

Severely eroding unpaved roads in the Buffalo River Watershed are a major contributor to sediment load and quality of the river. Scott Simon, The Nature Conservancy in Arkansas

Characterization of Roads within the Buffalo River Watershed

2017 Report to the Beautiful Buffalo River Action Committee



**ARKANSAS
GIS OFFICE**

Shelby D Johnson, Director
June 23, 2017

What is the significance of unpaved roads in the Buffalo River watershed?

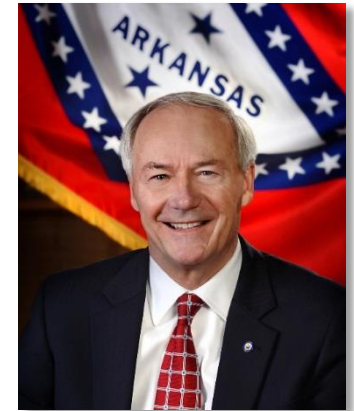
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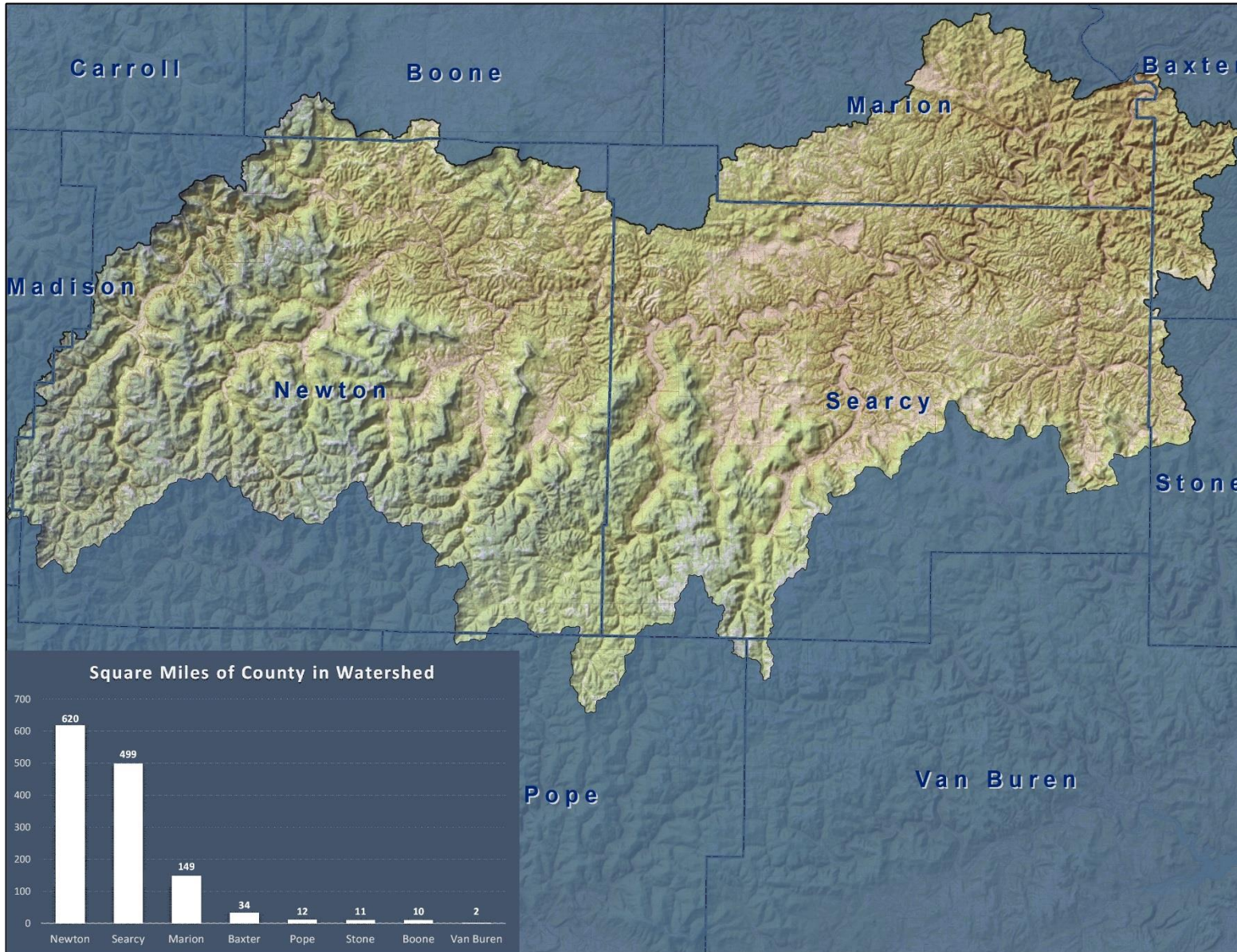


Governor Asa Hutchinson's Directive

“The Buffalo River is a national treasure and a significant agricultural, recreational, and natural resource. I am directing the Arkansas-led collaborative to proactively engage in protecting and supporting the protection and enhancement of the Buffalo River Watershed through partnership, research, and action.”

