

# Upper Washita River Watershed Project

## Roger Mills County Oklahoma

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 Washita River Watershed Project

The Upper Washita River Watershed Project includes 35 flood control dams in Roger Mills County. These dams were constructed by the Upper Washita Conservation District with the assistance of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation (NRCS) Watershed Program.

The watershed extends into the Texas panhandle and Texas has also constructed 38 dams in the upper end of the watershed.

Flooding was severe in the watershed before the dams were constructed. During the period of 1926-1955 there were 47 major floods (flood water covering more than 50 percent of the flood plain) and 49 smaller floods. These floods destroyed crops, roads and bridges and fences. They also drowned livestock and eroded the land.

Local people requested assistance from NRCS in 1958 in developing a watershed work plan to deal with flooding and erosion problems. The plan called for construction of 35 flood control dams and the installation of conservation practices in the watershed to control erosion and sedimentation.

### Upper Washita River Watershed Project Benefits – 35 Oklahoma Dams

- Dams provide \$784,376 in average annual benefits from reduced flood damages
- Provides flood protection for 148 farms and ranches
- Provides flood protection for 4 bridges and county roads
- Created or enhanced 750 acres of wetlands
- Reduces sedimentation of streams and rivers by 186,995 tons of soil annually
- Impounded water has created fish and wildlife habitat, waterfowl nesting areas and livestock water

The Upper Washita River 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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This publication is issued by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission in cooperation with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service as authorized by Trey Lam executive director. Copies have not been printed but are available through the agency website, <http://conservation.ok.gov>. August 2016

