

2009 Arkansas Annual Report





Kalven L. Trice
Arkansas State Conservationist

Dear Arkansans:

It is my pleasure to share the 2009 Arkansas Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Annual Report. The work depicted in this report portrays only a snapshot of the benefit Arkansas farmers and ranchers receive from the dedicated professionals and partners of NRCS.

Fiscal Year 2009 was a great year for NRCS and the Arkansas Conservation Partnership (ACP). With the passage of the 2008 Farm Bill, Arkansas benefitted greatly with additional financial resources.

Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), we obligated more than \$21.2 million of conservation projects on private lands. This funding was supplemented with money provided by landowners through cost-share.

Arkansas farmers and landowners consistently show they truly care about Arkansas' natural resources. More than 860 landowners with Conservation Security Program (CSP) contracts were rewarded with more than \$10.2 million for their stewardship ethic and hard work.

But, our work wasn't just confined to Farm Bill programs. The NRCS staff provided technical assistance to thousands of landowners across the state. We wrote conservation plans for more than 300,000 acres and applied conservation practices on more than 642,000 acres. Educating our customers about no-till farming, animal waste management systems, prescribed grazing and efficient irrigation are just a few examples of how NRCS assists land-users in protecting the Natural State's natural resources.

Our staff was also on the front lines when flooding, tornadoes and an ice storm devastated Arkansas. Through the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program, we contracted \$2.78 million worth of work to remove debris from stream channels and bridges and stabilize streambanks.

Arkansas NRCS also received more than \$3 million for American Reinvestment and Recovery Act projects.

We wouldn't be able to do all the great work we do throughout the state if it wasn't for the ACP and other conservation partners. I appreciate the ACP for their continued cooperation.

As I look ahead, 2010 will be another challenging year with the implementation of the 2008 Farm Bill. But, with the dedicated NRCS staff and assistance of our partners, I am confident we will continue to protect and enhance Arkansas natural resources.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kalven L. Trice". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kalven L. Trice
State Conservationist

On the Cover: Arkansas received nearly \$1.5 million through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act to rehabilitate Poteau River Watershed Site 5, an aging flood control structure in Scott County near Waldron. (Photo by Creston Shrum)

2009 Arkansas Annual Report

Arkansas Conservation Partnership

More than 220 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employees serve Arkansas' 75 counties from 62 field service centers throughout the state.

These employees work with private landowners and the Arkansas Conservation Partnership to preserve and maintain the natural resources of Arkansas.

The Arkansas Conservation Partnership is a unique force, combining the strengths of federal, state and local organizations along with educational institutions to help preserve and protect the Natural State. Formed in 1992, the partnership consists of the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts, Arkansas Association of Conservation District Employees, Arkansas Resource Conservation and Development Councils Inc., University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and the Arkansas Forestry Commission. The various agencies diverse missions complement each other.

In fiscal year 2009, the partnership focused on water resources, land resource management, conservation education, forestry health, 2008 Farm Bill programs, community development and alternative fuels.



Volunteers teach students about farm safety at the DeWitt Farm Safety Day Camp.

Earth Team

Arkansas has 566 active Earth Team volunteers who provided 12,036 hours of service.

Volunteers throughout the state helped with clerical projects, forestry clinics, field days, fair booths, outreach meetings, Earth Day, Farm Safety Day Camp, Envirothon contests, grazing land management workshops, surveying, preparing EQIP contract folders, collecting data for farm plans, GPS readings and fence measuring; pond design, layout, checkout and staking; generating maps for Took-Kit, wildlife habitat improvements, and other field work activities.



Ozan Creeks Watershed Site 12 protects a 475-acre drainage in Hempstead County.

Watershed Program

The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act authorizes NRCS to provide assistance to local organizations in planning and implementing watershed projects. In fiscal year 2009, planning began on a Flood Water Retarding Structure Operation and Maintenance workshop for Watershed Improvement District Sponsors and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) personnel. The workshop is to broaden the knowledge base of the attendees and open communications with NRCS, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission, Watershed Improvement Districts, and local units of government on dam safety, liability, proper maintenance and operation of flood water retarding structures assisted by NRCS.

Five additional Emergency Action Plans were prepared for high-hazard dams constructed under the PL-566 Small Watershed Program to assist if an event occurs that might endanger the flood water retarding structure and any residents living downstream of the structure.

