# Flood Control Dams in Oklahoma Senate District No. 18

Oklahoma has 2,107 flood control dams in 61 counties. These dams have been constructed through local units of government, mostly conservation districts, who serve as local watershed project sponsors. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provided financial and technical assistance to sponsors to build the dams through Public Law 78-534 Flood Control Act (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 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

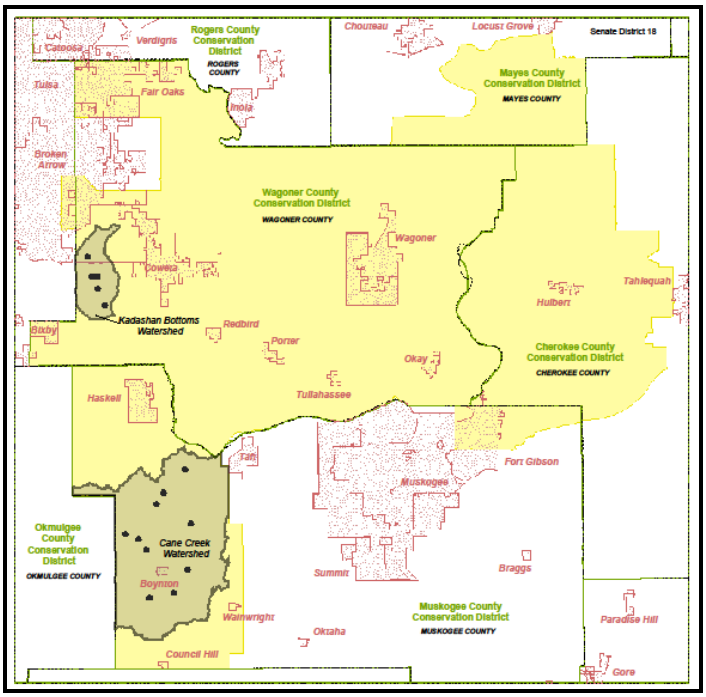
The operation and maintenance of dams is the responsibility of the project sponsors. Operation and maintenance of dams can be expensive and labor intensive, but is necessary to ensure the dams function as designed and remain safe. Maintenance work includes removing trees from dams and spillways, repairing erosion damage, repairing damage to spillways and dams after heavy rain storms, controlling beavers and rodents, and keeping the principal spillway inlet towers cleared of debris.

## Operation and Maintenance Needs

An estimated $6 million per year is needed to meet the operations and maintenance needs of the 2,107 flood control dams.

## Annual Benefits

The 2,107 flood control dams provide $85 million in average annual benefits. Listed below are the average annual benefits from watershed projects in Senate District No. 18.




## Rehabilitation and Dam Safety

Some dams will need rehabilitation to remain safe and protect the people that live or work downstream and to continue to provide benefits. There are 249 high hazard dams with 63 that meet current dam safety criteria either through original design or rehabilitation. It is estimated that $653 million will be required to rehabilitate the remaining 186 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 dams in the breach flood area.

NRCS can provide 65 percent of the cost to rehabilitate high hazard dams. Local project sponsors provide 35 percent of the cost and obtain any needed additional land rights.

As of January 2015 thirty-four dams in the state have been rehabilitated to meet state and federal mandated dam safety regulations and 18 dams are in various stages of planning, design or construction.

### Average Annual Watershed Benefits (Entire Watershed)

| Watershed Name | Dams in Watershed | Dams in District 18 | Monetary Benefits | Farms/Ranches Benefited | Bridges Benefited | Wetlands Enhanced/Created (acres) | Reduced Sedimentation (tons of soil) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cane Creek | 21 | 10 | $505,900 | 311 | 12 | 695 | 107,768 |
| Kadashan Bottoms | 5 | 5 | $196,598 | 39 | 4 | 49 | 6,851 |
| **Total** | **26** | **15** | **$702,498** | **350** | **16** | **744** | **114,619** |

# Conservation Contacts for Oklahoma Senate District 18

Conservation Districts are a primary sponsor of most watershed projects in Oklahoma. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is the federal agency that administers the watershed program and provides technical and financial assistance to the local project sponsors.

Listed below are conservation districts located in Senate District 18 that have watershed projects and other conservation agencies that can be contacted for more information about the watershed program.

**Muskogee County Conservation District**
3001 Azalea Park Dr., Ste. 1
Muskogee, OK
918/682-8831, Ext. 101
muskogeeccd@conservation.ok.gov

**Wagoner County Conservation District**
26114 State Highway 51
Wagoner, OK
918/485-4010
wagonerccd@conservation.ok.gov

**Oklahoma Conservation Commission**
2800 N. Lincoln Blvd. Suite 160
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4210
(405) 521-2384
info@conservation.ok.gov
http://www.ok.gov/conservation

**Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts**
P.O. Box 2775
Oklahoma City, OK 73101-2775
http://www.okconservation.org

**Natural Resources Conservation Service**
100 USDA, Suite 206
Stillwater, OK. 74074-2655
(405) 742-1204

This Publication is issued by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission as authorized by 65 O.S. 2001 §3-110.
Copies have not been printed, but are available on the agency website. January 2015.

OKLAHOMA CONSERVATION COMMISSION