



NRCS-Assisted Watershed Projects

Elkwater Fork Water Supply Dam

There are 2,100 watershed projects in the nation established by local units of government with the assistance of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Program (Public Law 78-534 and Public Law 83-566). These projects consist of over 11,000 flood control dams and thousands of conservation practices that provide over \$2 billion in annual benefits in flood prevention, water supplies, recreational areas, and other benefits. The following is just one example of how the Watershed Program is benefiting local communities and the nation.

Elkwater Fork Water Supply Dam

In 1993, several towns in the Upper Tygart Valley Watershed in Randolph County, West Virginia experienced a dangerous shortage of water. At a critical point, the water plant was within 72 hours of completely running out of water.

Soon after that, local community groups, interested citizens and government agencies began working toward a solution to avoid future water shortages.



The solution they ultimately settled on was to build a dam on the Elkwater Fork of the Tygart River. The dam would create a new reservoir that would provide a dependable water source for the 27,000 people in the watershed.

Local government agencies and community groups worked with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to create the Elkwater Fork Water Supply Dam.

An agreement was signed between three primary partners: the NRCS, the Tygart Valley Conservation District, and the West Virginia Conservation Agency. During the planning phase engineers determined that roller-compacted concrete (RCC) could be used to construct the dam. NRCS provided federal funding for the project through the PL-566 Watershed Program.

Construction began on the dam in May 2006 and was completed in June 2009. It then took more than five months to fill the reservoir.



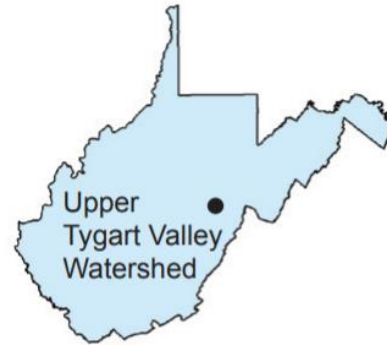
The Elkwater Fork Dam is one of the larger dams in West Virginia and one of the only dams in the state built with compacted concrete. This material has the strength and durability of conventional concrete but at half the cost.

For the dam to acquire a permit under the Clean Water Act of 1972, environmental mitigation was required to compensate for the resources impacted by construction. This work included natural stream restoration on about four and a half miles of the Shavers Fork River to support the brook trout population. A five-year monitoring plan has provided regular evaluations of the habitat improvements.

The 54-acre water supply impoundment also provides recreational opportunities. A safety boom improves boater safety since the water flows over the dam, not through a pipe spillway. There is a paved accessible fishing area below the dam, and an area for those with physical impairments to fish in the stilling basin. There is also a boat launch area, and an angler walking trail

Partners for the Project:

Upper Tygart Valley Watershed Partnership
Tygart Valley Conservation District
Randolph County Commission
Town of Huttonsville
West Virginia Conservation Agency
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Huttonsville Public Service District
Town of Beverly
City of Elkins



The Upper Tygart Valley Watershed Project located is in Randolph County, West Virginia.

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