

# SECTION 3

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

This section of the Plan provides a general overview of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) District 1 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 1 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 north western portion of the state. It is bounded by the Mississippi/Arkansas State Line to the west and Mississippi/Tennessee State Line to the north. Interstate 55 runs north to south through the region, passing through DeSoto, Grenada, Panola, Tate, and Yalobusha Counties. Interstate 69 runs east to west, passing through DeSoto and Tunica Counties. U.S. Route 61, which crosses north and south traveling through the Coahoma, DeSoto, and Tunica Counties. The MEMA District 1 Region includes the counties of Coahoma, DeSoto, Grenada, Panola, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica, and Yalobusha. An orientation map is provided as **Figure 3.1**.

MEMA District 1 is located adjacent to the Mississippi River supplying diverse recreational and cultural activities. The Mississippi Alluvial Plain makes up the MEMA District 1 region. The total area of each of the participating counties is presented in **Table 3.1**.

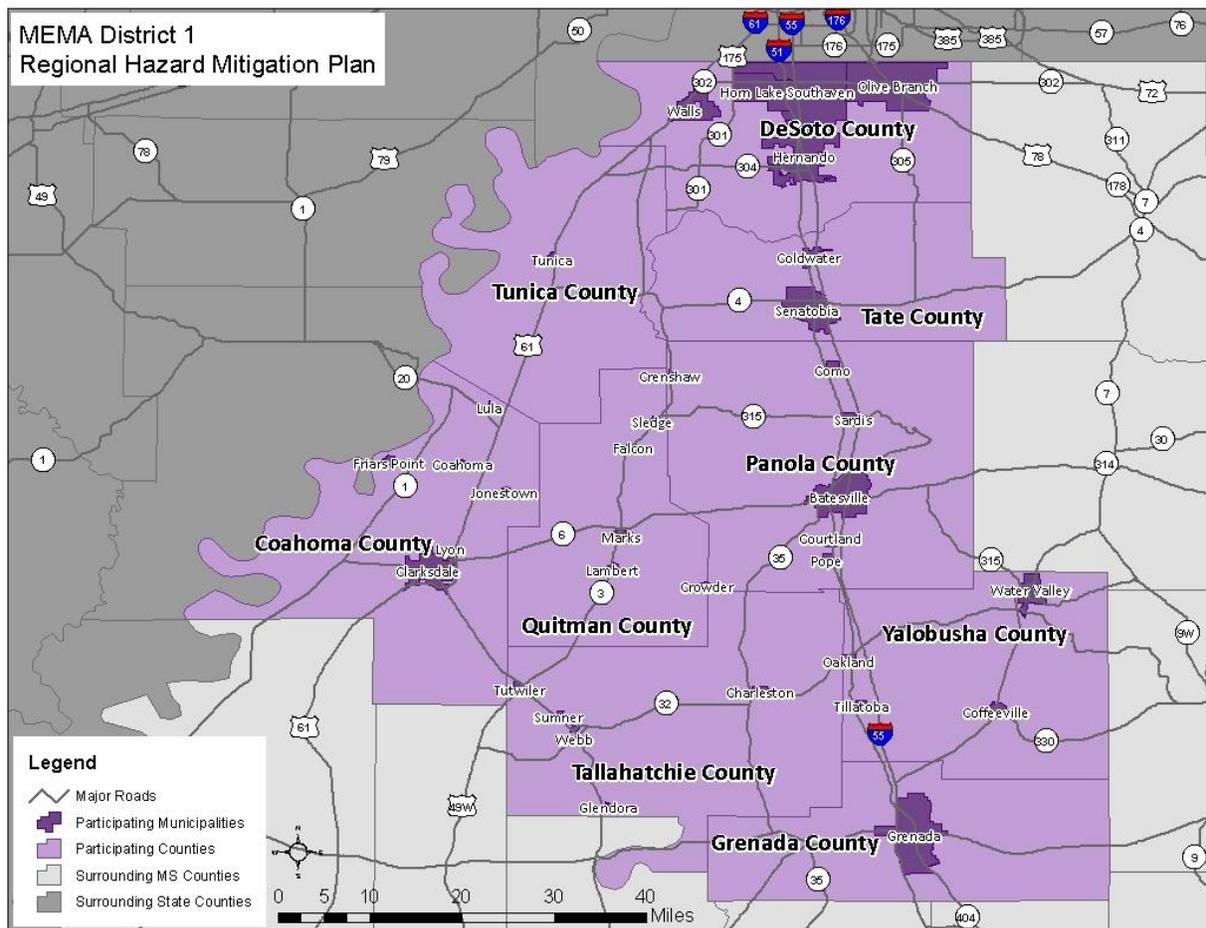
**TABLE 3.1: TOTAL AREA OF PARTICIPATING COUNTIES**

County	Land Area (sq. mi.)	Water Area (sq. mi.)	Total Area (sq. mi.)
Coahoma County	552	31	583
DeSoto County	476	21	497
Grenada County	422	27	449
Panola County	685	20	705
Quitman County	405	1	406
Tallahatchie County	645	4	652
Tate County	405	6	411
Tunica County	455	26	481
Yalobusha County	467	28	495

*Source: United States Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

The MEMA District 1 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 1 REGION ORIENTATION MAP**



### 3.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Although Panola County is the largest participating county by area, the largest population is found in DeSoto County. Between 2000 and 2010, the majority of participating jurisdictions experienced population growth; however, Coahoma, Grenada, Quitman, and Yalobusha Counties experienced decline. DeSoto County had the highest rates of growth, which is contributed by the county’s close proximity to the Memphis, Tennessee area. Population counts from the U.S. Census Bureau for 1990, 2000, and 2010 for each of the participating counties and jurisdictions are presented in **Table 3.2**.

**TABLE 3.2: POPULATION COUNTS FOR PARTICIPATING COUNTIES**

Jurisdiction	1990 Census Population	2000 Census Population	2010 Census Population	% Change 2000-2010
Coahoma County	10,530	30,622	26,151	-17.1%
DeSoto County	67,910	107,199	161,252	33.5%
Grenada County	7,701	23,263	21,906	-6.2%
Panola County	29,996	34,274	34,707	1.2%
