



NRCS-Assisted Watershed Projects

Double Creek Watershed Project

Washington County, Oklahoma

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.

The Double Creek Watershed Project consists of six flood control dams in a 38,000 acre watershed located in southern Washington County, Oklahoma. The dams were constructed between 1954 and 1955 by the Caney Valley Conservation District with the assistance of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. NRCS provided assistance through a national pilot watershed program authorized in the 1944 Flood Control Act.

The primary purpose of the project is to control flooding, erosion and sedimentation. The dams provide flood protection for U. S. Highway 75, a major transportation route between Tulsa and Bartlesville, the town of Ramona and 3,800 acres of rural land downstream of the dams.



Before the dams were constructed the watershed had a long history of frequent and severe flooding. Between 1917 and 1936, flood water from 36 major floods covered more than 50 percent of the 3,800 acres of floodplain and there were 43 smaller floods during that period.

Watershed Project Benefits:

- \$70,000 in average annual benefits from reduced flood damages
- Provides flood protection for 3,800 acres of floodplain
- Provides flood protection for bridges, county roads, U. S. Highway 75 and a major railroad
- Provides flood protection for 60 farms and ranches
- Provides flood protection for public facilities, businesses and homes in Ramona
- Impounded water has created fish and wildlife habitat, waterfowl nesting areas and livestock water The

The six dams were rehabilitated between 2004 and 2009. This was the first complete watershed project in the nation to have all the dams rehabilitated.

Rehabilitation included removing and replacing the principal spillways, raising the height of the embankments and widening the auxiliary earthen spillways.

Rehabilitation brought the dams up to current dam safety criteria and extended their life for another 100 years.



Double Creek Watershed Dam No. 6
During Rehabilitation

Double 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 and the Oklahoma Conservation Commission.

2,107 NRCS-assisted flood control dams have been built in 61 Oklahoma counties. These dams provide over \$81 million in average annual benefits in reduced flood damages, reduced erosion and sedimentation, improved water quality, and municipal water supplies.

For additional information about watershed projects in the state visit the Oklahoma Conservation Commission website at: <http://conservation.ok.gov>.

May 2022