

# Rock Creek Watershed Project

## Latimer and LeFlore Counties, 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.*

## Rock Creek Watershed

The Rock Creek Watershed is located in southeast Oklahoma. The watershed encompasses 37,997 acres of which 20,666 acres are in Latimer County and 17,331 are in LeFlore County.

The Talihina and LeFlore County Conservation Districts and the City of Talihina requested assistance from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in developing a watershed work plan in 1965 for flood control and for a water supply for Talihina.

Flooding occurred regularly in the watershed before the dams were constructed. Severe floods (flood water covering over 50 percent of the flood plain) occurred an average of two times a year. The most disastrous flood occurred in 1904 when four people were drowned. These floods destroyed crops, fences, roads and bridges and drown livestock. Eighty-nine acres inside the City of Talihina occasionally flooded before the construction of Dam No. 2.

The City of Talihina obtained their water supply from Lake Talihina prior to 1970 and it had become an inadequate water source. Dam No. 2 (Carl Albert Lake) was constructed in 1970 with the NRCS providing engineering assistance and funding for the dam for flood control. The City of Talihina providing funding for an additional 2,739 acre feet of water storage above that needed for flood control for municipal water and recreational use.

## Rock Creek Watershed Project Benefits – 4 Dams

- Dams provide \$467,304 in average annual benefits
- Provides flood protection for 152 farms and ranches
- Provides flood protection for 5 major bridges and many smaller bridges and county roads
- Created or enhanced 70 acres of wetlands
- Reduces sedimentation of streams and rivers by 12,476 tons of soil annually

The Rock 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.

2,107 flood control dams have been constructed in 61 Oklahoma counties. These watershed projects that also include thousands of conservation practices provide over \$94 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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