

# **PUBLIC DISCLOSURE**

**January 21, 2014**

## **COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**AMERIS BANK  
Certificate Number: 20504**

**225 South Main Street  
Moultrie, Georgia 31768**

**Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation  
10 Tenth Street, N. E., Suite 800  
Atlanta, Georgia 30309-3849**

**NOTE:** This document is an evaluation of this institution's record of meeting the credit needs of its entire community, including low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, consistent with safe and sound operation of the institution. This evaluation is not, nor should it be construed as, an assessment of the financial condition of this institution. The rating assigned to this institution does not represent an analysis, conclusion or opinion of the federal financial supervisory agency concerning the safety and soundness of this financial institution.

## INSTITUTION'S RATING

**INSTITUTION'S CRA RATING:** This institution is rated Satisfactory.

### LENDING, INVESTMENT, AND SERVICE TABLE:

*The following table indicates the performance level of the institution with respect to the lending, investment, and services tests.*

PERFORMANCE LEVELS	AMERIS BANK		
	PERFORMANCE TESTS		
	Lending Test*	Investment Test	Service Test
Outstanding			
High Satisfactory			
Low Satisfactory	X	X	X
Needs to Improve			
Substantial Noncompliance			

*\*Note: The lending test is weighted more heavily than the investment and service tests when arriving at an overall rating.*

### Lending Test

- The volume of lending activity and the percentage of loans originated in the assessment areas reflects an adequate responsiveness to assessment areas' credit needs.
- The geographic distribution of loans reflects adequate penetration throughout the assessment areas.
- Lending to borrowers reflects an adequate distribution among businesses of different sizes and an adequate distribution among retail customers of different incomes.
- The bank originated a relatively high level of community development loans. Both the number and dollar volume of community development loans increased from the previous CRA evaluation.

During this evaluation period, Ameris reported a total amount of \$16.2 million in qualified investments. Additionally, Ameris reported approximately \$483,773 in qualified grants and donations during this period. Overall, Ameris' qualified investments, grants, and donations since the previous evaluation totaled \$16.7 million, which is a \$9.8 million increase from the total at the previous evaluation at \$6.9 million. As of September 30, 2013, Ameris' overall qualified investments, grants, and donations during this evaluation equates to 5.1 percent of the bank's total capital, 5.3 percent of total investments, and 0.59 percent of total average assets. Current-period investments are commensurate with the volume of qualified investments provided by other similarly situated banks.

A further breakdown of the \$16.7 million in qualified investments (including grants and donations) is included in the following table. Based on qualitative and quantitative considerations, the states of Georgia and South Carolina are rated high satisfactory. The state of Florida is rated Low Satisfactory while the state of Alabama is rated Needs to Improve. The Other category represents investments that benefit the overall assessment areas.

<b>Qualified Investments by State</b>		
<b>State</b>	<b>\$(000's)</b>	<b>% of Bank Investments</b>
Georgia	7,878	47%
South Carolina	4,872	29%
Florida	1,733	11%
Alabama	187	1%
Other	1,997	12%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16,667</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Bank records

Prior-period investments represent outstanding amounts of qualified investments transacted during previous evaluation, and the current-period investments represent qualified investments made during this evaluation period. Including the grants and donations, the following table lists approximately \$16.7 million in qualified investments, of which \$12.1 million were added during this evaluation period, and \$4.6 million represents all prior-period investments that remain outstanding. Examiners placed most weight on investment activities the bank made in the current evaluation period, which is 72 percent of the total qualified investments.

Refer to the following table and comments for additional details regarding the bank's qualified investments.

<b>Summary of CRA Investments</b>			
<b>Description</b>	<b>Prior-Period</b>	<b>Current-Period</b>	<b>Total</b>
Municipal Bonds	\$1,160,000	\$7,966,000	\$9,126,000
Housing Bond	\$0	\$555,975	\$555,975
Mortgage-Backed Securities	\$1,484,781	\$3,019,438	\$4,504,219
CRA Qualified Mutual Fund	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000
Senior Housing Crime Prevention Program	\$997,232	\$0	\$997,232
Grants and Donations	\$0	\$483,773	\$483,773
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$4,642,013</b>	<b>\$12,025,186</b>	<b>\$16,667,199</b>

Source: Bank Records

The bank also has a prior period investment in a Ginnie Mae qualified mortgage-backed security that was targeted to building an affordable housing apartment complex for low- and moderate-income individuals in a moderate-income census tract in Colquitt County. The majority of the residents for this 80-unit apartment complex obtained government subsidized rents. Further, 100 percent of Colquitt County's census tracts were either moderate-income or designated as distressed nonmetropolitan middle-income census tracts for both the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Censuses. The current book value of the investment is \$1,484,781.

#### *CRA Qualified Mutual Fund*

The bank obtained a prior period investment of \$1,000,000 in the Community Capital Management CRA Investment Fund. The fund targets programs that promote economic development, revitalization or stabilization for low- and moderate-, underserved or distressed areas or provides affordable housing or community services for low- and moderate-income individuals. The mutual fund benefits the overall assessment areas and holds at least 90 percent of its net assets to CRA qualifying securities, certificates of deposit, or other debt instruments.

#### ***Senior Housing Crime Prevention***

**The bank made a \$1,000,000 prior period investment in the Senior Housing Crime Prevention Program. This nonprofit program provides resources for nursing homes that address the financial needs of the elderly and income limited residents and provides job opportunities for lower-income caregivers. The current book value of the investment is \$997,232.**

#### *Charitable Contributions*

Donations to CRA-related organizations during this evaluation period totaled \$483,773. Approximately 56 percent of the total donations resulted from Ameris Bank's food drive programs. In particular, Ameris Bank took a leadership position in its communities by making bank contributions of approximately \$271,803 to various food banks throughout its combined assessment areas. The food banks distribute the donations predominately to low-income families. Please refer to the state and assessment area analysis for further details on the charitable contributions provided by the bank since the last evaluation.

#### **SERVICE TEST**

Ameris demonstrated a low satisfactory performance in the service test.

The institution offers a standard array of financial services throughout its assessment areas to ensure that the needs of the communities are met through several delivery methods. These delivery systems are reasonably accessible to essentially all portions of the institutions assessment areas. The bank's record of opening and closing branches has generally not adversely affected the accessibility of its delivery systems in its assessment areas, particularly in low- and moderate-income geographies and to low- and moderate-income individuals. Its services do not vary in a way that inconveniences certain portions of the assessment areas, particularly low- and moderate-income geographies and low- and moderate-income individuals.