

Tennessee valley authority

[History](#), [American History](#)



The Tennessee Valley Authority Introduction The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was the first large regional planning agency created by the United States Government in May of 1933. The TVA was one of the most innovative and significant ideas of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to help tackle the economic, social, and political problems in the Tennessee Valley, a region with no economic growth and was heavily impacted before and after the Great Depression. The TVA is a federally owned corporation that provided a series of environmental regulations and resource management to help stabilize and generate economic growth in the Tennessee Valley. The regulation includes: flood control, fertilizer manufacturing, electrical generation, and economic development. The TVA was a significant economic development agency and a regulator during the time. This paper will provide the history and the foundation of the TVA and the essential significance of it to help construct and developed economic and political achievement from regionally to nationally. Tennessee Valley The Tennessee Valley was one of the most impoverished and poor areas of the United States. This region was one of the hardest hit regions after the Great Depression. Much of the land had been farmed too hard for too long, which erodes and depleted the soil (Ezzell). Crop productions had fallen along with farm incomes. Sadly, this region showed no economic growth before and after the Great Depression. Due to this reason the government had established the Tennessee Valley Authority. Tennessee Valley Authority in the 1930s When President Franklin Delano Roosevelt won the election of 1932, he pledged himself to the American people for a " New Deal". This order of central economic agenda and economic stimulus plan includes the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

On March 1933, Congress and President Roosevelt passed the Tennessee Valley Authority Act to aim for reforestation and the proper use of the marginal lands in the Tennessee Valley (Ezzell). The TVA regulated proper forest, controlled forest fires, and to boost environmental habitats for wildlife. It also promised to improve navigability on the Tennessee River, as well as providing flood controls (U-S-History. com). The most significant transformation during the 1930s was electricity generated by the Tennessee Valley Authority dams. Due to electricity, farmers were more productive and sufficient. Modern devices also made farming much more sufficient and prolific. Electricity also inspired and drew in industries into the Tennessee Valley region. This provided the jobs necessary for those in needs and created even more jobs. Many privately owned power companies in the Tennessee Valley were either bought by the federal government or went out of business because they could not compete with the TVA during the time. There were also Government regulations that were put into effect to prevent competition with the TVA. Controversies There were many economic libertarians who believed the government should not be involved in the electricity generation business. Libertarians fear that government intervention and possession would result to the misuse of hydroelectric sites. The TVA was one of the first federal hydropower organizations. The TVA encountered many setbacks and failures and was involved in many controversies. In the case of Ashwander vs. Tennessee Valley Authority, the court distinguished that regulating commerce among the states includes regulation of streams and that controlling floods is required for keeping streams navigable, and is therefore, considered constitutional (Badger).

Directions of the TVA The TVA was presided over by three-member board who held differing ideas about the direction of the TVA (U-S-History. com). A man by the name of Arthur Morgan believed in social planning. His view on the TVA was that it was an opportunity to establish a relationship between government and privately owned businesses. Another man by the name of Harcourt Morgan believed and supported the elimination of poverty and the unemployment of the Tennessee Valley and that it should be the representation for national and regional development. David Lilienthal was a promoter of public power who wanted the TVA to compete directly with the private power interests. There were major conflicts between the three men until March 1938 when President Roosevelt dismissed Morgan for his public criticism of the TVA (U-S-History. com). Dams The first major construction ever built by the Tennessee Valley Authority was the Norris Dam. Named after Senator George W Norris for his creativity and inventiveness. The dam is a hydroelectric and flood control structure located on the Clinch River in Tennessee. The dam was constructed in the 1930s to initiate and establish economic growth to the region and to control the unrestrained flooding that had long afflicted the Tennessee Valley. TVA constructed a total of sixteen dams and steam plant between 1933 and 1944 (Ezzell). Due to the massive constructions the employment reached approximately 28, 000 workers. This impacted significantly in the Tennessee Valley region and provided immediate economic growth. Economic Development of the TVA and the Significant Changes By the 1960s, the Tennessee Valley region experienced a significant economic growth. The overall environment of the region was in better shape. This means that farms and forests were extremely in good

conditions. The TVA had delivered efficient generating units into service. The electric rates were among the nation's lowest (Ezzell). Due to the unprecedented growth, the TVA had aimed for a different direction. The TVA began building nuclear plants as a new source of economic power (Ezzell). However, due to the increase of cost in electricity and fuel and the decrease in demand and construction cost rising in the early 1970s, the TVA shut down several nuclear plants. The TVA started to become more productive and efficient while cutting costs. By the late 1980s, TVA had replaced its variable power rates with a fixed rate that lasted for a long period of time. TVA in the 1990s to present day Like many other power industries that are moving towards restructuring, the TVA prepared for competition. The TVA set an agenda to meet the energy needs of the Tennessee Valley. The company cut back on operation costs by nearly a billion dollars every year, it reduced its workforce, stopped building nuclear plants, and generated full capacity of its plants (Edsforth). There were many significant changes for power industries that the TVA had to prove itself to the public. The TVA had to prove its responsibility, efficiency, and reliability. (Edsforth) Conclusion Before and after the Great Depression, the Tennessee Valley was proven to be an impoverished region with high unemployment rates and low standards of living. During the election of 1932, Franklin Delano Roosevelt won by a landslide, defeating Herbert Hoover. He had pledged himself to the American people for a " New Deal". Within the structure of the New Deal was the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). This was one of FDR's most innovative and successful programs up to this day. The TVA established environmental regulations and resource management. TVA had impacted many aspects of

American politics and economics. The TVA definitely established economic growth and nurtured it through providing jobs. The TVA held its strategy to its solution even as the issues changes over the years. It also had changed the lives of farmers because farming became much more productive and efficient due to its modernized devices. The electricity-generated dams attracted many industries into the region of the Tennessee Valley, providing the jobs for those needed. Up to today, the TVA had proved to be a very stable and successful government operated organization. The power system continues to operate with an astonishing level of reliability and dependability. TVA continues to strengthen its position as a leader in energy and environmental issues. Bibliography Melvyn Dubofsky, *The New Deal: Conflicting Interpretations and Shifting Perspectives* George McJimsey, *The Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt* Frank Freidel, *The New Deal and The American People* Ronald Edsforth, *Problems In American History: Our Friend: The New Deal* Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal — The Depression Years 1933 — 1940* TVA — Patricia Bernard Ezzell < <http://www.tva.com/abouttva/history.htm>> U-S-History. < <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1653.html>> “ Modern Marvels Tennessee Valley Authority” DVD