

2013 Nonpoint Source Success Stories

The partnership among Oklahoma landowners, local Conservation Districts, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC), and the Oklahoma Secretary of Environment is allowing Oklahoma to be a national leader in solving water quality problems caused by nonpoint source pollution. Voluntary conservation programs have resulted in the removal of streams from Oklahoma's 303(d) List of Impaired Waterbodies. Success is also evidenced by healthy streams across the state, where water is free of significant pollution. These streams are "clean enough" to stay off the list due to the sound management implemented by agricultural producers and other landowners in these watersheds.

11 NPS-Impaired Streams Removed from the 303(d) List

EPA has accepted 11 new Nonpoint Source Success Stories from Oklahoma in 2013. These streams are found in nearly all areas of the state and showcase watersheds where voluntary conservation programs through the state and its federal partners have resulted in significant water quality improvement. The Oklahoma Conservation Commission's Water Quality Monitoring Program measured improved water quality in these 11 streams, including decreased turbidity, higher oxygen content, reduced fecal bacteria contamination, and reductions in visible oil and grease.

One example of success is Big Creek in Nowata and Craig Counties, which was removed from the 2012 303(d) list due to decreases in *E. coli* bacteria concentrations. NRCS and state conservation programs used prescribed grazing, critical area plantings, erosion control, cross fencing, wetland development, and other practices to improve water quality of the stream. As a result, Big Creek is now in partial support of its Primary Body Contact Beneficial Use.

The Medicine Lodge River in Alfalfa and Woods Counties is another example of voluntary conservation programs solving water quality impairments. NRCS and State conservation programs implemented conservation crop rotations, reduced tillage farming, erosion control, prescribed grazing and other practices resulting in improved water quality which, in turn, allowed the fish populations of the stream to improve. As a result, a 14 mile long segment of the river was delisted from the 2012 303(d) because it now fully attains its Fish and Wildlife Propagation Beneficial Use.



Big Creek



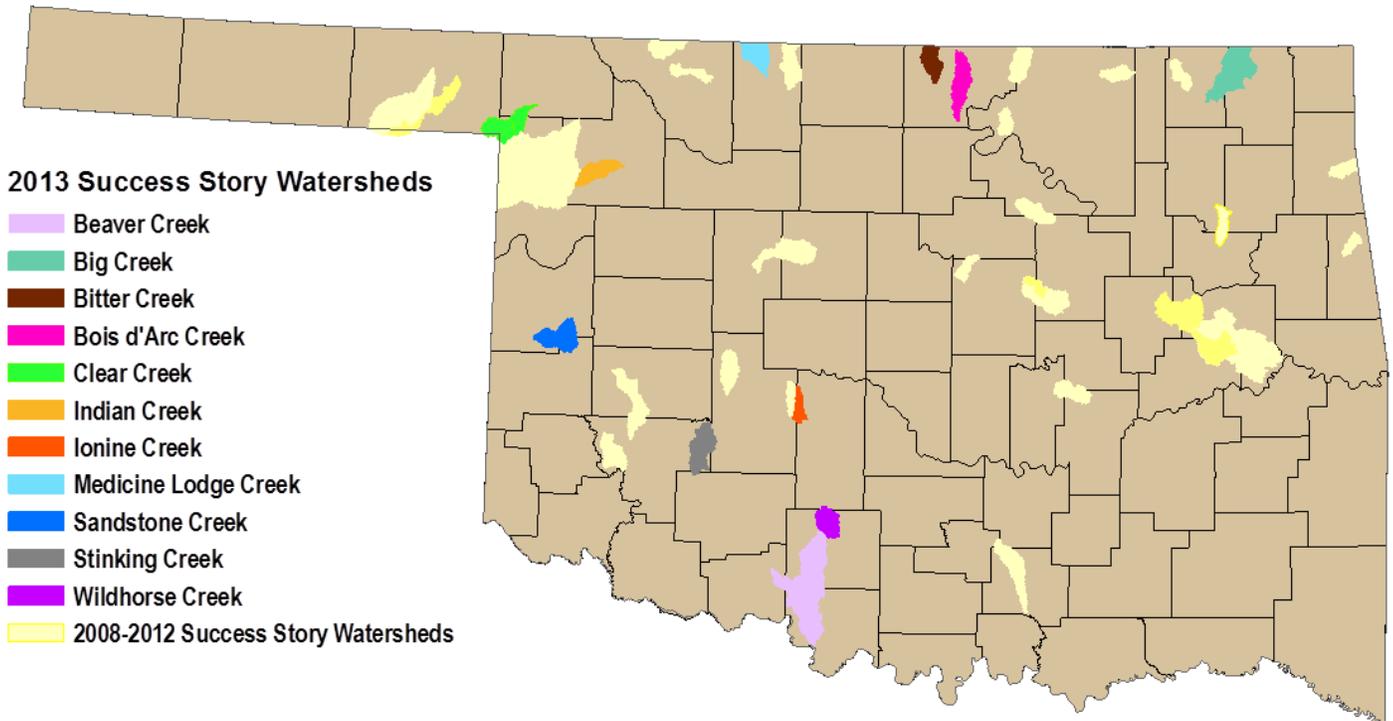
The suckermouth minnow is an intolerant species now found in the Medicine Lodge River.

More than 200 Streams with Good Things to Say:

In addition to cleaning up impaired streams, voluntary conservation programs serve an important function to keep streams healthy and off the 303(d) list. According to Oklahoma's 2010 Integrated Report, Oklahoma Monitoring Programs (OCC, Oklahoma Water Resources Board, etc.) found more than 200 waterbodies that were not added to the 303(d) list. The report also determined that more than 263 waterbody segments fully support their fish and wildlife beneficial use, meaning that they support healthy aquatic and wildlife communities.

For Oklahoma's 2012 Integrated Report, the OCC alone proposed more than 190 streams that fully support their fish and wildlife beneficial use. This suggests that the number of Oklahoma waterbodies that are healthy enough to remain off the 303(d) list in 2012 will be even higher than the 200 in 2010.

Oklahoma's Nonpoint Source Program Success Stories



The eleven new 2013 success stories bring the Oklahoma total to 37, meaning that only two other states in the nation have more success at solving water quality problems than Oklahoma. This success proves that the voluntary partnership between landowners and local, state, and federal conservation agencies remains as an effective way to address natural resource concerns.

Site	Parameter Delisted	County
Beaver Creek	Turbidity	Jefferson
Big Creek	Escherichia coli	Nowata
Bitter Creek	Escherichia coli	Kay
Bois d' Arc Creek	Escherichia coli	Kay
Clear Creek	Escherichia coli	Harper
Indian Creek	Fishes Bioassessment	Woodward
Ionine Creek	Fishes Bioassessment	Grady
Medicine Lodge River	Fishes Bioassessment	Alfalfa
Sandstone Creek	Turbidity	Roger Mills
Stinking Creek	Turbidity	Kiowa
Wildhorse Creek	Turbidity	Stephens

Success Story Webpage: <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/success319/>



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