced it to shut down in 2012. In Lincoln County, Lake Lincoln is great for camping, hiking, and water activities. As part of the Homochitto National Forest, Okhissa Lake in Franklin County offers over 1,000 acres of lake area for fishing, boating and leisure activities. There are also numerous other small lakes, creeks, and other water bodies throughout the region that offer the outstanding outdoor recreational opportunities for which the region is known.

3.3.3 Land Use

The MEMA District 7 Region has a blend of old and new development that contributes to physical, cultural, and economic attributes throughout the region. As shown in **Figure 3.1** above, there are many small incorporated municipalities located throughout the planning area, with a few larger urban economic hubs interspersed. These areas are where the region's population is generally concentrated. The incorporated areas are also where many of the businesses, commercial uses, and institutional uses are located. Land uses in the balance of the study area generally consist of residential development, agricultural uses, and recreational areas, although there are some notable exceptions in larger municipalities. There are multiple county- and regional-based agencies that serve to coordinate growth and promote economic development.

Local land use and associated regulations are further discussed in *Section 7: Capability Assessment*.

3.4 EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

Like many other parts of Mississippi, the MEMA District 7 Region's economy has traditionally been heavily reliant on the manufacturing industries. However, the region has suffered from numerous plant closings during the 1990s and 2000s. As a result, many of the communities have worked to develop place-based economies that will rely on the MEMA District 7 Region's unique location and cultural resources. Educational services, health care and social assistance industry employs the majority of residents within MEMA District 7 Region. Agriculture and livestock based operations also continue to play a key role in the local economy and throughout the region.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), in 2015, Adams County had an average annual employment of 25,935 workers and an average unemployment rate of 11.3 percent (compared to 10.3 percent for the state). In 2015, Educational services, and health care and social assistance accounted for 23.3 percent of the county's workforce followed by Retail trade (15.0%) and Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services (10.8%). The average annual median household in 2015 for Adams County was \$28,869 compared to \$39,665 in the State of Mississippi.

In 2015, Amite County had an average annual employment of 10,357 workers and an average unemployment rate of 12.7 percent. In 2015, the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry employed 25.8 percent of the county's workforce followed by Manufacturing (11.4%) and Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (10.3%). The average annual median household in 2015 for Amite County was \$30,704.

Franklin County had an average annual employment of 6,074 workers and an average unemployment rate of 8.9 percent in 2015. According to the ACS, in 2015, the Educational services, and health care and social assistance employed 22.7 percent of the workforce followed by Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (14.4%) and Manufacturing (13.0%). The average annual median household in Franklin County was \$38,170.

In 2015, Jefferson County had an average annual employment of 6,013 workers and an average unemployment rate of 15.9 percent. According to the ACS in 2015, the Educational services, health care and social assistance industry employed 37.1 percent of the workforce. Manufacturing was the second largest industry, employing 13.6 percent of workers, and Transportation and warehousing followed behind (12.1%). The average annual median household in Jefferson County was \$20,743.

Lawrence County had an average annual employment of 9,826 workers and an average unemployment rate of 10.8 percent in 2015. According to the ACS, in 2015, the Educational services, health care and social assistance industry employed 25.2 percent of the workforce followed by Manufacturing (15.2%) and Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining (11.6%). The average annual median household in Lawrence County was \$35,634.

In 2015, Lincoln County had an average annual employment of 26,902 workers and an average unemployment rate of 7.5 percent. In 2015, according to the ACS, the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry employed the most people, with 27.4 percent of the workforce, followed by Retail trade (13.0%) and Manufacturing (9.7%). The average annual median household in Lincoln County was \$36,473.

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Pike County, in 2015, had an average annual employment of 30,450 workers and average unemployment rate of 9.5 percent. In 2015, according to the ACS, the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry employed 21.1 percent of the workforce. Manufacturing was the next largest industry, employing 17.3 percent of workers, and Retail trade (13.0%). The average annual median household in Pike County was \$31,677.

Walthall County had an average annual employment of 11,702 workers and an average unemployment rate of 11.1 percent in 2015. According to the ACS, in 2015, the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry employed 20.7 percent of the workforce followed by Manufacturing (14.6%) and then Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (12.2%). The average annual median household in Walthall County was \$31,384.

In 2015, Wilkinson County had an average annual employment of 7,481 workers and an average unemployment rate of 9.7 percent. In 2015, according to the ACS, the Public administration industry employed 21.2 percent of the workforce. Educational Services, health care and social assistance was the second largest industry, employing 19.5 percent of workers, and Retail trade followed behind (12.0%). The average annual median household in Wilkinson County was \$29,931.