Quitman County	10,490	10,117	8,223	-23.0%
Tallahatchie County	15,210	14,903	15,378	3.1%
Tate County	21,432	25,370	28,886	12.2%
Tunica County	8,164	9,227	10,778	14.4%
Yalobusha County	12,033	13,051	12,678	-2.9%

Source: United States Census Bureau, 1990, 2000, and 2010 Census

Based on the 2010 Census, the median age for residents of the participating counties ranges from 32 to 41 years with the average age being 36 years of age. The racial characteristics of the participating counties are presented in **Table 3.3**. A majority race does not make up the region, there is an equal distribution of white and black majority populations throughout the region.

**TABLE 3.3: DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPATING COUNTIES**

Jurisdiction	White, Percent (2010)	Black or African American, Percent (2010)	American Indian or Alaska Native, Percent (2010)	Asian, Percent (2010)	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Percent (2010)	Other Race, Percent (2010)	Two or More Races, percent (2010)	Persons of Hispanic Origin, Percent (2010)*
Coahoma County	22.9%	75.5%	0.1%	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	1.1%
DeSoto County	72.2%	21.9%	0.3%	1.3%	0.1%	2.8%	1.6%	5.0%
Grenada County	56.9%	41.7%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.8%	0.9%
Panola County	49.4%	48.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.6%	0.9%	1.4%
Quitman County	29.0%	69.6%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.8%	0.7%
Tallahatchie County	38.9%	56.4%	0.3%	0.8%	0.1%	2.4%	1.2%	5.6%
Tate County	66.9%	30.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%	2.2%
Tunica County	23.7%	73.5%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	1.2%	0.9%	2.3%
Yalobusha County	60.5%	37.9%	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.9%	1.2%

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

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2010 Census

### 3.3 HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND LAND USE

#### 3.3.1 Housing

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there are 133,762 housing units in the MEMA District 1 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, most counties have a very low percentage 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 (2010-2014)
Coahoma County	11,490	10,792	2.6%	\$58,100
DeSoto County	40,795	61,634	0.4%	\$151,200
Grenada County	9,973	10,155	3.2%	\$88,800
Panola County	13,736	14,697	3.3%	\$78,400
Quitman County	3,923	3,589	1.8%	\$53,800
Tallahatchie County	5,711	5,530	2.9%	\$66,700
Tate County	9,354	10,947	1.1%	\$114,900
Tunica County	10,015	10,074	3.7%	\$65,500
Yalobusha County	6,224	6,344	5.4%	\$70,400

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census and 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

