

TENNESSEE-TOMBIGBEE WATERWAY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Fiscal Years 2028–2032

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1. Comprehensive Mission Statement

The Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Development Authority (Authority) promotes the economic and responsible development of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway and its four-state region, including Mississippi. The Authority advances industrial development, commerce and trade, recreation and tourism, and small-business growth.

2. Agency Philosophy

The Authority is a four-state interstate compact comprising Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Its board consists of the governors of the four member states and five appointees from each state. The board meets quarterly to establish policy and oversee the compact's administration and finances. The Administrator supervises daily operations and staff.

The Authority works through partnerships with public agencies, ports, economic developers, waterway users, and private industry. It emphasizes stewardship, accountability, regional cooperation, and measurable economic benefits.

3. Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks

Statewide Goal 1—Economic Development: Strengthen the economies of northeast Mississippi counties along the waterway by expanding employment, private investment, commerce, and trade.

Statewide Goal 2—Natural Resources and Recreation: Preserve access to Mississippi's water, fish, wildlife, and recreation resources through responsible development and coordinated management.

Key Benchmarks

- Annual waterborne tonnage and ton-miles moved on the Tenn-Tom.
- Jobs, personal income, and tax revenue associated with commercial navigation and recreation.
- New or expanded industrial investment and jobs in the waterway corridor.
- Annual recreation visitation, visitor spending, and public inquiries.
- Federal operation, maintenance, and capital funding for the waterway.
- Status of invasive-species monitoring and control, including hydrilla and invasive carp.

Natural-Resource Priorities

The Authority will coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and state and federal resource agencies to support management of wildlife mitigation lands, recreation areas, and invasive species. Priorities include maintaining public access, addressing seasonal hydrilla impacts at marinas, and advancing the authorized invasive-carp barrier project at Jamie Whitten Lock and Dam near Bay Springs, Mississippi.

4. Overview and Operating Environment

The Tenn-Tom is a multimodal economic asset that connects Mississippi and the Southeast to domestic and international markets. The corridor supports manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, energy, ports, and related service industries. Recent industrial activity in the Columbus area demonstrates the waterway's continuing value for transporting project cargo and serving major employers.

The system also supports more than two million recreation visits in a typical year, sustaining jobs and small businesses in nearby communities. Fishing tournaments, boating, camping, hunting, trails, and other public facilities broaden the waterway's economic impact.

ANNUAL IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL NAVIGATION ACTIVITIES (IN 2025 \$)

	Annual Estimated Impact
Personal Income	\$1,188,965,708
Total Jobs	18,669
Tax Revenue	\$328,005,108
<i>Federal Tax Revenue</i>	<i>\$223,370,448</i>
<i>State Tax Revenue</i>	<i>\$73,669,128</i>
<i>Local Tax Revenue</i>	<i>\$30,965,532</i>

Source: NSPARC, 2025

5. Strategic Priorities for FY 2028–2032

Priority 1—Increase Commercial Use: Increase annual commercial traffic to 7.0 million tons by FY 2032 and make measurable progress toward 2.0 billion annual ton-miles. Work directly with shippers, ports, carriers, and industries to shift suitable freight to water and develop new cargo opportunities.

Priority 2—Attract Investment and Jobs: Support at least \$1 billion in additional waterway-related capital investment during the five-year period. Coordinate with state, regional, and local economic-development organizations to recruit and expand industries that benefit from water access.

Priority 3—Expand Recreation and Tourism: Increase annual recreation visitation toward 3.0 million visitor-days by FY 2032. Strengthen promotion of waterway destinations, major fishing events, outdoor recreation, and community amenities.

Priority 4—Protect System Reliability: Advocate for sufficient federal funding to operate, maintain, rehabilitate, and improve the waterway. Coordinate navigation issues with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, ports, and commercial operators to reduce disruptions and prevent a maintenance backlog.

Priority 5—Improve Freight Connectivity: Advance dependable, cost-effective container-on-barge, breakbulk, and project-cargo services. Support efficient connections among Tenn-Tom ports, Gulf ports, highways, and railroads.

