



## NRCS-Assisted Watershed Projects Upper Black Bear Watershed Dam No. 62 Noble 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.

**Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Dam No. 62**, also known as the CCC Perry Lake, was constructed in 1963 by the City of Perry, Oklahoma, the Black Bear Conservancy District and the Noble County Conservation District with assistance from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program.



The dam was constructed with the primary purpose being flood control, but the City of Perry paid for an additional 6,119 acre feet of water storage beyond that required for flood control for municipal and recreational water storage.

The dam is located 4,100 feet upstream from Interstate I-35 and approximately five miles upstream from the residential and business district in Perry.

The dam created a 897 surface acre lake with eleven miles of shoreline. Recreational facilities around the lake include a boat ramp, campsites, camper parking, electrical hookup, picnic areas, restroom, and a playground. It has become a major water-based recreational area for the surrounding counties. The dam is currently scheduled to be rehabilitated to upgrade it to current dam safety standards and extend its life for another 100 years.

Dam No. 62 is one of 72 flood control dams in the 241,000 acre Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Project (50 in Noble County and 22 in Garfield County). Flooding was a serious problem in the watershed prior to construction of the dams. From 1935 to 1954 there were 28 major floods that covered more than one-half of the watershed floodplain and there were many less severe floods. There were 13 floods in 1957. These floods cost millions of dollars in loss of crops and livestock, damaged or destroyed bridges, and washed out county roads.

Local people formed the Upper Black Bear Creek Watershed Project in 1959 and requested technical and financial help from the NRCS in planning and implementing the project.