



## NRCS Assisted Watershed Dams in Texas 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District

In the mid-1930s, Congress began looking at ways to complement the downstream flood control program of the Corps of Engineers. It passed flood control acts in 1936, 1944, and 1954 and assigned responsibility of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program to the USDA Soil Conservation Service, now the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Since that time, the NRCS has assisted watershed sponsors in construction of nearly 2,000 floodwater retarding structures (dams) in 145 watershed projects across Texas. In addition, the NRCS has assisted watershed sponsors with the installation of land treatment practices and channel improvements for watershed protection. Texas watershed projects provide **\$150 million** in annual benefits.



*The recently completed Attoyac Bayou Multiple Purpose Structure 23A will provide not only flood prevention, but additional recreational storage benefits for Nacogdoches County and the surrounding communities. Recreational facilities will also be provided.*

### Operation and Maintenance of Watershed Projects

The annual operation and maintenance of dams and their components is the responsibility of project sponsors (local units of government, usually conservation districts, city and county governments, and special purpose districts).

*See the back of this page for a list of the watershed sponsors in the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District.*

Operation and maintenance of watershed dams can be expensive and labor intensive, but is necessary to ensure the dams function as designed and remain safe. Maintenance work includes clearing trees from dams and spillways, repairing soil erosion damage, repairing damages after heavy storm events, and keeping the principal spillway inlet clear of debris.

### Rehabilitation of Aging Dams

NRCS assistance is available to rehabilitate aging watershed dams. A typical candidate site for rehabilitation was constructed between the late 1950's to the middle 1960's, and no longer meets current safety criteria.



There are **thirteen constructed watershed dams** in the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District.

The dams provide over **\$1.8 million** in annual benefits, as well as capturing over 37 thousand tons of sediment annually. At least 45 bridges and numerous county and state roads are also protected.

There are 2 dams in the 1st Congressional District that are 40-49 years old, and 10 dams are 30-39 years old.

The majority of the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District was in a rural setting when the watershed projects were planned. Conversion from agricultural to urban land use has taken place and development is intensifying. Many dams were originally constructed as low hazard, but if urban development occurs downstream of the dams, the hazard class may change to high hazard. As a result, the dam will require upgrading (rehabilitation) to meet high hazard criteria.



Annual Watershed Benefits in 2011 Dollars

Watershed	Total Dams Constructed	Monetary Benefits	Bridges Benefited	Wetlands Created/Enhanced (acres)	Reduced Sedimentation (tons of soil)
Attoyac Bayou	13	\$1,843,000	45	435	37,100

Monetary benefits include reduction in flood damages to agricultural lands and rural and urban infrastructure including roads and bridges. Other benefits include soil erosion control, recreational areas, irrigation water, municipal and industrial water supply, and wildlife habitat.

Listed below are the sponsors for watersheds located in the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District:

- Attoyac Bayou Watershed Authority*
- City of Center*
- Nacogdoches County Commissioners Court*
- Nacogdoches Soil and Water Conservation District*
- Piney Woods Soil and Water Conservation District*
- Rusk County Commissioners Court*
- Rusk Soil and Water Conservation District*
- Shelby County Commissioners Court*
- Shelby Soil and Water Conservation District*

Information about watershed projects and other conservation programs is available at the local conservation district or NRCS offices. For further information, refer to the Texas NRCS website located at:

[www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/tx/programs/planning/wpfp](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/tx/programs/planning/wpfp)

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