FARM POND MANAGEMENT (OK-ECS-001)

Overview

This workshop will introduce participants to the basics of farm pond management for the primary purpose of improving or maintaining recreational fishing. The training will also emphasize multipurpose benefits associated with farm ponds including fishing opportunities, recreation use, wildlife habitat development, and livestock water development. Principal subjects to be discussed include: Pond design and construction techniques for improving fish habitat; Fish identification, Stocking rates and fish species; Harvest and removal recommendations; Water quality and turbidity problems; Eradication of existing fish populations; Aquatic Weed Control; Farm pond fencing; Wildlife buffer development; and Alternative livestock watering access.

Objectives

Upon completion of this training, participants will be able to:

1. Recommend design and construction techniques to maximize fish habitat including dam and shoreline slope angles, optimum water depths, drain pipe and drawdown features, and artificially created fish structure (i.e. brush piles, tire bundles, rock and concrete piles).

2. Determine the proper species for stocking in Oklahoma farm ponds depending on the goals of the landowner (i.e. catfish, bluegill, bass) and the proper number of each species to stock.

3. Determine harvest quotas for each fish species in order to maintain healthy populations and quality fishing.

4. Use harvest results and seine analysis to determine the present population balance and dynamics in order to make harvesting recommendations and restocking recommendations.

5. Determine causes of turbid (muddy) water conditions and make recommendations on solving the problem using erosion control methods and/or chemical treatment.

6. Make recommendations on when, why, and how to eradicate existing fish populations and restock. Methods for eradication include drawdown of the pond and/or use of fish toxicants.

7. Identify common aquatic plants found in farm ponds of Oklahoma. Determine plants that are beneficial and detrimental to fish habitat and fishing. Determine when aquatic plants should be controlled and become familiar with control methods including mechanical, biological, and chemical control.

8. Recommend the use of fencing and alternative access for livestock water in order to create buffers for erosion control, improve water quality, create wildlife habitat, improve fishing, and enhance the environment.

Prerequisites

NRCS employees should have minimum of 1 year of experience before making recommendations. Otherwise, no prerequisite required for NRCS employees or general public.

Duration

1 day in the field.