Priority 6—Balance Development and Stewardship: Support practical federal and state policies that protect environmental quality while allowing responsible economic development, navigation, recreation, and infrastructure maintenance.

6. Performance Measures

Measure	FY 2032 Target	Reporting Method
Commercial tonnage	7.0 million tons annually	USACE waterborne-commerce data
Commercial activity	Progress toward 2.0 billion ton-miles annually	USACE waterborne-commerce data
Capital investment	\$1.0 billion added during FY 2028–2032	Authority project records and partner reports
Recreation	Progress toward 3.0 million visitor-days annually	USACE recreation data
Public engagement	10% annual growth in qualified inquiries and digital engagement	Authority communications records
Federal support	Funding sufficient for safe, reliable operations and priority maintenance	Federal appropriations and USACE work plans

7. Strategies and Actions

- Maintain regular outreach to existing and prospective shippers, carriers, ports, manufacturers, and economic-development partners.
- Identify commodities and projects suited to barge transportation and provide routing, port, site, and service information.
- Support studies and investments that improve navigation reliability, freight capacity, safety, and intermodal connectivity.
- Advocate before Congress and federal agencies for adequate operation, maintenance, rehabilitation, and construction funding.
- Coordinate with resource agencies on wildlife mitigation lands, recreation assets, hydrilla management, and invasive-carp prevention.
- Promote the Tenn-Tom through targeted advertising, digital communications, earned media, trade events, tourism partnerships, and major recreation events.
- Track results annually and adjust activities based on performance data, available funding, economic conditions, and partner priorities.

8. External and Internal Assessment

The Authority's results will be influenced by the following conditions:

- National and global economic conditions, commodity markets, energy prices, trade policy, and access to private capital.
- The level and timing of federal funding for operation, maintenance, rehabilitation, and capital improvements.
- Continued financial support from the Authority's four member states.
- Aging navigation infrastructure and the economic consequences of prolonged outages.

- Industry changes involving vessel design, barge dimensions, draft requirements, automation, and intermodal logistics.
- Regulatory requirements affecting navigation, infrastructure, industrial development, and natural resources.
- The availability of public and private investment in recreation and tourism facilities.

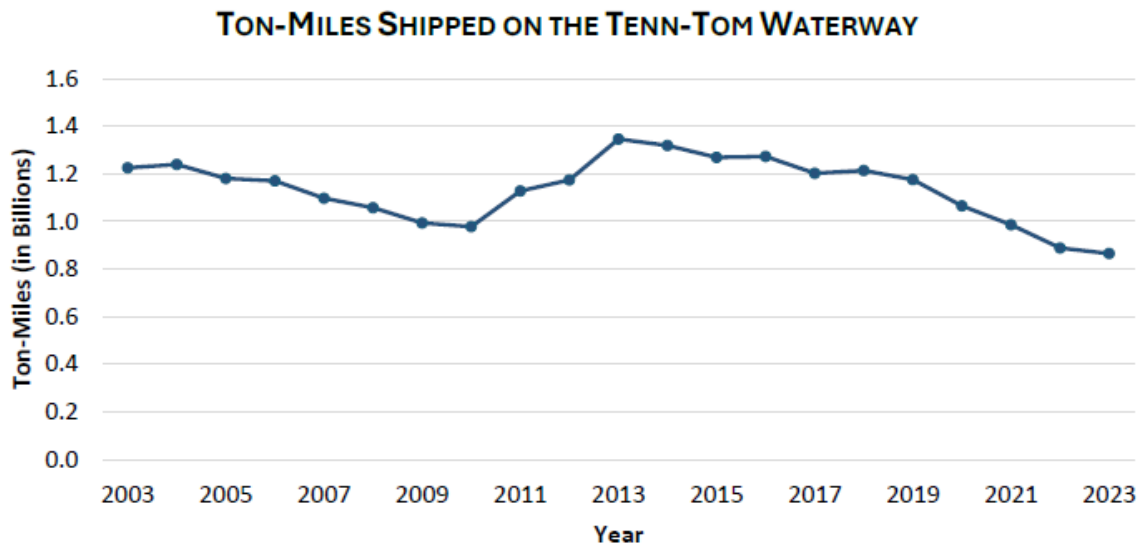
9. Agency Capacity and Partnerships

The Authority is Mississippi's only state agency devoted exclusively to developing the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway and its impacted region. Because its mission is regional and partnership-driven, success depends on close coordination with the four member states, the U.S. Congress, federal agencies, ports, local governments, economic developers, shippers, carriers, and private investors.

