



# Delta Regional Authority Disaster Economic Recovery Funding (P.L. 118-158)

December 19, 2025

The American Relief Act (ARA), 2025 (P.L. 118-158, enacted December 21, 2024) provided \$1.51 billion to the [U.S. Economic Development Administration](#) (EDA) for disaster economic recovery and directed EDA to transfer \$10 million of that to the [Delta Regional Authority](#) (DRA), one of the six active [federal regional commissions and authorities](#) (FRCAs). This report summarizes DRA's use of ARA appropriations for its FY2025 disaster recovery grant program and awards. This report also highlights post-disaster economic development challenges and the role of DRA's [local development districts \(LDDs\)](#) in providing post-disaster technical assistance. For a summary of EDA's FY2025 disaster recovery grant program, see CRS Insight IN12633, *Economic Development Administration Disaster Economic Recovery Funding (P.L. 118-158)*.

## Background

The DRA was established in 2000 to address economic distress in the Mississippi River Delta region (P.L. 106-554). The DRA aims to “improve regional economic opportunity by helping to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of the 10 million people” in 255 designated counties and parishes in parts of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee.

P.L. 118-158 provided \$1.51 billion in supplemental funding to the EDA, including \$10 million to be transferred to the DRA, “for economic adjustment assistance related to flood mitigation, disaster relief, long-term recovery, and restoration of infrastructure” in areas with a [presidential](#) major disaster declaration under the Robert T. Stafford Act in calendar years 2023 and 2024. EDA funding is available to [eligible areas nationwide](#); DRA funding is available for eligible areas in the [DRA region](#) (see [Figure 1](#)).

In recent years—with the exception of this transfer—FRCAs generally have not received supplemental funding for disaster economic recovery activities. However, DRA and [other FRCAs](#) occasionally fund disaster economic recovery and resilience [projects](#) through their existing programs. DRA incorporates principles of resilience into both disaster and non-disaster activities. For instance, one of DRA's [four strategic goals](#) focuses on resilient infrastructure.

