

## NRCS Assisted Watershed Dams in Texas 26<sup>th</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, channel improvements, and dikes for watershed protection.

Texas watershed projects provide **\$150 million** in annual benefits.

The watershed projects in or upstream of the 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District provide **over \$6.4 million** in annual benefits, as well as capturing over 984,000 tons of sediment annually. Over 500 bridges and numerous county, state, and federal roads are also protected.

There are **22 watershed dams** in four watershed projects either in or providing protection to the district. *See the table on the back of this page for the annual benefits of each watershed projects protecting the 26th Congressional District.*

*The seventeen dams in the Little Elm and Laterals Watershed provided nearly \$1 million in flood damage reduction benefits during the June 18, 2007, storm event alone.*

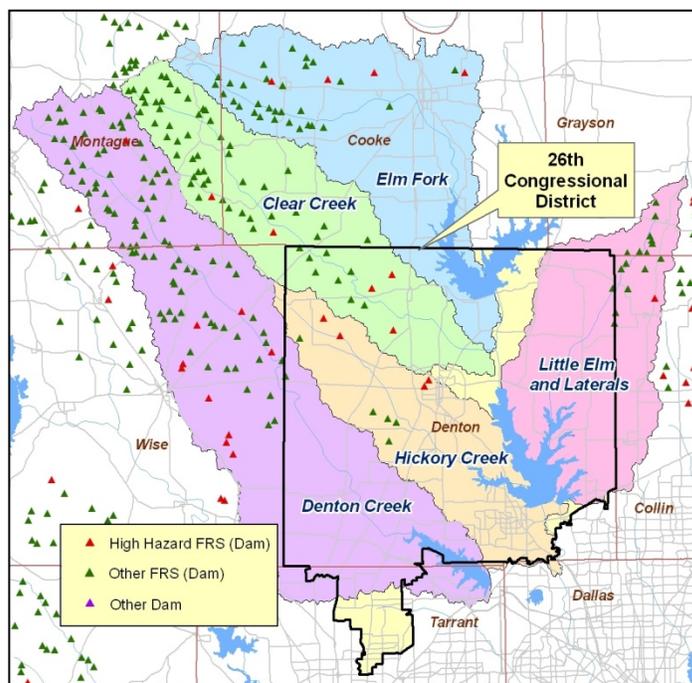
### Operation and Maintenance of Watershed Projects

The annual operation and maintenance of dams and their components is the major 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.

*There is one dam in the 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District in need of funding for repairs at an estimated cost of \$303,000.*



### 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 2 dams in the 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District that are over 50 years old, 14 dams that are 40-49 years old, and 6 dams that are 30-39 years old.

The majority of the 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District was in a rural setting when these 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. Seven dams in the 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District are classified as high hazard dams. Five of these dams need to be upgraded to high hazard criteria at an estimated cost of \$7.5 million, including \$2.6 million in sponsor's cost.

Annual Watershed Benefits in 2011 Dollars (Entire Watersheds)						
Watershed	Total Dams Constructed	Dams in District 26	Monetary Benefits	Bridges Benefited	Wetlands Created/Enhanced (acres)	Reduced Sedimentation (tons of soil)
Clear Creek	62	11	\$1,839,000	124	1,052	475,700
Denton Creek	97	1	\$4,056,000	318	1,600	381,600
Hickory Creek	9	9	\$226,000	37	207	31,900
Little Elm and Laterals	17	1	\$ 313,000	34	483	95,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>\$6,434,000</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>3,342</b>	<b>984,700</b>

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 and protecting the 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District:*

<i>City of Denton</i>	<i>Denton County Soil and Water Conservation District</i>
<i>Clear Creek Watershed Authority</i>	<i>Grayson County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>Collin County Commissioners Court</i>	<i>Montague County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>Collin County Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	<i>Upper Elm-Red Soil and Water Conservation District</i>
<i>Dalworth Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	<i>Wise County Commissioners Court</i>
<i>Denton County Commissioners Court</i>	<i>Wise 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](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/tx/programs/planning/wpfp)