

Cobb Creek Watershed Dam No. 1

Crowder Lake

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.*

Cobb Creek Watershed Dam No. 1 Washita County, Oklahoma

Cobb Creek Watershed Dam No. 1, known locally as Crowder Lake, is located ten miles south of Weatherford, Oklahoma. The 89-foot high dam has created a 135 surface acre lake.

The dam was constructed for flood control in 1958 by the Deer Creek Conservation District with the assistance of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Watershed Program.

In 1983 the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department (OTRD) created a state park around the lake and it became known as Crowder Lake State Park. In 1997 Southwestern Oklahoma State University took over management of the park and in 2003 the OTRD transferred the lake to SWOSU and it became known as Crowder Lake University Park.

Park facilities around the lake include RV sites, picnic tables, camp sites, fishing docks and a one-mile interpretive trail. The lake is a favorite fishing location for many local residents and has been designated a Trophy Bass Lake by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

SWOSU utilizes the lake in conducting courses such as a ropes course, wilderness first aid, sailing, canoeing, hiking and climbing.

What started out as a single purpose flood control dam has been turned into a great location for college students to learn skills outside the classroom; a recreational area for university and area citizens; and a lake with enhanced fish and wildlife habitat areas.

The dam was originally designed as a low hazard dam and constructed to protect rural agricultural land from flooding. Because of later development downstream the dam was reclassified as high hazard in 2006.



Cobb Creek Dam No. 1 before rehabilitation

The dam was rehabilitated in 2011 to bring it up to current dam safety criteria and extend its life for another 100 years. Rehabilitation included raising the height of the dam, replacing the principal spillway and widening the auxiliary spillway.

The dam is one of twelve dams in the Cobb Creek Watershed and together they provide \$252,000 in average annual benefits to those living in the watershed. These benefits include reduced flood and sedimentation damages, recreational benefits, and protection of roads and bridges.

Flooding occurred frequently in the watershed before the watershed project was implemented. From 1923 to 1942 there were 13 floods where water covered more than one-half of the watershed flood plain and 67 smaller floods.

The Cobb Creek Watershed Project is one of 129 watershed 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 counties that 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.