#### 3.3.2 Infrastructure

##### TRANSPORTATION

There are several major thoroughfares that traverse the MEMA District 1 Region. Interstate 55 is a major north-south interstate highway connecting DeSoto, Grenada, Panola, Tate, Yalobusha Counties to areas in Memphis, Tennessee to north of New Orleans, Louisiana. DeSoto and Tunica Counties contain Interstate 69 operating in the western area of the region. U.S. Highway 49 runs south-west through Tallahatchie County and U.S. Highway 49 runs north south through Coahoma County. DeSoto, Grenada, Panola, Tate, and Yalobusha Counties contain U.S. Highway 51 which is a north-south highway traveling from New Orleans, Louisiana north to the Wisconsin-Minnesota state border. U.S. Highway 61, a north-south highway, travels through Coahoma, DeSoto, and Tunica Counties providing access to the north into Memphis, Tennessee and to the south towards Vicksburg, Mississippi. In Quitman County, U.S. Highway 278 provides access to the north and south. State Highway 1 in Coahoma County runs parallel to the Mississippi River and Highway 304 in Tate County serve as scenic routes within the region. 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 1 Region, including one in nearly every county. Within Coahoma County, there are two operating airports. Fletcher Field public use airport categorized as a general aviation facility with no scheduled commercial airline service and Shannon Field is a local airport with private facility usage. DeSoto County contains 6 aircraft facilities. Olive Branch Airport, in DeSoto County, is a privately owned but publicly used airport categorized as a general aviation reliever airport. Hernado Village Airpark, privately owned and publicly used, has hanger

space available to pilots and their aircraft. Vaiden Landing Airport is a private use airport facility located within the City of Hernando. Within DeSoto County, the airports facilities of Davis Field Airport, Delta Flying Service Airport, and Double O Ranch are all privately owned and privately used. Operating within Grenada County is Grenada Municipal Airport public use airport categorized as a general aviation facility with no scheduled commercial airline service. Also in Granada County is Spencer Field Airport which is privately owned and used. Panola County Airport is publicly owned and available for public use with two heliports operated within Panola County. Quitman County contains Selfs Airport which is open to the public. Charleston Municipal Airport is a publically owned public use airport facility in the City of Charleston in Tallahatchie County. Within Tallahatchie County, Flautt Airport and Flying Y Service Airport are both private use facilities. Williams Field Airport is a private use facility within Tate County. Operating in Tunica County, is Tunica Municipal Airport which is a public use general aviation facility which currently does not provide commercial airline service. Arnold Field Airport is a private use facility within Tunica County. Also in Tunica County, Ralph M. Sharpe Airport is a privately owned facility with public use with general aviation aircraft operations. Casino Center Heliport and Robinsonville Heliport are private use facilities within Tunica County. In Yalobusha County, Burney Farms Airport is a private use facility catering to private charter flights and Water Valley Municipal Airport is publicly owned and used facility. Tgp Station 847 Heliport is a private facility open to helicopters traveling within Yalobusha County.

Multiple freight rail lines operate within the MEMA District 1 Region. Alabama and Gulf Coast Railway and BNSF Railway travel throughout the area. Mississippi Delta Railroad is a short line railroad company operating from Swan Lake to Jonestown, Mississippi. Business and industries rely on and are severed by these various rail lines with the MEMA District 1 Region. Amtrak operates a route north and south throughout MEMA District 1 Region.

### ***UTILITIES***

Electric power in the MEMA District 1 Region is provided by several electricity cooperatives. The City of Clarksdale electric power association serves Coahoma County and additional areas throughout the MEMA District 1 Region. Coahoma electric power association operates in Coahoma, DeSoto, Quitman, Tallahatchie, and Tunica Counties, as well as several other nearby counties and unincorporated areas. Grenada and Tallahatchie Counties receives service from Delta EPA. Entergy Utility serves Coahoma, DeSoto, Panola, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica, and Yalobusha Counties. Grenada and Yalobusha Counties gain electric service from Natchez Trace electric power association. Northcentral Mississippi electric power association serves DeSoto and Tate Counties and South Mississippi electric power association serves DeSoto and Tunica Counties. DeSoto, Grenada, Panola, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica, and Yalobusha Counties is provided service from Tallahatchie Valley electric power association.

Water and sewer service is provided by all of the participating towns and/or community based associations, but unincorporated areas often rely on septic systems and wells in the MEMA District 1 Region.

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

There are a number of public buildings and community facilities located throughout the MEMA District 1 Region. According to the data collected for the vulnerability assessment (Section 6.4.1), there are 80 fire stations, 37 police stations, and 123 schools located within the study area.

