

Watershed Operations

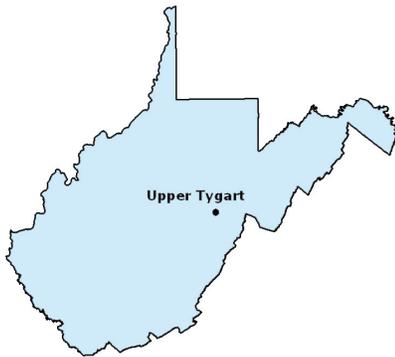
April 2009

Water Supply

Upper Tygart Valley Watershed

Introduction

Construction began on the dam in 2006 and is near completion. As a condition of permitting under the Clean Water Act 401/404, mitigation activities must be completed before the dam can be utilized to supply water.



The Upper Tygart Valley Watershed Project located is in Randolph County, West Virginia.

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

- **Location:** Randolph County, West Virginia, Second Congressional District
- Federal Funding: \$5,200,000
- Sponsor Funding: \$875,000
- **Size:** 173,100 acres (watershed)
- **Start Date:** Obligate Phase I construction funds September 2009, complete project October 2010; Obligate Phase II construction funds September 2010, complete project October 2011.

Mitigation activities include the following work: creation of .75 acres of wetlands, 7.2 miles of in-stream fish habitat enhancement, angler access improvements (boat launch area, handicap accessible fishing area, and an angler walking trail), and a safety boom to prevent accidental boat escape over the dam. Due to landowner access problems for the in-stream mitigation, this work will be done at other streams in the area as separate projects from the on-site work.

Partners

- Randolph County Commission
- City of Elkins, and the towns of Beverly, Huttonsville, and Mill Creek
- Tygarts Valley Conservation District
- West Virginia State Conservation Committee

Benefits

The Upper Tygart Valley Watershed Project will improve health and human safety by providing needed water supply for communities in the Upper Tygart

The Elkwater Fork Dam handicap accessible fishing area will be paved. The permanent water pool in the background is 14-feet deep. The roller bucket pool will attract fish because it will be filled with cold water from the bottom of the dam.



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View looking up at the dam

Valley River Watershed. In 1993, several towns in this watershed experienced a critical shortage of water. Several schools were not able to hold classes on opening day due to the water shortage crisis. At a critical point the one water plant was within 72 hours of complete depletion of water.

It is estimated 27,803 residents directly or indirectly benefit from municipal water. Customers are the city of Elkins, and the towns of Beverly, Huttonsville, and Mill Creek (four municipalities and three public service districts). The majority of beneficiaries reside in Randolph County. Estimated average annual water supply benefits are \$1,414,193.

As part of the construction project for the Elkwater Fork water supply dam, environmental mitigation work was required to compensate for the resources impacted by the dam construction. The dam construction is scheduled for completion in 2009 with the mitigation work to follow. Mitigation requirements include the creation of wetlands to replace lost

wetland area, in-stream fish habitat enhancement for 7.2 miles of stream, and provisions for angler access. In cooperation with the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, it was agreed that the angler access improvements would include a boat launch area, angler walking trail, and a handicap accessible fishing area.

The off-site mitigation work will include the use of natural stream design methods to improve aquatic habitat and road culvert replacement to eliminate fish passage barriers.

Economic Opportunities

This project will create an estimated 55 jobs.

Statewide Perspective

Complementing this project, USDA Rural Development is planning to provide a loan and grant to Elkins for a Water Treatment Plant and Upgrade Project. Due to emergency circumstances, the City proposes to replace a significant portion of its antiquated water distribution system

The Elkwater Fork Dam's primary purpose is water supply.



and construct a new six million gallon-per-day water treatment plant.

USDA Rural Development is also funding a water treatment plant that will be built next to the reservoir that complements this project.

Human health and safety will be improved by providing sufficient water to meet sanitary and fire protection needs.

Randolph County is a recreation destination. The mitigation projects supplement recreational opportunities.

For More Information

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Project web site:

[http://www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov/
programs/watershed/elkwater/
elkwater.html](http://www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watershed/elkwater/elkwater.html)

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