NRCS participated in the plan supplemental of the Big Slough Watershed, a flood control project in northeast Arkansas near Piggott. Design and land rights acquisition was in process for the Departee Creek Watershed for dam construction and channel selective clearing and snagging. A feasibility study for a new lake site for municipal water supply was also completed for Saline County.

Another flood water retarding structure assessment related to dam safety for the PL-566 rehabilitation program was performed in the Big Creek Watershed in Craighead County.



Dr. Chuck West, a professor at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, helps students identify legumes during a Pasture Ecology I course.

Grazing Lands

Technical assistance for owners and managers of grasslands in Arkansas is an important component of the NRCS program. The Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) was founded to provide high quality technical assistance on privately owned grazing lands on a voluntary basis and to increase the awareness of the importance of grazing land resources.

This year's successes include collaborating with the Arkansas Forage and Grassland Council on hosting the spring grazing tour, holding two grazing workshops in Monticello and Hope, presenting awards to a producer (Bill Dunham, Booneville) and two educators (LeVonna Uekman, NRCS, and Bob Rhodes, Cooperative Extension Service), holding numerous one-day sessions across the state, funding demonstrations on clover establishment and nutrient management of pastures, and writing monthly articles for the Arkansas Cattlemen's magazine.

Forty-five grazing lands presentations were conducted, reaching approximately 1,750 people. The presentations included limited resource farmer training with Heifer International, Iowa Forage and Grassland Council meeting, grazing conferences in Georgia and Louisiana, grazing workshops in southern Arkansas, several fence-building presentations throughout the state, training NRCS and University of Arkansas personnel to conduct grazing trainings, a webinar for Southern Sustainable Ag Workers Group and a presentations at their annual meeting, several county meetings of the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association and their annual state meeting, the annual Youth Conservation Camp, and the annual Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts meeting.

Considerable effort was put into NRCS personnel training this year through Pasture Ecology I and II as well as an emphasis placed on development of fact sheets and jobs sheets.



Leslie Glover II, Pine Bluff Major Land Resource Area project leader, digs a pit for soil sampling.

Soil Surveys and National Resource Inventory

The Arkansas Soil Survey staff of 15 soil and Geographic Information Systems professionals modernized soils data on 617,504 acres. Interactive Soil Surveys are available online at <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov> for all counties in Arkansas.

The U.S. Forest Service Ouachita National Forest and NRCS signed a memorandum of understanding to collocate a new soil survey office in Glenwood.

The National Resource Inventory (NRI) is a national program that monitors the conservation efforts of our conservation programs and the trending of our natural resources. The results from this inventory are used to develop environmental policy for program implementation, such as the Farm Bill. Arkansas completed data collection on 1,057 sites throughout the state.

Resource Conservation and Development

Arkansas' Resource Conservation and Development Councils (RC&D) and sponsoring organizations were instrumental in accomplishing numerous projects in Fiscal Year 2009 to help improve living conditions in rural Arkansas. The projects involved volunteer support and financial assistance and created jobs. The RC&D program encourages economic growth through development, conservation and planned utilization of the natural resources in an area. Assistance is provided by many public and private sources under the direction of local leaders.

- ◆ Rural Fire Protection Program - The Rural Fire Protection Program is in its 13th year of providing grant funding to rural fire departments to improve water supply, communication and water delivery components of fire fighting capabilities. In FY 2009, \$316,000 was awarded to 94 fire departments.

- ◆ Farmers Markets - Many of the councils have been working to develop markets for non-traditional crops and working with local industry to expand their available



Workers install the sign for the Arkansas State University Regional Farmer's Market in Jonesboro.

products. They are creating new farmers markets around the state.

◆ Community Facilities/Services - Council are assisting communities to improve and make available health care facilities, senior citizen centers, offering Alzheimer Caregiver Workshops, restoration of historic sites, and creating recreational facilities and parks.

◆ Natural Resource and Conservation Management - Councils provide timber management by promoting the Steward Plans with the Arkansas Forestry Commission, assistance with rural water supplies, drainage improvements, conservation education, outdoor classrooms, wetland restoration, expansion of a sweet potato co-op and processing facility and disposal of hazardous household chemicals.

To benefit both game and non-game species and encourage elk to stay within the park boundaries, the Northwest Arkansas RC&D is assisting several cooperating agencies with restoration and expansion of large mammal habitat in the Buffalo National River.

