

## Watershed Rehabilitation

April 2009

## *Reinvesting in Cottonwood Creek Watershed Dam No. 15, Oklahoma*

### Introduction

This project will create or save jobs during the construction period. It will remove an unsafe dam and allow for the rehabilitation of an upstream dam that will protect agricultural land, homes, and county highways.



The Cottonwood Creek Watershed Dam is located four miles southwest of Cashion, in Kingfisher County.

Funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, this project is part of the Obama Administration's plans to modernize the nation's infrastructure, jump-start the economy, and create jobs. NRCS is using Recovery Act dollars to update aging flood control structures, protect and maintain water supplies, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and restore wetlands. NRCS acquires easements and restores floodplains to safeguard lives and property in areas along streams and rivers that have experienced flooding.

### Project Description

- o **Location:** Kingfisher County, 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District
- o **Federal Funding:** \$3,200,000
- o **Sponsor Funding:** \$1,579,500

The classification of the dam was changed from low-hazard to high-hazard due to a 2007 study that showed five county highways and two houses would be inundated if the dam failed. Bringing the dam up to the necessary safety standards is cost prohibitive; therefore, the dam will be decommissioned, allowing for rehabilitation of an upstream high-hazard dam.

A portion of the embankment of the dam will be removed, and the stream and floodplain functions will be restored. A rock riprap drop structure will be installed to stabilize the remaining embankment and stored sediment at the site.

### Partners

- o USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- o Kingfisher County Conservation District
- o Oklahoma Conservation Commission

### Benefits

Decommissioning the Cottonwood Creek Watershed Dam No. 15 removes an unsafe dam and allows for the rehabilitation of an upstream high-hazard dam that will provide over \$17 million in flood damage reduction benefits over the life of the project. It will also allow for the reclaiming of the conservation pool for agricultural use.



The existing dam at Cottonwood Creek Watershed.

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The outlet structure at Cottonwood Creek dam.

### **Economic Opportunities**

The construction of the project will create or save jobs for heavy equipment operators, job managers, and other construction personnel and subcontractors. Local businesses such as motels, restaurants and fuel suppliers will also benefit.

### **Statewide Perspective**

Cottonwood Creek Watershed Dam No. 15, one of 16 dams in the 242,470-acre watershed, is part of a vital network of 2,105 dams in Oklahoma. These dams make up a \$2 billion infrastructure that provides \$75 million in annual benefits.

### **For More Information**

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Cottonwood Creek dam is part of a 242,470-acre watershed.

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