



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mississippi Prison Work Crews Provide Valuable Free Public Service Labor

Jackson - Mississippi residents benefited greatly from the state prison system's public service work program during FY '02. According to a recently completed report on external public service work provided by state inmates, a combined total 188,886 man-hours of public service work was provided by prisoners off institutional grounds during fiscal year ending on June 30, 2002.

According to the report's findings, a major portion of the free inmate labor was attributed to the prisons' *Mobile Work Crews (MWC)*, which are comprised of minimum-security inmates. In addition, inmates sentenced to the prison system's *Regimented Inmate Discipline (RID)* program accounted for over one-fourth of the total free public service labor during this time period.

"We are extremely proud of our public service work program that state inmates provide to state and local units of government," said Mississippi Department of Corrections Commissioner Christopher Epps. "This meaningful work ethic plays a very integral role in an offender's rehabilitation. Equally important, the free labor performed by our prisoners provides invaluable assistance to local communities during these difficult economic times." According to the report, the total value of the free inmate labor reached nearly one million dollars."

Some of the work projects included: maintenance work on county court houses and police departments; painting public buildings; road work drainage projects; cutting grass around public buildings; and maintenance work on state parks facilities.