

Rick Scott
GOVERNOR



Jesse Panuccio
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: May 1, 2015

Subject: Definition of rural areas as defined under s. 288.0656, F.S., Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI)

Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Eligible Counties and Communities:

The counties and communities listed below qualify for waivers or reduction of match and "assistance" from REDI agencies and organizations as defined in s. 288.0656(6)(a).

Designated Rural Counties

"Economically distressed" counties with a population of 75,000 or less, or a population of 125,000 or less AND contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or less.

Qualified counties:

Baker, Bradford, Calhoun, Columbia, DeSoto, Dixie, Flagler, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Gulf, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Nassau, Okeechobee, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Wakulla, Washington and **Walton.**

Designated Rural Communities Located in an Urban County:

The following communities have been designated as "rural" under s. 288.0656(2)(e)4, F.S., *designation for the following communities only will expire on the corresponding dates shown below.*

Cities/Towns (County):

Center Hill (Sumter)
Fort Meade (Polk)
Frostproof (Polk)
Jay (Santa Rosa)

Expiration Date:

October 6, 2016
March 26, 2016
June 26, 2016
November 14, 2016

Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO – previously referred to as RACEC)

Please note: During the 2014 Legislative Session HB 7023, approved by Governor Scott on 6/20/14, renamed "Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern" to "Rural Areas of Opportunity." The change went into effect 7/1/2014.

REDI may recommend to the Governor up to three rural areas of opportunity. The Governor may by executive order designate up to three Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO). Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO) are priority assignments for REDI.

All state agencies and departments shall use all available tools and resources to the extent permissible by law to promote the creation and development of each catalyst project and the development of catalyst sites.