

Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Project

Protecting Our People - Protecting Our Natural Resources



This is one of 129 examples of how local, state and federal government agencies have worked together to utilize the Natural Resources Conservation Service Watershed Program to address natural resource needs and improve the quality of life for thousands of Oklahomans.*

Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Project

The Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Project includes 72 flood control dams in Garfield and Noble Counties.

Before the dams were constructed, the Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed was subject to frequent and severe flooding, as often as eight times in a single year. During the years of 1935-1954 there were 28 major floods which covered more than 50 percent of the floodplain. These floods destroyed roads, bridges, crops, and fences and eroded the land. Flooding cost landowners and county governments thousands of dollars each year.

The Black Bear Conservancy District and conservation districts in Noble, Garfield, and Pawnee Counties developed a watershed plan in 1959 with the assistance of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to address the flooding and other natural resource issues.

The plan called for the construction of flood control dams and the application of conservation practices in the watershed. Two of the dams were to be designed as multipurpose structures to provide municipal water supplies and recreational facilities.

Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Dams No. 61A and 62, known locally as Perry Lake, were constructed as multiple purpose structures to provide flood control, municipal water and recreational areas.

The dams were constructed by local project sponsors with NRCS providing engineering assistance and funding for construction of the dam. The City of Perry provided funding for additional municipal water storage beyond that needed for flood control.

Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Project Benefits – 72 Dams

- Dams provide \$1,044,664 in average annual benefits from reduced flood damages
- Provides flood protection for 475 farms and ranches
- Provides flood protection for 38 major bridges and many smaller bridges and county roads
- Created or enhanced 1,910 acres of wetlands
- Reduces sedimentation of streams and rivers by 496,767 tons of soil annually
- Impounded water has created fish and wildlife habitat, waterfowl nesting areas and livestock water

The Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Project is one of 129* projects in Oklahoma that have been planned and implemented by local people with assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

2,107 flood control dams have been constructed in 61 Oklahoma counties. The watershed projects that also include thousands of conservation practices provide over \$90 million in average annual benefits.

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



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