



NRCS Assisted Watershed Dams in Texas 23rd 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 watershed projects which impact the 23rd Congressional District provide **\$18.4 million** in annual benefits, as well as capturing over 471,000 tons of sediment annually. Over 225 bridges and numerous county, state, and federal roads are also protected.

There are **54 watershed dams** in 15 watershed projects located in the district. *See the table on the back of this page for the annual benefits provided by each watershed project in the district.*

The Salado Creek Watershed dams provided \$900,000 in flood damage reduction benefits from the June 29, 2007, storm alone.

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.

Three of the dams in the 23rd Congressional District are in need of funding for repairs at an estimated cost of \$6 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 25 dams in the 23rd Congressional District that are over 50 years old, 6 dams that are 40-49 years old, and 7 dams that are 30-39 years old. Rehabilitation studies have been requested on three of the dams in the 23rd District.

The majority of the 23rd 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.

Thirty dams in the 23rd Congressional District are classified as high hazard dams. Seven of these dams need to be upgraded to high hazard criteria at an estimated cost of \$9 million including \$3.1 million in sponsor's cost.

Annual Watershed Benefits in 2011 Dollars
(Entire Watersheds)

Watershed	Total Dams Constructed	Dams in District 23	Monetary Benefits	Bridges Benefited	Wetlands Created/Enhanced (acres)	Reduced Sedimentation (tons of soil)
Alamo Arroyo	2	2	\$177,000	6	0	63,900
Camp Rice Arroyo	1	1	\$239,000	4	0	23,700
Cornudas North & Culp Draws	1	1	\$921,000	20	0	9,300
Diablo Arroyo	2	2	\$132,000	5	0	66,400
Dry Devils River and Lowrey Draw	13	13	\$2,131,000	25	420	54,100
Hitson CL and Washburn Draws	3	3	\$2,586,000	15	169	16,300
Johnsons Draw	7	7	\$931,000	15	235	20,400
Leona River	3	3	\$1,506,000	15	143	24,300
Macho Arroyo	1	1	\$59,000	6	0	4,900
Madden Arroyo	1	1	\$112,000	4	0	27,800
Mimms Draw	1	1	\$124,000	30	20	1,100
Salado Creek	14	4	\$5,111,000	40	340	35,900
Sanderson Canyon	11	11	\$3,702,000	19	319	88,000
Three-Mile and Sulfur Draw	2	2	\$574,000	15	0	27,200
Upper Las Moras Creek	2	2	\$188,000	6	53	8,400
Total	64	54	\$18,428,000	225	1,699	471,700

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 23rd Congressional District:

<i>Alamo Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	<i>Hudspeth County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>Alamo Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	<i>Hudspeth County Conservation and Reclamation District # 1</i>
<i>Big Bend Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	<i>Hudspeth County Underground Water Conservation District</i>
<i>Brewster County Commissioners Court</i>	<i>Kinney County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>City of Brackettville</i>	<i>Nueces-Frio-Sabinal Soil and Water Conservation District</i>
<i>City of Dell City</i>	<i>Pecos County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>City of Marfa</i>	<i>Presidio County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>City of San Antonio</i>	<i>Rio Grande-Pecos River Soil and Water Conservation District</i>
<i>City of Sonora</i>	<i>San Antonio River Authority</i>
<i>City of Uvalde</i>	<i>Schleicher County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>City of Van Horn</i>	<i>Sutton County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>Culberson County Commissioners Court</i>	<i>Terrell County Commissioners Court High Point Soil and Water Conservation District</i>
<i>Edwards Aquifer Authority</i>	<i>Trans-Pecos Soil and Water Conservation District</i>
<i>Edwards Plateau Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	<i>Uvalde County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>El Paso-Hudspeth Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	<i>West Nueces-Las Moras Soil and Water Conservation District</i>
<i>Eldorado Divide Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	
<i>Highland 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