Adequate state funding is essential to sustain marketing, project development, federal advocacy, stakeholder coordination, and performance reporting. The Authority will direct available resources to activities that produce measurable gains in commerce, investment, employment, tourism, and system reliability.

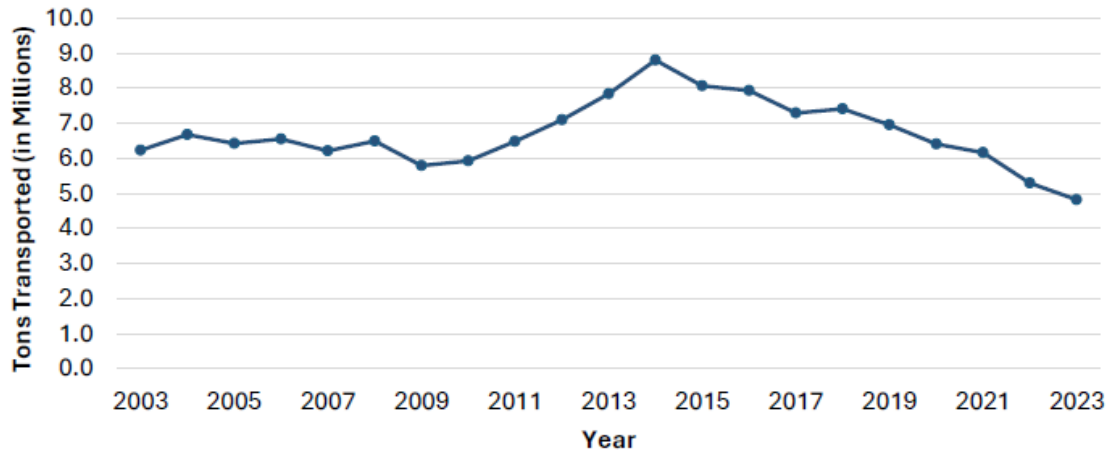
10. Supporting Indicators

The following figures summarize recent commercial-navigation and recreation indicators used to inform the plan. The Authority will update these measures as new official data become available.



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Waterborne Commerce Statistical Center, 2025.

TONNAGE SHIPPED ON THE TENN-TOM WATERWAY



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Waterborne Commerce Statistical Center & Lock Performance

This decline should be interpreted with caution, as LPMS records indicate a trajectory for crude materials tonnage shipped.

ANNUAL IMPACT OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES (IN 2025 \$)

	Annual Estimated Impact
Personal Income	\$23,058,224
Total Jobs	745
Tax Revenue	\$11,752,675
<i>Federal Tax Revenue</i>	<i>\$4,084,732</i>
<i>State Tax Revenue</i>	<i>\$5,556,928</i>
<i>Local Tax Revenue</i>	<i>\$2,111,015</i>

Source: NSPARC, 2025

VISITORS AND THEIR SPENDING OF TENN-TOM WATERWAY

Year	Total Visitors	Visitor Spending (Nominal Dollars)	Visitor Spending (2025 Dollars)	Average Spending (2025 Dollars)
2019	1,682,611	\$78,616,763	\$99,056,727	\$59
2020	1,582,485	\$69,993,930	\$87,117,335	\$55
2021	1,319,560	\$62,569,666	\$74,382,409	\$56
2022	1,256,550	\$85,349,297	\$93,944,495	\$75
2023	1,245,511	\$63,601,704	\$67,239,001	\$54
5-Year Average	1,417,343	\$72,026,272	\$84,347,994	\$60

Source: 2019-2023 Recreation Fast Facts, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Institute for Water Resources Website, 2026.