



NRCS Assisted Watershed Dams in Texas 6th 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, NRCS has assisted watershed sponsors in construction of nearly 2,000 floodwater retarding structures (dams) in 145 watershed projects across Texas. In addition, 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 watershed projects which impact the 6th Congressional District provide **nearly \$14 million** in annual benefits, as well as capturing over 3.2 million tons of sediment annually. Over 650 bridges and numerous county, state, and federal roads are also protected.

There are **183 constructed watershed dams** in 6 watershed projects in the 6th Congressional District. *See the back of this page for the annual benefits provided by these watershed projects.*

Over 25% of Ellis County is protected by floodwater retarding dams. Thirty-eight of these dams provided over \$2.2 million in floodwater damage reduction benefits from the late March 2007 storms.

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).

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

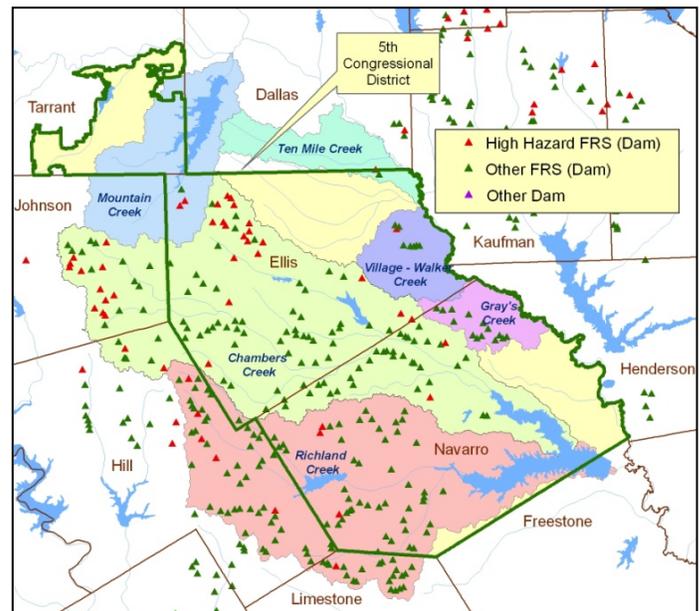
damages after heavy storm events, and keeping the principal spillway inlet clear of debris.

Twenty-nine dams in the 6th Congressional District need repair at an estimated cost of \$16.1 million.

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 72 dams in the 6th Congressional District that are over 50 years old, 80 dams that are 40-49 years old, and 22 dams that are 30-39 years old.



The majority of the 6th Congressional District was in a rural setting when the watershed projects were planned. Conversion from agricultural to urban land use has taken place and is intensifying. Many dams originally constructed as low hazard are now classified as high hazard, or will soon be high hazard as a result of downstream urbanization.

Rehabilitation of these dams is needed to protect lives and downstream property. Twenty-seven dams in the 6th Congressional District are classified as high hazard dams.

Twenty-five of these dams need to be upgraded to high hazard criteria at an estimated cost of \$37.5 million, including over \$13 million in sponsor's cost.

Rehabilitation planning has been completed and construction funds requested for one dam in the 6th Congressional District.

Annual Watershed Benefits in 2011 Dollars (Entire Watersheds)						
Watershed	Total Dams Constructed	Dams in District 6	Monetary Benefits	Bridges Benefited	Wetlands Created/Enhanced (acres)	Reduced Sedimentation (tons of soil)
Chambers Creek	137	105	\$9,249,000	286	4,256	453,900
Gray's Creek	14	14	\$359,000	17	761	374,500
Mountain Creek	3	3	\$442,000	4	167	37,100
Richland Creek	125	52	\$3,539,000	350	3,047	2,378,100
Ten Mile Creek	2	1	\$157,000	4	51	7,500
Village- Walker Creek	8	8	\$229,000	7	103	23,200
Total	289	183	\$13,975,000	668	8,385	3,274,300

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 6th Congressional District:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <i>City of Alvarado</i> | <i>Hill County-Blackland Soil and Water Conservation District</i> |
| <i>City of Dawson</i> | |
| <i>City of Ennis</i> | <i>Johnson County Commissioners Court</i> |
| <i>Dalworth Soil and Water Conservation District</i> | <i>Johnson County Soil and Water Conservation District</i> |
| <i>Ellis County Commissioners Court</i> | <i>Limestone County Commissioners Court</i> |
| <i>Ellis County Levee Improvement District #2</i> | <i>Limestone-Falls Soil and Water Conservation District</i> |
| <i>Ellis-Prairie Soil and Water Conservation District</i> | <i>Navarro County Commissioners Court</i> |
| <i>Hill County Commissioners Court</i> | <i>Navarro Soil and Water Conservation District</i> |

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

