



NRCS-Assisted Watershed Projects

Horseshoe Lake Wildlife Structure

Lancaster, Minnesota

There are 2,100 watershed projects in the nation established by local units of government (watershed project sponsors) 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.

Below is an example of a project that provides flood and sediment control, along with a main purpose of increasing waterfowl production.

Horseshoe Lake

The original wildlife structure, located north and east of the City of Lancaster, MN was installed in 1968 by local watershed project sponsors with assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Program (PL566) and is referred to as the Horseshoe Lake Wildlife Structure.

The project consisted of diking, an emergency spillway, and a 54" diameter x 68' long pipe with an 8' x 16' x 7' concrete box inlet associated with the main outlet, and also a north dike to contain flows from State Ditch #84.



Engineering and technical assistance was provided by NRCS and funding and other resources were provided by both the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Two Rivers Watershed District.

The structure was constructed for the purpose of waterfowl production and it was envisioned that a 351 acre impoundment with an average 2' depth would be created at the normal pool elevation of 974.2 feet. A flood pool of 590 acres would occur at an elevation of 977.1 feet.

The impoundment did not attain its expected wildlife or flood control benefits, and in 2007 the DNR, TRWD, and Kittson County agreed to modify the structure by cutting a 4'x6' notch in the face of the cement box and inserting stoplogs to be able to manipulate the water levels. The new project has a capacity of storing a total of 2,130 acre feet from a drainage area of 29.4 square miles. This has local benefits to the North Branch Two Rivers and also smaller benefits to the Red River.

Information for article provided by the Two Rivers Watershed District in Kittson, Roseau and Marshall Counties, MN. <http://www.tworiverswd.com/index.html>