Rush Creek Watershed Project
Garvin, Grady and Stephens Counties
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.*

Rush Creek Watershed Project

Fifty-five flood control dams have been constructed in the Rush Creek Watershed (36 in Grady County, 16 in Garvin County and 3 in Stephens County).

Rush Creek flooded frequently before the flood control dams were constructed. During the period between 1923 and 1942 there were 57 floods in the 193,000 acre watershed. A flood in May 1950 flooded the City of Pauls Valley causing over $300,000 in damages and claiming the lives of two people.

Conservation districts in Garvin, Grady and Stephens Counties requested assistance from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 1954 in planning and implementing a watershed project in the Rush Creek Watershed. This plan included the construction of flood control dams and the installation of conservation practices.

Flooding occurred with less frequency and severity as the dams were constructed. Most of the dams were constructed between 1959 and 1974, with the last dam constructed in 1986.

Rush Creek Watershed Dam No. 1, known as Taylor Lake and, was constructed in 1960 by the City of Marlow and the Grady County Conservation District with the assistance of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Program.

The dam was built for flood control, municipal water supply for the City of Marlow and for a recreational area. The dam creates a 178 surface acre lake with seven miles of shoreline. The city paid for an additional 505 acre feet of water storage beyond that needed for flood control during construction for use as municipal water.

Benefits of the 55 Flood Control Dams in the Rush Creek Watershed Project

- Provides $2,9 million in average annual benefits
- Provide flood protection for bridges, highways, homes and county roads
- Provides flood protection for 570 farms and ranches
- Impounded water has created fish and wildlife habitat, waterfowl nesting areas and livestock water
- Reduces sedimentation by 180,000 tons of soil annually
- Dams have created or enhanced 778 acres

The Rush 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. The 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.

OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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