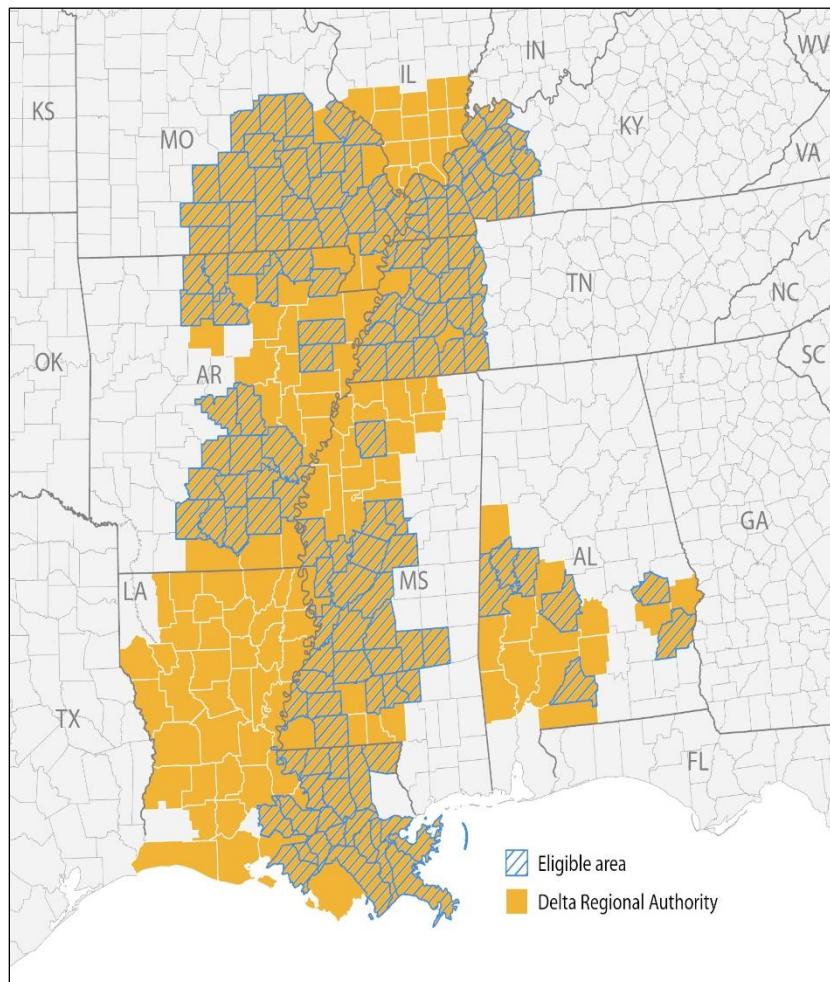
Congressional Research Service

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

IN12632

**Figure 1. DRA Areas Eligible for the FY2025 Disaster Recovery Grant Program**

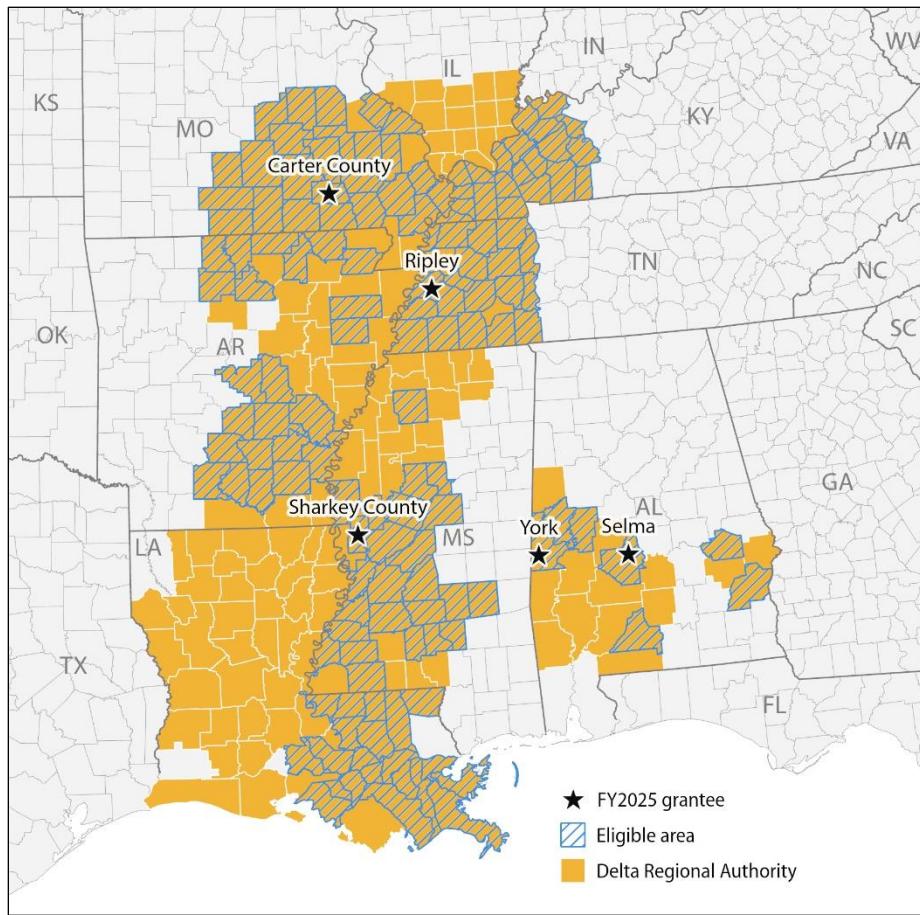
Areas with at Least One Major Disaster Declaration in 2023 or 2024



**Source:** CRS, with data from the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), [Disaster Declarations Summary Table](#), accessed 12/5/2025, U.S. Census Bureau (Census), and ESRI.