Seventeen hospitals and medical facilities are located in the MEMA District 1 Region. Baptist Memorial Hospital-North Mississippi is a 242-bed general medical and surgical care facility serving the northern Mississippi with an accredited rehabilitation facility within DeSoto County. Merit Health Northwest Mississippi is a 181-bed medical-surgical hospital located in Clarksdale City of Coahoma County. Yalobusha General Hospital is a 26-bed hospital and 122-bed nursing home within Yalobusha County. There are also several additional medical care facilities located throughout the region as outlined in the vulnerability assessment (Section 6.4.1).

Educational institutions are found throughout MEMA Region 1. Coahoma Community College is a two year coeducational community college within Coahoma County. Coahoma Community College provides athletic opportunities for students and sporting events for county residents. Mississippi State University has an extension campus within Panola County.

Museums based on the historic nature of MEMA Region 1 are provided to residents and visitors. There are multiple museums in Coahoma County such as Delta Blues Museum, North Delta Museum, and Rock 'n' Roll Blues Heritage Museum. DeSoto County Museum located in the City of Hernando and contains exhibits related to civil war history and other history associated with the County.

Recreational opportunities exist within MEMA Region 1. The Coahoma County Expo Center hosts livestock events throughout the year along with festivals, concerts, racing events, conventions, and flea markets. There is RV parking available with full access to necessities. Isle of Capri Entertainment Resort within Coahoma County offers gaming and dining. The City of Southaven, within DeSoto County, contains the Arena at Southaven which offers access to horse shows, rodeos, expos and trade shows. The City of Southaven also operated multiple different sports complex pertaining to football, baseball, softball, soccer and gold. The Snowden Grove Amphitheater in DeSoto County features summer music concerts and festivals.

Sporting complexes are available in MEMA Region 1. The Quitman Softball complex operates within Quitman County. There are other available community based parks throughout Tate County. Tate County has multiple athletic complexes for baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, and other additional sports. These include Matthew Drive, Southern Avenue, and Scott Street Athletic Complexes. Tunica County has an aquatic center with pool facilities and equipment that hosts various swimming events. GW Henderson Recreational Center is located within Tunica County and provides various sports activities to Tunica County residents.

Due to the location of MEMA Region 1, there are multiple water based refuges, activities, and recreational features focused on local waterways. DeSoto County contains various water features that can be accessed for recreations in designated areas. These water features include Arkabutla Lake, Coldwater River, Mississippi Delta Bluffs, and the Mississippi River. Quapaw Canoe Company operates within Coahoma County providing guided tours along the Lower Mississippi. Grenada Lake in Grenada County is a controlled lake reservoir on the Yalobusha River. Various campground are located around the lake. Sardis Lake in Panola County has both a lower and upper lake areas with swimming beaches

and a marina. There are campsite and picnic pavilions along with camp sites and multipurpose trails. There is a state refuge at Sardis Lake for various types of birds and animals including a bald eagle retreat. Enid Lake, within Panola County, is an outdoor recreational area that features picnic pavilions, swimming beaches, campgrounds, natural trails, bike trails, horseback trails, and is recognized as a top fishing location. Archusa Lake and Recreational Park is a 454 acre area offering fishing with the City of Quitman in Quitman County.

MEMA Region 1 not only has multiple community parks, it also contains state and nationally based park systems. Hernado DeSoto Park, within DeSoto County, features hiking and walking trails, river overlook, picnic area, boat parking and launch access to the Mississippi River. A variety of community parks throughout DeSoto County are operated and maintained by the County. In Grenada County, High White State Park is a park featuring boating, waterskiing, and fishing on Grenada Lake. There are campsite, cabin, and picnic areas within the park. An 18-hole golf course, The Dogwoods, operates within the park. Malmaison Wildlife Management Area features hiking trails and camping. The area also allows hunting based on the time of year. Within Panola County, John Kyle State Park is located at Sardis Lake and provides RV and tent campgrounds, cabins, and golf villas. Fishing and water skiing are available at Sardis Lake, along with a boat launch area. George Payne Cossar State Park is located adjacent to Enid Lake containing RV and tent campgrounds, cabins, fishing, boat launches, picnic pavilions, playgrounds, and nature trails. Coldwater River National Wildlife Refuge in Quitman County is a smaller refuge with multiple ponds attracting all type of bird species. The refuge is closed to public access to maintain the integrity of the refuge and the birds within it. Tallahatchie National Wildlife Refuge is in Grenada and Tallahatchie Counties and maintained by the state. This area is home to various bird species throughout the year depending on migration patterns. Deer and other mammals can also be seen within the area. Gabbert Park, City Park, and Norfleet Drive Park are three popular parks within Tate County.

