

Oklahoma Flood Control Dams Prevented \$280 Million in Damages During Extreme Rainfall Events in 2015

This is one of many examples of the benefits of the flood control projects across the state that are planned and organized by local people with assistance from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Watershed Program. These projects address natural resources needs and improve the quality of life for thousands of Oklahomans.

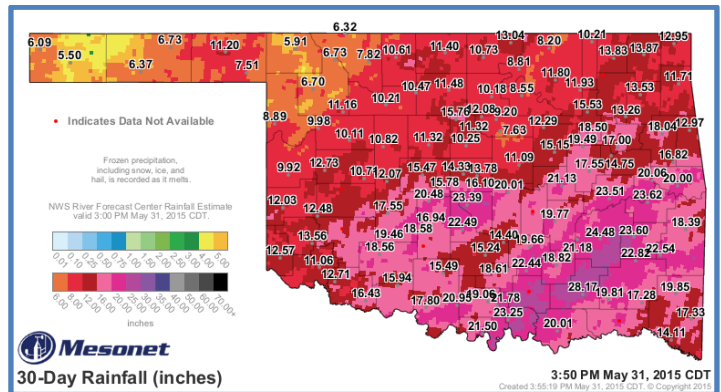
2015 Storms Highlighted Flood Control Benefits in Oklahoma

Oklahoma had unusual high rainfall amounts in 2015. Extreme rainfall events occurred from April to July with some areas receiving over 50 inches during this period. May was the wettest month in Oklahoma history with a state-wide average of 12.29 inches. Total rainfall for the year in Oklahoma City was 50.4 inches, but many areas of the state received 70-80 inches which was often double the normal average annual rainfall.

The high rainfall amounts in the state once again proved the value of 2,107 flood control dams constructed by local units of government (usually conservation districts) with the assistance of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Program.

The 2,107 dams provide an estimated \$90 million in average annual benefits from reduced flooding.

However, in 2015 with the high rainfall events the dams provided \$280 million in benefits from reduced flooding. It is estimated that another \$69 million in reduced flooding benefits would have been realized if the remaining 331 planned dams had been constructed.



May was the wettest month in Oklahoma history with many areas in the southern part of the state receiving over 20 inches of rainfall.



Flood control dams impound water from high rainfall events and release it slowly over a period of days or weeks. This reduces flooding downstream.

For additional information about Oklahoma's watershed program visit the Oklahoma Conservation Commission website at: <http://conservation.ok.gov> or visit your local conservation district and NRCS office.