## DRA's FY2025 Disaster Recovery Grant Program

DRA used the [Community Infrastructure Fund \(CIF\) Program](#) to administer the transferred funding as a targeted initiative for disaster economic recovery. The CIF is an existing, competitive grant program for unmet infrastructure needs in the DRA region. DRA announced the [Supplemental Disaster Recovery Funding \(SDRF\)](#) opportunity in July 2025 as an addendum to the CIF and [awarded grants](#) in November 2025. A total of six grants were awarded to communities in four states (see [Figure 2](#)).

**Figure 2. DRA Disaster Recovery Awards, FY2025**

**Source:** CRS, with data from FEMA, [Disaster Declarations Summary Table](#), accessed 12/5/2025, Census, ESRI, and DRA, “[DRA Awards Nearly \\$10 Million in Disaster Recovery Relief Funds](#),” November 20, 2025.

**Note:** DRA awarded two SDRF grants to Selma, AL.

As in the CIF program, the SDRF-eligible activities included basic public infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer), transportation infrastructure (e.g., roads, bridges), and flood control projects (e.g., levees, stormwater systems). The grants ranged in value from \$500,000 to \$2 million (see **Table 1**).

**Table 1. DRA FY2025 Disaster Recovery Grant Awards**

Grantee	Amount	Project Purpose
Selma, AL	\$2 million	To repair infrastructure and address drainage failures caused by a tornado
Selma, AL	\$2 million	To rehabilitate road infrastructure damaged by a tornado
York, AL	\$1.8 million	To upgrade sewer infrastructure to address weather-related damage
Sharkey County, MS	\$2 million	To improve critical road infrastructure along three corridors damaged by a tornado
Carter County, MO	\$1 million	To replace infrastructure damaged by reoccurring flood and flash-flooding events
Ripley, TN	\$850,000	To replace two lift stations damaged by flooding

**Source:** DRA, “[DRA Awards Nearly \\$10 Million in Disaster Recovery Relief Funds](#),” November 20, 2025.

**Notes:** Grant award amounts do not total \$10 million due to rounding and amounts allocated for administration.

# Economic Development Challenges and Local Development Districts' Roles in Disaster Recovery

Following a major disaster, long-term recovery and redevelopment can take years or decades. Communities often face several, inter-related challenges in the recovery phase: a 2022 International Economic Development Council [report](#) on disaster and economic recovery noted that economic developers often face hurdles related to navigating federal assistance programs, lack of advance planning, limited organizational capacity, redevelopment issues, and business retention and continuity concerns—particularly for small businesses.

In response to these challenges, [local development districts](#) (LDDs)—a type of [regional development organization](#) (RDO)—assist with projects in areas that lack financial resources or professional staff. [DRA](#), for instance, noted that their [network of LDDs](#) was available to provide application assistance to impacted communities for the SDRF opportunity. Although roles and organizational capacity levels vary, LDDs generally provide planning, project scoping, grant-writing, and other forms of technical and administrative assistance. FRCAs and state and federal agencies may provide financial assistance to LDDs for their activities. LDDs may also be EDA-designated [economic development districts](#) (EDDs), which are RDOs with similar activities, roles, and objectives. Some [observers](#) note that LDDs and EDDs are important for building regional economic development capacity.

In light of the [increasing frequency of major disasters](#), Congress may continue to consider the role of FRCAs as an additional channel for administering grant assistance for long-term recovery and resilience projects. Given post-disaster economic development challenges, Congress may also consider the role of FRCAs' [LDD](#) networks in providing technical and administrative assistance.

LDDs and EDDs, where available, may be a general source for information about challenges and opportunities facing individuals, businesses, and institutions in a particular region following major disasters. This information may inform the [federal disaster recovery approach](#), including recovery funding priorities and processes. Member offices often engage with LDDs and EDDs to learn about community conditions or to share information about federal resources.

## Author Information

Julie M. Lawhorn  
Analyst in Economic Development Policy

---

## Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However,

as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.