◆ Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy - RC&D promoted USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). The program provides grants and loan guarantees to producers and small rural businesses to make energy efficiency improvements or purchase renewable energy equipment in agriculture production facilities. To meet application requirements of obtaining energy audits, the councils trained seven energy audit data collectors to provide energy auditors with facility data.

Several councils are also investigating options for using biomass as energy alternatives. Due to the large volume of biomass produced in the state opportunities avail for job creation and reduced dependence on foreign oil.

RC&Ds are working on Energy Efficiency Collaborative

Projects such as new lighting for poultry houses. This project involves research from the University of Arkansas and the poultry integrators to find a more energy efficient light bulb for poultry houses. A limited supply of lights will be distributed to poultry producers with the help of Arkansas' conservation districts.

The Ag Energy Risk Management Cost Reduction Strategies program will enable the council to provide 28 workshops to landowners, industry and other agencies on ways to identify energy cost reductions in agriculture production operations.



Randy King, Booneville Plant Materials Center manager, waters big bluestem at the facility.

Plant Materials Center

As part of a national network of Plant Materials Centers (PMC) that provide vegetative solutions to conservation problems the Booneville PMC serves 54 million acres in Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

The production and shipment of 800 pounds of 'Bumpers' eastern gamagrass foundation seed to Ernst Conservation Seed Co., means this new eastern gamagrass variety will be available for forage producers and conservation use.

The five member staff provided 32 hours of new employee training, 150 hours of individual service to 169 customers, and conducted 11 PMC tours.

To provide information on production and management of native warm-season grasses, the staff conducted 33 evaluations on 19 center studies and 12 field plantings, made 17 oral presentations, provided information to four news agencies, and wrote eight technical documents.

The center has developed partnerships with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (\$52,000 contract), U.S. Forest Service, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and Pine Bluff, Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, Agricultural Research Service, Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, and the Natural Heritage Commission.

Conservation Stewardship Program

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary program providing financial and technical assistance promoting the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and private working lands.

The 2008 Farm Bill replaced the Conservation Security Program with the new Conservation Stewardship Program

for fiscal years 2009 through 2017. The program may enroll more than 12.7 million acres each fiscal year. Acreage will be allocated based primarily on each state's or area's proportion of eligible acres to the total number of all eligible acres.

The 2008 Farm Bill provides for funding for all current Conservation Security Program contracts.



Photos by Creston Shrum

The Conservation Stewardship Program provides financial and technical assistance to promote conservation.

Highlights – 2004 to 2009

- ◆ 2004 - 79 contracts on 68,470 acres in the Little River Ditches Watershed*
- ◆ 2005 - 580 contracts on 480,002 acres in the Cadron, Lower White/Bayou Des Arc, Lower Neosho, Lower St. Francis and Little River Ditches watersheds*
- ◆ 2006 - 96 contracts on 57,734 acres in the Lower Arkansas Watershed*
- ◆ 2008 - 106 contracts on 103,492 acres in the Upper White-Village Watershed*
- ◆ 2009 - Continuous sign-up for the new Conservation Stewardship Program began Aug. 10. The first cutoff for ranking purposes was Sept. 30. Arkansas received 444 applications.

* Conservation Security Program

County	2009 Obligation Amount
Arkansas	\$146,145.00
Benton	\$4,839.00
Clay	\$165,198.00
Cleburne	\$26,942.00
Conway	\$18,687.00
Craighead	\$934,482.73
Crittenden	\$834,665.00
Cross	\$105,040.00
Faulkner	\$34,643.00
Greene	\$345,551.00
Independence	\$19,459.00
Jackson	\$697,150.00
Jefferson	\$737,030.00
Lawrence	\$897,298.00
Lee	\$251,081.00
Lonoke	\$743,227.00
Mississippi	\$2,342,028.27
Poinsett	\$1,083,218.75
Prairie	\$632,802.00
Randolph	\$43,370.00
St. Francis	\$35,720.00
Van Buren	\$4,277.00
White	\$116,489.00
Woodruff	\$33,559.00
Total**	\$10,252,901.75

** Payments for all current Conservation Security Program contracts. Conservation Stewardship Program obligations will be reflected in the 2010 Annual Report.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service provides a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers to promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals.