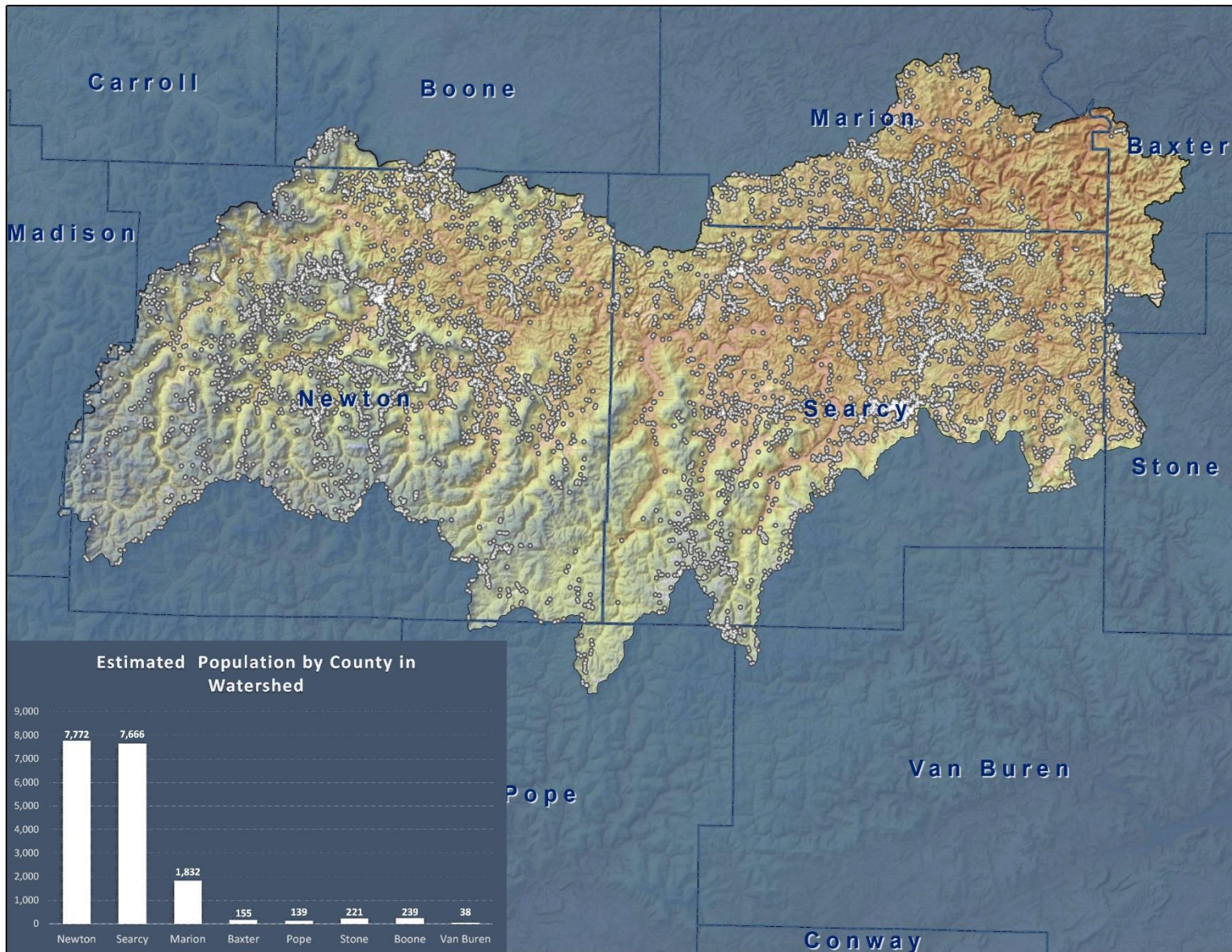


Geography of the Buffalo River Watershed



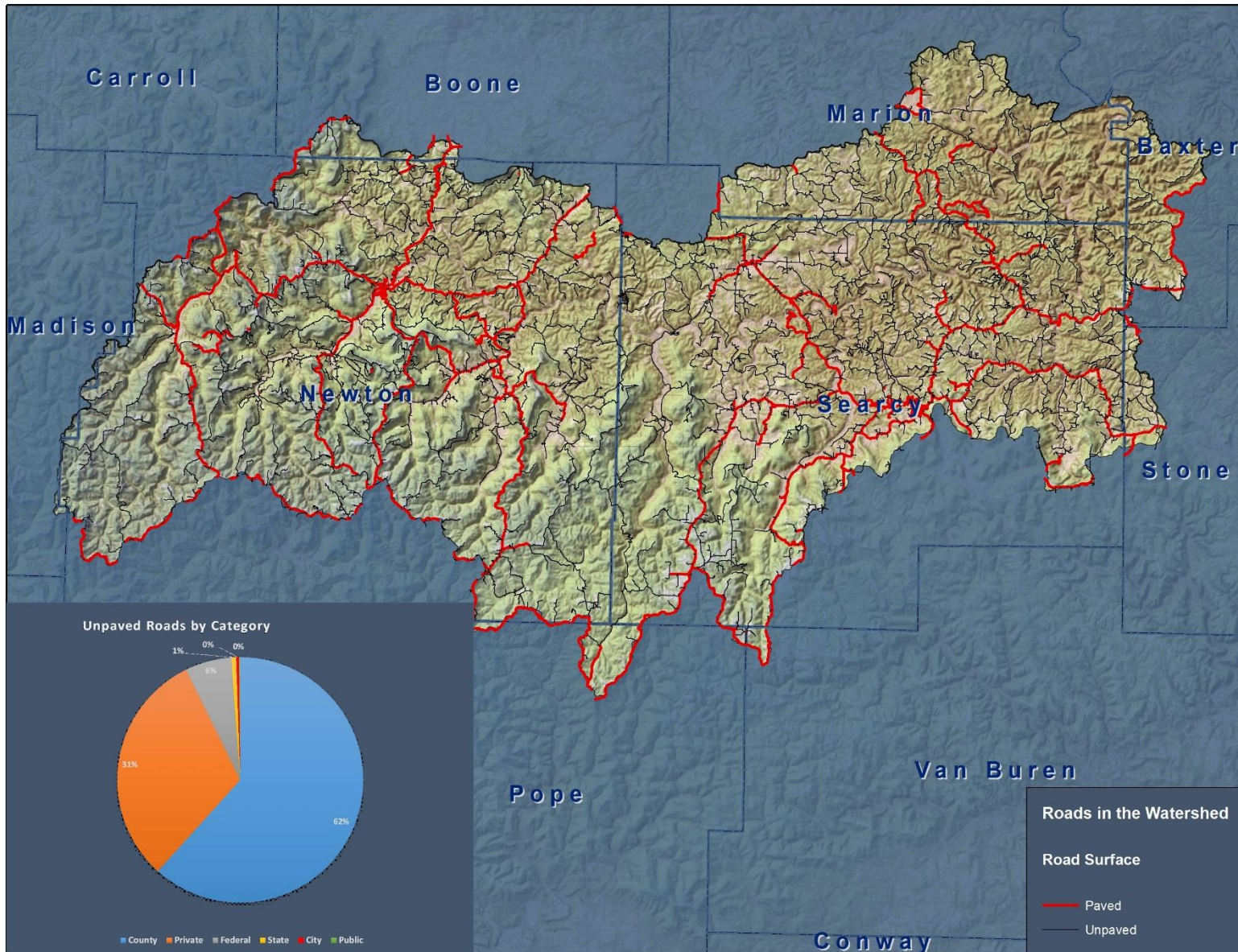
The Buffalo River watershed begins along the western border of Newton County. The river flows easterly to meet the White River. The watershed drains roughly 1,339 square miles of the Boston Mountains and Ozark Highlands. It covers parts of eight counties. The terrain is rugged and steep. The majority of the watershed lies in Newton, and Searcy counties with the smallest portion of the watershed lying in Van Buren County.

Distribution of Population in the Watershed



The watershed's estimated population is around 18,000. The majority of population is situated in Newton and Searcy counties. *Estimate derived by factoring the number of 9-1-1 addresses by 1.8.

