

Watershed Projects.....

Helping Oklahoma Communities Solve Natural Resource Issues



Oklahoma has 129 watershed projects in 64 counties. These projects include 2,107 flood control dams.

Watershed projects are planned and implemented by local units of government (usually conservation districts or cities) who serve as project sponsors, with assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The projects are authorized and funded through the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (Public Law 83-566) and the Flood Control Act of 1944 (Public Law 78-534). The program has been amended several times to address a broad range of natural resource and environmental issues.

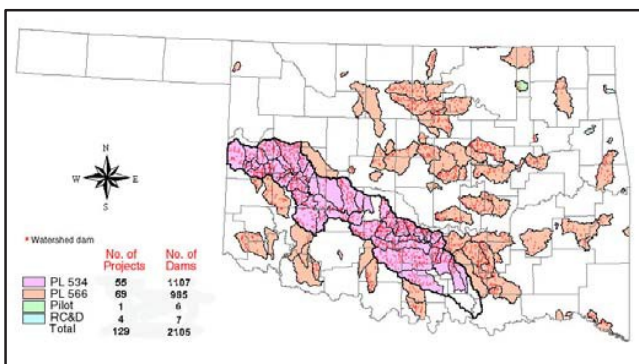
The dams provide flood control, soil erosion control, improved water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, irrigation and livestock water, and in some cases municipal water supplies and recreational areas.



A series of flood control dams constructed in a watershed impound water from heavy rainfall events and slowly release it through a pipe in the dam over a period of days or weeks. This reduces flooding downstream.



Local watershed project sponsors operate and maintain the flood control dams with assistance from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and NRCS.



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Flood Control Dams Improve the Quality of Lives for Oklahomans

Flood control dams in Oklahoma watershed projects provide multiple benefits to citizens. Most of the 2,107 dams are located on private lands in rural areas and many people don't even know they exist or they don't know they were constructed for flood control.

These dams make up a \$2 billion infrastructure that provides average annual benefits of \$94 million for the state.

Flood Control

The dams are constructed with flood control as their primary purpose, protecting homes, roads, highways and bridges, cropland, pastureland, livestock, and fences.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat



The 2,107 watershed dams in the state have created an estimated 50,000 acres of water that provide some of the best fish and wildlife habitat in the state. The conservation practices and proper land management in the watershed also provide great upland wildlife habitat.

Water Supplies and Recreation



Forty-two of the flood control dams are considered multi-purpose structures that provide water supplies for cities and rural water districts and/or recreational areas. The above photo shows recreational areas around Stillwater Creek Watershed Dam No. 23 (Boomer Lake) in Stillwater. Thousands of people utilize the trails, picnic areas, fishing docks and other facilities around the lake each year.


Water Quality



Thousands of conservation practices have been applied to the land in the watersheds where dams are located. These practices such as terraces, grass plantings, ponds and other practices along with the dams reduce erosion and trap sediment improving water quality in streams, rivers and larger lakes downstream.

9 OUT OF 10

The number of Oklahomans living within 20 miles of a flood control dam (92.9 percent).



Flood control dams are close to all Oklahomans. We live, work and play under their protection every day. Flood control makes modern Oklahoma life possible.

Average Annual Benefits Provided by Oklahoma's Watershed Projects	
Flood Damage Reduction Benefits to Agriculture	\$22.8 Million
Flood Damage Reduction Benefits to Non-Agriculture	\$28.6 Million
Non-flood Damage Reduction Benefits to Agriculture	\$6 Million
Non-flood Damage Reduction To Non-Agriculture	\$36.5 Million
Total Monetary Benefits	\$94 Million
<p>Estimated average annual benefits include reduced flood damages, sediment reduction, soil erosion control, recreation and municipal water supplies. 2017 price base.</p>	

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



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