

Sergeant Major Creek Watershed

Roger Mills County, Oklahoma

Protecting Our People - Protecting Our Natural Resources



This watershed project is one of 129 examples of how local, state and federal government agencies have utilized the Natural Resources Conservation Service Watershed Program to solve natural resource problems and improve the quality of life for thousands of Oklahomans.*

Sergeant Major Creek Watershed

The Sergeant Major Creek Watershed is located in Roger Mills County, Oklahoma. The watershed encompasses 19,684 acres and includes the town of Cheyenne and the Washita Battlefield National Historic Site. Sergeant Major Creek drains into the Washita River just north of Cheyenne.

Six flood control dams were constructed in the watershed between 1949 and 1963 by the Upper Washita Conservation District with the assistance of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Program.

Prior to construction of the dams Sergeant Major Creek contributed to major flood damages. Heavy rains in the watershed contributed to a flood in the small community of Hammon in 1934 that killed 17 people. During the period from 1923 to 1942, eleven floods occurred in the watershed where water covered more than one-half of the flood plain and areas of Cheyenne would often flood. There were 74 smaller floods during this period.

Today the six flood control dams, along with the associated conservation practices, protect the agricultural land in the watershed as well as the town of Cheyenne from flooding and the once eroding Sergeant Major Creek banks have stabilized.

Like several other watershed projects in the state, dams constructed for primarily flood control have produced unplanned benefits. When the town of Cheyenne's water wells went dry the town began utilizing water from Dam No. 4 and today it is the sole source of water for the community of 950 people.

The six dams provide an estimated \$53,000 in average annual benefits from reduced flood damages and provide flood protection for 60 farms and ranches and bridges and county roads. Sedimentation is reduced by 50,000 tons of soil annually.



Sergeant Major Creek Watershed Dam No. 4 serves as the water supply for the town of Cheyenne, Oklahoma.

In 2000 Sergeant Major Creek Watershed Dam No. 2, which had been built in 1949, was the first watershed dam in the nation to be rehabilitated. The dam, located just upstream from Cheyenne, was rehabilitated under a NRCS national pilot rehabilitation project to bring it up to current dam safety criteria and to extend its life span for another 100 years.

Dam No. 3 was rehabilitated in 2001. Rehabilitation of the dams included raising the height of the dams, widening the auxiliary earthen spillways and replacing the principal spillways.

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

2,107 NRCS-assisted flood control dams have been constructed in 61 Oklahoma counties. These dams provide over \$81 million in average annual benefits in reduced flooding and sedimentation.

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.