



Press Release



The Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Development Authority has hired Mitchell B. "Mitch" Mays of Russellville, Alabama, as its administrator. The authority is a congressionally authorized interstate compact established to promote the development of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. Its members are the States of Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The governors along with five appointees from each of the four states constitute the governing board of the compact.

As administrator of the waterway authority, Mays will also serve as president of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Development Council, a not-for-profit trade association the authority established in 1985 to represent the myriad interests in the waterway and its potential benefits.

Mays, 45, has extensive experience in the economic development field that will be beneficial to his new responsibilities. His most recent position was executive director of the Franklin County, Alabama, Development Authority, which he had held since 2005. Prior to that, he was project manager for the Talladega County, Alabama, Economic Development Authority for five years. He is a retired veteran of the U.S. Air Force and the Alabama Air National Guard where he received numerous citations and awards for his outstanding service to the nation.

His academic background includes degrees from Wesley College in Delaware and William Carey College in Mississippi as well as professional related education from the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma and similar courses at Georgia Tech. He is married to Melissa Mays, who is a nursing school instructor. They have two children.

"We are very pleased Mitch has accepted our offer of employment with the Authority", said Jason Rich, of Tennessee and vice-chairman of the authority who spoke on behalf of the other members. "We have known Mitch for several years and have admired the outstanding work he has accomplished for Franklin County. Working

closely with the members of the authority and those of the council, his talents and experience will help realize the many economic benefits and improved quality of life the Tenn-Tom offers our region and its citizens”, stated Rich.

The waterway, opened to commerce in 1985, is a vital link to the nation’s vast inland waterway system that serves some 38 states. It offers the most economical and environmentally friendly mode of transportation to ship certain products and commodities long distances at lower costs. These freight shipping advantages have also helped attract billions of dollars of new and expanded industrial development within the waterway corridor. Its modern recreational facilities, such as marinas, camp grounds and thousands of acres of wildlife habitat, attract nearly 2 million visitors each year that pumps additional dollars into local economies. When built, the waterway was the largest project ever constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that now operates and maintains the project and its facilities.

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