Various community parks throughout Tunica County with walking trails, ball fields, picnic areas, and playgrounds. Tunica River Park, within Tunica County, supplies recreational activities interacting with the Mississippi River. The park includes the Mississippi River Museum, riverboat cruises, nature trails, river overlook, and gift shop. Holly Springs National Forest is located within Yalobusha County, providing numerous activities such as campgrounds, picnic areas, swimming beaches, and hiking trail. Chewalla, Puskus, and Choctaw Lakes are found within the Holly Spring National Forest.

### **3.3.3 Land Use**

The MEMA District 1 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 study area, with a few larger city-specific 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, historic areas, 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 1 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 1 Region's unique location and cultural resources. Educational services, health care and social assistance industry employs the majority of residents within MEMA Region 1. Agriculture and livestock based operations continues to play a major role in the local economy and throughout the region as does tourism.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), in 2014, Coahoma County had an average annual employment of 10,738 workers and an average unemployment rate of 11 percent (compared to 6.3 percent for the state). In 2014, Education services, health care and social assistance accounted for 30.6 percent of the county's workforce followed by Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (14.8%); Retail trade (10.7%); and Manufacturing (8.9%). The average annual median household in 2014 for Coahoma County was \$27,735 compared to \$39,464 in the state of Mississippi.

In 2014, DeSoto County had an average annual employment of 88,271 workers and an average unemployment rate of 5.7 percent. In 2014, the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry employed 20.5 percent of the county's workforce followed by Transportation, warehousing, and utilities (12.8%); Manufacturing (10.7%); Retail trade (10.5%); and Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (10.3%). The average annual median household in 2014 for DeSoto County was \$58,995.

Grenada County had an average annual employment of 9,042 workers and an average unemployment rate of 5.9 percent in 2014. According to the ACS, in 2014, the Manufacturing industry employed 27.2 percent of the workforce followed by Educational services, health care and social assistance (20.1%) and Retail trade (14.1%). The average annual median household in Grenada County was \$33,067.

In 2014, Panola County had an average annual employment of 14,157 workers and an average unemployment rate of 6.9 percent. According to the ACS in 2014, the Educational services, health care and social assistance industry employed 26.7 percent of the workforce. Manufacturing was the second largest industry, employing 14.3 percent of workers, and Retail trade followed behind (12.8%). The average annual median household in Panola County was \$36,651.

Quitman County had an average annual employment of 3,080 workers and an average unemployment rate of 9.5 percent in 2014. According to the ACS, in 2014, the Educational services, health care and social assistance industry employed 31.3 percent of the workforce followed by Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (12.7%) and Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining (11.3%). The average annual median household in Quitman County was \$ 24,212.

In 2014, Tallahatchie County had an average annual employment of 4,552 workers and an average unemployment rate of 4.8 percent. In 2014, according to the ACS, the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry employed the most people, with 24.5 percent of the workforce, followed by Manufacturing (11.4%) and Public administration (11.2%). The average annual median household in Tallahatchie County was \$ 31,860.

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Tate County, in 2014, had an average annual employment of 13,120 workers and average unemployment rate of 6.2 percent. In 2014, according to the ACS, the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry employed 25.9 percent of the workforce. Retail trade was the next largest industry, employing 11.6 percent of workers, and Transportation and warehousing, and utilities followed closely behind (9.5%). The average annual median household in Tate County was \$42,902.

Tunica County had an average annual employment of 4,729 workers and an average unemployment rate of 7.3 percent in 2014. According to the ACS, in 2014, the Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services industry employed 40.9 percent of the workforce followed by Educational services, health care and social assistance industry (15.7%) and then Retail trade (10.2%). The average annual median household in Tunica County was \$31,406.

In 2014, Yalobusha County had an average annual employment of 5,185 workers and an average unemployment rate of 2.9 percent. In 2014, according to the ACS, the Manufacturing industry employed 29.8 percent of the workforce. Educational Services, health care and social assistance was the second largest industry, employing 23.5 percent of workers, and Retail trade followed behind (11.8%). The average annual median household in Yalobusha County was \$33,900.