Flood Control Dams in Payne County

Oklahoma has 2,107 flood control dams in 61 counties. These dams have been constructed through conservation districts with financial and technical assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) authorized through Public Law 78-534 (Washita River Watershed) and Public Law 83-566 Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program.

The primary purpose of flood control dams is to reduce flooding. The secondary benefits of the dams address a myriad of public needs such as water supply, water quality, soil health, water management, wetland enhancement, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreation. Flood control dams improve public safety, contribute to a healthy economy and support a strong nation.

Watershed projects also include the installation of natural resource conservation practices such as terraces, waterways, ponds, gully repair, and pasture and rangeland plantings. These conservation practices improve water quality and soil health and reduce sedimentation into the lakes formed by the dams.

Operation and Maintenance of Dams

The annual operation and maintenance of dams is the responsibility of project sponsors (local units of governments such as conservation districts).

Operation and maintenance of dams can be expensive and labor intensive, but is necessary to ensure the dams function as designed and remain safe. Maintenance work includes removing trees from dams and spillways, repairing erosion damage, repairing damage to the spillway and dams after heavy rainstorms, and keeping the principal spillway inlet towers cleared of debris.

Operation and Maintenance Needs

$22 million is needed to meet the operation and maintenance needs of the 2,107 flood control dams for fiscal years 2012-2016. This equates to $4 million per year for fiscal years 2014-2018.

Rehabilitation and Dam Safety

Some dams will need rehabilitation to remain safe and protect the people that live or work downstream. It is estimated that $457 million will be required to rehabilitate the existing 172 high hazard dams to comply with federal and state dam safety laws. More dams will become high hazard as long as residential and business development is allowed downstream of the dam in the breach flood area.

NRCS can provide 65 percent of the rehabilitation costs and technical assistance to rehabilitate high hazard dams. Local project sponsors provide 35 percent of the cost and obtain any needed additional land rights. As of January 2013 twenty-nine dams have been rehabilitated and 21 others are in various stages of planning, design or construction.

Annual Benefits

The 2,107 flood control dams and conservation practices in watershed projects provide $85 million in annual benefits. Listed below are the average annual benefits from watershed projects in Payne County.

Payne County Conservation District
2600 South Main Ste. C
Stillwater, OK
405/372-7201

Average Annual Watershed Benefits (Entire Watershed)

Watershed Name	Dams in Watershed	Dams in Payne County	Monetary Benefits	Farms/ Ranches Benefited	Bridges Benefited	Wetlands Enhanced/Created (acres)	Reduced Sedimentation (tons of soil)
Long Branch Ck.	11	6	$82,955	73	12	197	31,430
Stillwater Ck.	33	28	$2,362,582	252	20	524	87,655
Total	**44**	**34**	**$2,445,537**	**325**	**32**	**721**	**119,085**

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