EQIP priorities in Arkansas are to reduce erosion; reduce pollution from animal wastes, nutrients and sediments; improve irrigation and reduce dependence on ground water for irrigation; forest improvements; improve grazing lands; and improve wildlife habitat.

Highlights – 2009

- ◆ Water quality, animal waste – 115 contracts for \$2,014,912
- ◆ Water quality, cropland – 37 contracts for \$783,477
- ◆ Water quality, forest management – 108 contracts for \$1,279,986
- ◆ Water quality, grassland – 490 contracts for \$6,137,266
- ◆ Water quantity, irrigation – 78 contracts for \$3,086,527
- ◆ Alternative Crop/Small Farm Initiative – 25 contracts for \$320,288
- ◆ Air Quality - 7 contracts for \$40,339
- ◆ Planning, forest management - 15 contracts for \$12,704
- ◆ Organic, certified - 4 contracts for \$148,798
- ◆ Organic, transition - 2 contracts for \$23,289

Conservation Practice	Practices Installed	Amount Installed
Alum Treatment of Poultry Litter	14	34 treatments
Amendments for the Treatment of Agricultural Waste	53	36,272 pounds
Animal Mortality Facility	27	33 facilities
Brush Management	221	6,430 acres
Composting Facility	23	23 facilities
Conservation Cover	25	577 acres
Conservation Crop Rotation	11	1,026 acres
Critical Area Planting	43	97 acres
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management	16	618 acres
Fence	613	951,743 feet
Firebreak	131	651,556 feet
Forest Stand Improvement	19	248 acres
Grade Stabilization Structure	59	145 structures
Heavy Use Area Protection	163	1,239 acres
Irrigation Land Leveling	219	11,484 acres
Irrigation Regulating Reservoir	27	1,469
Irrigation Storage Reservoir	18	11,105 acre-ft
Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery	10	10 systems

Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline, Underground	252	346,7106 feet
Irrigation Water Management	220	15,885 acres
Mulching	20	59 acres
Nutrient Management	255	6,631 acres
Pasture and Hay Planting	379	7,173 acres
Pest Management	204	5,422 acres
Pipeline	130	109,817 feet
Pond	120	1,649
Prescribed Burning	211	7,875 acres
Prescribed Grazing	493	10,106 acres
Pumping Plant	102	107 plants
Shallow Water Development and Management	103	4,996 acres
Structure for Water Control	134	247 structures
Tree/Shrub Establishment	235	6,075 acres
Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	229	7,058 acres
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	131	2,568 acres
Waste Storage Facility	96	3,495
Waste Transfer	17	17 systems
Waste Treatment Lagoon	10	11 lagoons
Waste Utilization	209	4,236 acres
Water Well	31	31 wells
Watering Facility	217	283 facilities

Data from NRCS Integrated Data for Enterprise Analysis Report

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

County	2009 Contracts Obligated	2009 Obligation Amount
Arkansas	2	\$49,336.00
Ashley	3	\$116,464.96
Baxter	25	\$428,997.00
Benton	27	\$315,432.57
Boone	11	\$57,668.72
Bradley	6	\$101,027.00
Calhoun	1	\$4,351.00
Carroll	16	\$218,940.00
Chicot	5	\$117,481.14
Clark	11	\$199,237.00
Clay	4	\$136,880.00
Cleburne	16	\$205,193.64
Cleveland	11	\$54,711.00
Columbia	14	\$62,770.89
Conway	13	\$182,762.18
Craighead	2	\$133,561.14
Crawford	3	\$19,612.44
Crittenden	10	\$102,679.00
Cross	4	\$124,559.00
Dallas	5	\$41,232.00
Desha	5	\$152,115.00
Drew	5	\$49,190.00
Faulkner	11	\$371,698.63
Franklin	17	\$262,358.86
Fulton	73	\$872,177.93
Garland	5	\$18,058.00
Grant	2	\$19,147.06
Greene	32	\$735,028.00
Hempstead	5	\$56,248.50
Hot Spring	7	\$103,449.00
Howard	11	\$158,934.53
Independence	27	\$328,213.40
Izard	38	\$509,766.18
Jackson	2	\$82,686.00
Jefferson	26	\$1,403,415.38
Johnson	8	\$95,899.00
Lafayette	5	\$86,316.22
Lawrence	16	\$187,615.00

