

Watershed Dams In Beckham County

Oklahoma has 129 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) assisted watershed projects in 64 counties. Over 2,100 watershed dams have been built in the state with financial and technical assistance from NRCS authorized through Public Law 78-534, Flood Control Act of 1944 (Washita River Watershed) and Public Law 83-566 Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program.

Watershed projects address a myriad of natural resource issues such as flooding, soil erosion, water quality, animal waste management, irrigation water management, water supply, wetland development or enhancement, fish and wildlife habitat and recreation. Many of these watershed projects also include conservation practices such as terraces, waterways, ponds, gully control, and pasture and rangeland plantings.

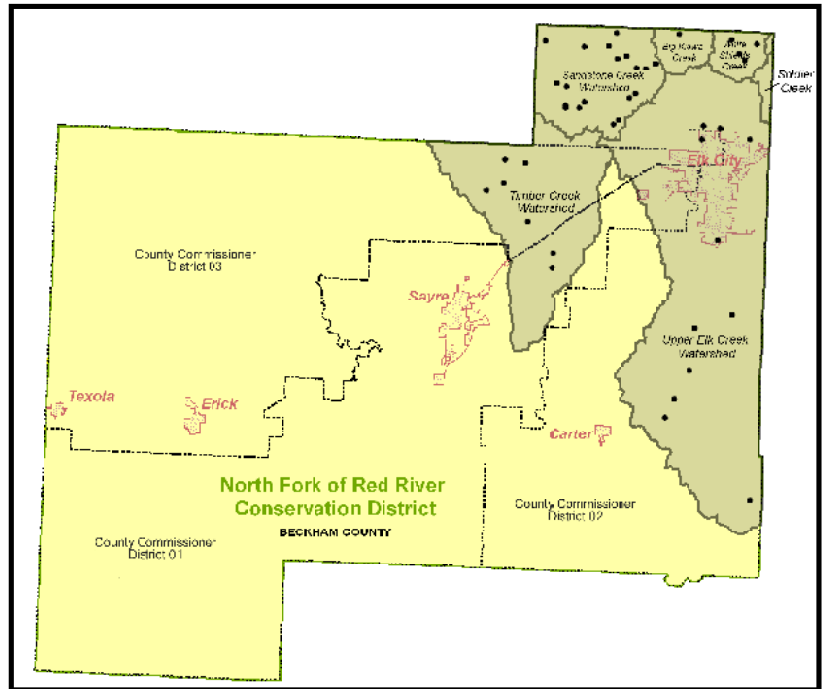
Operation and Maintenance of Watershed Projects

The annual operation and maintenance of dams and their components is a major responsibility for project sponsors (local units of governments, usually conservation districts, conservancy districts, or city or county governments).

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

Operation and Maintenance Needs

\$11.7 million is needed to meet operation and maintenance needs on all watershed dams in the state for fiscal years 2009-2012.



Rehabilitation of Aging Dams

Oklahoma has 321 watershed dams that will exceed their 50-year design life span by 2009 and 806 dams will reach this milestone by 2013.

Beckham County has 22 dams that will exceed their 50-year design life in 2009 and that number will increase to 29 by 2013.

Some Oklahoma dams will need rehabilitation to remain safe and protect the people that live or work downstream. It is estimated that \$30 million will be needed to rehabilitate the highest priority of these dams during the next five years. Oklahoma currently has several rehabilitation projects in various stages of planning, design or construction.

NRCS assistance is available to rehabilitate aging watershed dams with 65 percent federal cost-share. Local project sponsors provide 35 percent of the rehabilitation costs.

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Annual Watershed Benefits (Entire Watershed)

Watershed Name	Dams in Watershed	Dams in Beckham Co.	*Monetary Benefits	Farms / Ranches Benefited	Bridges Benefited	Wetlands Enhanced/Created (acres)	Reduced Sedimentation (tons of soil)
Big Kiowa Creek	6	1	\$63,295	23	5	151	108,135
Sandstone Creek	42	19	\$331,665	60	8	809	296,123
Timber Creek	7	7	\$174,402	50	12	163	36,095
Upper Elk Creek	35	11	\$1,176,327	251	27	925	192,226
Whiteshield Creek	19	4	\$131,291	21	11	131	23,847
Total	109	42	\$1,876,980	405	63	2,179	656,426

*Monetary benefits include reduction in flood damages and may include other benefits such as soil erosion control, recreational areas, irrigation water, municipal and industrial water supply, and wildlife habitat. (Price Base 2007). December 2008