

Big Wewoka Creek Watershed Dam No. 22

Sportsman Lake

Seminole County, Oklahoma



Protecting Our People - Protecting Our Natural Resources

This is one of 2,107 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.*

Big Wewoka Creek Watershed Dam No. 22

Big Wewoka Creek Watershed Dam No. 22, known as Sportsman Lake, was constructed in 1958 by the City of Seminole and the Seminole County Conservation District with the assistance of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program.

The dam was built for flood control and recreation and is operated by the City of Seminole. The lake has 354 surface acres and 15 miles of shoreline.

Recreational facilities include a boat ramp, boat dock, fishing dock, campsites, camper parking, electrical hookups, picnic areas, grills, restrooms, playground, group shelter, showers, and equestrian trails.

The dam is one of 41 flood control dams that have been constructed in the Big Wewoka Creek Watershed (30 in Seminole County and 11 in Hughes County).

Before the dams were constructed frequent flooding occurred in the watershed. From 1923 to 1942 there were 41 floods that covered over one-half of the flood plain and 92 smaller floods. Floods would wash out roads, bridges, and railroad tracks; destroy crops; and drown livestock. The larger floods would cause damage in the cities of Wewoka and Seminole. This most disastrous flood occurred in April 1945 when seven people lost their lives.

In 1955 the Hughes County and Seminole County Conservation Districts and the Wewoka Creek Water and Soil Conservancy District requested the Soil Conservation Service (now Natural Resources Conservation Service) for technical and financial assistance in developing and implementing the Big Wewoka Creek Watershed Project. The 41 flood control dams were built between 1957 and 1967. Thousands of conservation practices were also applied in the watershed as part of the project to reduce erosion and sedimentation.



Big Wewoka Creek Watershed Dam No. 22 provides flood control and recreational areas.

Benefits of the Forty-One Dams in the Big Wewoka Creek Watershed

- Provides \$1.2 million in average annual benefits from reduced flood damages
- Provides flood protection for bridges, county roads and railroad tracks
- Provides flood protection for 543 farms and ranches
- Impounded water has created fish and wildlife habitat and waterfowl nesting areas
- 1,600 acres of wetlands have been created or enhanced
- Sedimentation is reduced by 320,000 tons of soil each year

The Big Wewoka 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 and the Oklahoma Conservation Commission.

*2,107 NRCS-assisted flood control dams have been constructed in 61 Oklahoma counties. These watershed projects, that also include thousands of conservation practices, provide over \$81 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.