County	2009 Contracts Obligated	2009 Obligation Amount
Lee	7	\$141,019.76
Lincoln	20	\$212,834.47
Little River	8	\$189,386.12
Logan	14	\$199,167.00
Lonoke	6	\$288,470.00
Madison	15	\$172,294.49
Marion	23	\$234,742.89
Miller	6	\$44,190.00
Mississippi	16	\$131,658.00
Monroe	3	\$157,330.00
Montgomery	3	\$18,472.00
Nevada	2	\$32,931.00
Newton	5	\$45,998.78
Ouachita	3	\$15,241.00
Perry	4	\$54,336.00
Phillips	7	\$105,684.00
Pike	10	\$235,084.53
Poinsett	5	\$99,040.00
Polk	22	\$230,543.80
Pope	13	\$98,730.06
Prairie	3	\$101,012.00
Pulaski	2	\$80,647.00
Randolph	36	\$397,341.45
Scott	1	\$24,861.00
Searcy	27	\$473,642.04
Sebastian	2	\$11,205.00
Sevier	11	\$115,269.00
Sharp	30	\$353,762.81
St. Francis	7	\$120,237.36
Stone	17	\$262,070.00
Union	11	\$79,601.23
Van Buren	7	\$90,634.40
Washington	24	\$336,160.00
White	11	\$201,316.00
Woodruff	5	\$132,843.00
Yell	11	\$197,197.52
Total	881	\$13,850,167.08

Wetlands Reserve Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial support to help landowners with their wetland restoration efforts. The NRCS goal is to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat, on every acre enrolled in the program. This program offers landowners an opportunity to establish long-term conservation and wildlife practices and protection.

Highlights – 1996 to 2009

- ◆ 175,255 acres on 355, permanent easements
- ◆ 17,201 acres on 65, 30-year easements
- ◆ 811 acres on 10, 10-year agreements
- ◆ 193,267 total acres on 430 projects
- ◆ Projects in 40 counties in each region of the state
- ◆ In southwest Arkansas, about 30,000 acres have been restored in the area surrounding the Red River
- ◆ In southeast Arkansas, wetland work is reducing soil erosion and improving water quality
- ◆ In northwest Arkansas, WRP addresses farm nutrient runoff
- ◆ In northeast Arkansas, NRCS and the Fish and Wildlife Service are re-establishing bottomland hardwood forests

Conservation Practice	Practices Installed	Amount Installed
Access Control	2	337 acres
Conservation Cover	1	3 acres
Dike	7	4,656 feet
Shallow Water Development and Management	4	80 acres
Structure for Water Control	5	7 structures
Tree/Shrub Establishment	29	2,288 acres
Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	4	1,350 acres
Wetland Restoration	15	3,123 acres
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	10	2,430 acres

Data from NRCS Integrated Data for Enterprise Analysis Report



Photo by Creston Shrum

A crew sets out to plant a variety of hardwoods on a WRP site.

County	2009 Easements Funded	2009 Dollar Value
Ashley	1	\$581,800
Conway	2	\$2,269,000
Crawford	3	\$530,000
Dallas	1	\$327,000
Greene	1	\$701,000
Jackson	1	\$151,000
Johnson	1	\$33,000
Lafayette	2	\$363,000
Lee	2	\$132,000
Lonoke	1	\$239,000
Monroe	3	\$1,194,000
White	1	\$54,000
Total	19	\$6,574,800

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat primarily on private land.

Emphasis is on declining species: bobwhite quail, elk, neo-tropical migratory songbirds and threatened or endangered species. Good habitats are also being developed and managed for numerous game and non-game species.

Highlights – 2009

- ◆ Elk Special Project Area – 3 contracts for \$20,440
- ◆ Quail Focal Area – 17 contracts for \$159,534
- ◆ Streambank restoration – 1 contract for \$21,530
- ◆ Upland habitat – 69 contracts for \$628,239



Jeremy Huff, soil conservationist at Salem, lights a back fire for a prescribed burn.

