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**River Valley Regional Commission Receives  
National Association of Development Organizations 2015 Innovation Award**

**WASHINGTON, DC – The River Valley Regional Commission, based in Americus and Columbus, received a 2015 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation for the *Show Your Love of the River Valley Photo Contest*.**

“The contest helped create awareness about historic sites, our downtowns, natural resources and the places people consider important and beautiful in the River Valley,” said RVRC Executive Director Patti Cullen. “The contest also served as a means to further promote the RVRC’s mission to increase tourism and other economic development endeavors in the region.”

The mission of the RVRC is to create, promote and foster the orderly growth and economic prosperity of the 16-county region that includes Chattahoochee, Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Harris, Macon, Marion, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor and Webster.

The photo contest was conducted during January and February 2015 and the RVRC asked residents to submit photos of their favorite local places in the following categories: Historical Sites, Our Town, Scenery, and Life in the River Valley. The winners were announced the day before Valentine’s Day. A first place winner was selected in each category with a Grand Prize winner being selected from the first place winners. Additionally, a People’s Choice award was presented to the photo receiving the most likes on RVRC’s Facebook page. Patricia Goodman won the Grand Prize with her photo of the Andrew College president’s home and the People’s Choice Award for her photo of Chelsea’s Fountain in Shellman. All the photo entries may be viewed on the RVRC Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/rivervalleyrc](http://www.facebook.com/rivervalleyrc)).

The RVRC will launch a “Christmas in the River Valley” photo contest after Thanksgiving. Visit the RVRC website ([www.rivervalleyrc.org](http://www.rivervalleyrc.org)) for contest details.

NADO is a Washington, DC-based association that promotes programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities, and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery, and comprehensive strategies. The association’s Innovation Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and partnering organizations for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation’s regions and local communities. Award-winning projects were honored during NADO’s 2015 Annual Training Conference, held Oct. 24-27 in New Orleans.

“For nearly 30 years, NADO’s Innovation Award has provided regional development organizations the opportunity to be recognized for their hard work and dedication to promoting economic development in rural and small metropolitan communities across the country. Building on the unique strengths and challenges of each region and community, award recipients continue to promote sustainable economic growth not only now, but for many years to come. And I am pleased to announce that this year over 100 regional development organizations were selected to receive NADO’s 2015 Innovation Award,” said NADO 2014-2015 Board President Terry Bobrowski, executive director of the East Tennessee Development District in Alcoa, TN.

For more information about the award-winning project, contact Mia Anderson at the River Valley Regional Commission at (706) 256-2910.

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**Since 1967 the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) has provided advocacy, education, networking, and research for the national network of 540 regional development organizations. NADO members provide professional, programmatic and technical assistance to over 2,300 counties and 15,000 municipalities.**