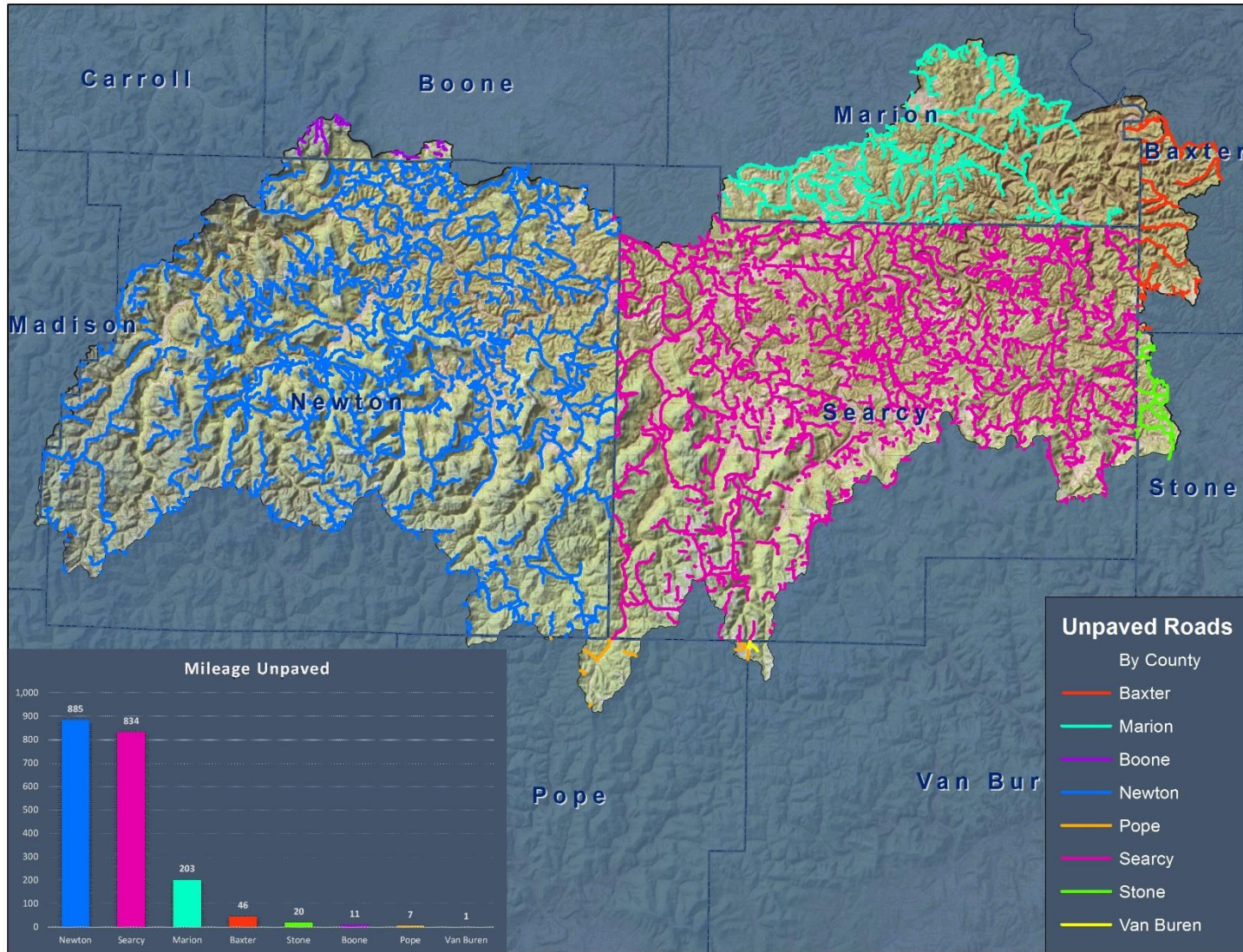
2, 518 Miles of Roads in the Watershed.



Of the 2,518 miles of road in the watershed, the majority are unpaved. This illustration shows paved roads in red. The remainder of roads shown in black are not paved. The pie chart illustrates that 1,245 miles or 62% of unpaved roads are under County jurisdiction. Nearly 630 miles or 31% of unpaved roads are private. These may be long driveways to farms or residences.

80% of Roads in the Watershed Are Unpaved

of



2,007 of the 2,518 miles of roads in the watershed are unpaved. The majority these are found in Newton (885 miles) and Searcy County (834 miles). Marion, Baxter and Stone follow with 203, 46, and 20 miles respectively; with only 11 in Boone, 7 in Pope and 1 in Van Buren.



The Committee may desire further research on the impact of unpaved roads within the watershed. Should additional GIS analysis or data be requested, the Arkansas GIS Office stands ready to support the work of the Committee.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shelby D Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shelby D Johnson, State Geographic Information Officer
/sdj