Conservation Practice	Practices Installed	Amount Installed
Access Control	5	139 acres
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management	82	303 acres
Fence	6	14,755 feet
Field Border	3	2,020 acres
Firebreak	108	451,819 feet
Forest Stand Improvement	40	1,072 acres
Land Clearing	54	164 acres
Prescribed Burning	160	6,169 acres
Restoration and Management, Rare and Declining Habitats	24	244 acres
Streambank and Shoreline Protection	1	600 feet
Structure for Water Control	1	1 structure
Tree/Shrub Establishment	18	153 acres
Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	13	159 acres
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	152	3,380 acres
Watering Facility	18	23 facilities
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	1	9 acres
Wildlife Watering Facility	2	2 facilities

Data from NRCS Integrated Data for Enterprise Analysis Report

County	2009 Contracts	2009 Obligation Amount
Baxter	2	\$16,312.00
Calhoun	1	\$10,764.00
Carroll	1	\$4,106.00
Crawford	1	\$13,357.00
Faulkner	6	\$82,949.80
Franklin	5	\$82,828.81
Fulton	18	\$147,163.50
Grant	1	\$15,000.00
Izard	10	\$66,643.07
Johnson	4	\$26,582.59
Madison	3	\$12,621.80
Monroe	1	\$13,518.00
Randolph	3	\$13,194.00
Saline	1	\$18,733.00
Scott	1	\$7,611.00
Searcy	7	\$62,577.22
Sharp	2	\$15,731.00
Stone	9	\$61,860.00
Van Buren	2	\$22,276.00
Washington	2	\$16,603.00
White	8	\$85,673.25
Yell	2	\$33,720.00
Total	90	\$829,825.04

Conservation Technical Assistance



The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) Program provides technical assistance supported by science-based technology and tools to help people conserve, maintain, and improve natural resources on their land.

The CTA program provides the technical capability, including conservation planning, design, and implementation assistance, that helps people plan and apply conservation on the land.

This assistance is provided to individuals, groups, and communities who make natural resource management decisions on private, tribal, and other non-federal lands. NRCS, through the CTA Program, provides conservation technical assistance to address state and national natural resource conservation issues.



Photo by Creston Shrum

Wavey Austin, environmental engineer, discusses nutrient management with a hog farm operator.

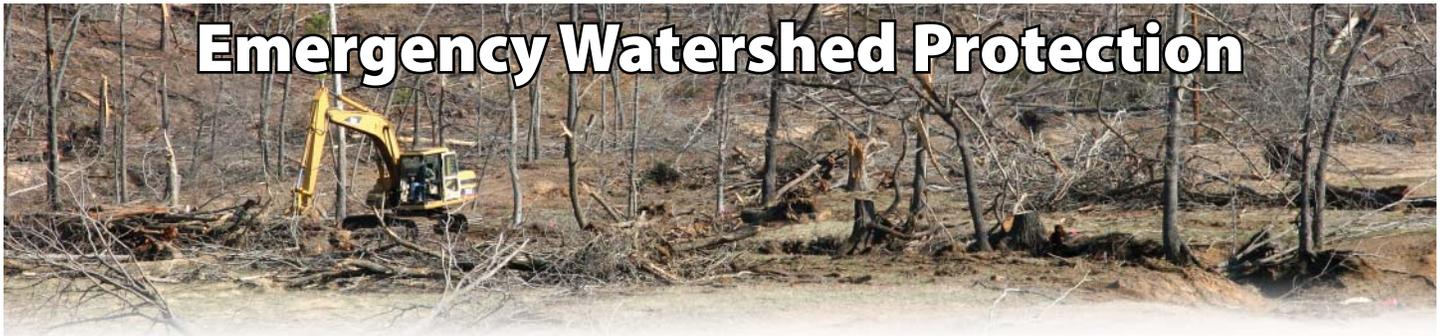
Conservation Practice	Practices Installed	Amount Installed
Access Control	119	5,490 acres
Brush Management	144	3,718.10 acres
Conservation Cover	133	2,546.90 acres
Conservation Crop Rotation	481	34,155.40 acres
Forage Harvest Management	291	6,213.50 acres
Irrigation Water Management	294	23,709.90 acres
Nutrient Management	1,876	59,401.20 acres
Pest Management	1,749	63,962.50 acres
Prescribed Grazing	941	21,793.40 acres
Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed	115	7,593.10 acres
Residue Management, Seasonal	263	15,100.20 acres
Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	57	1,038.20 acres
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	469	19,683.40 acres
Waste Utilization	542	10,349.00 acres

Data from NRCS Integrated Data for Enterprise Analysis Report

Highlights – 2009

- ◆ 300,683 acres of conservation plans written
- ◆ 7 watershed or area-wide conservation plans developed
- ◆ 102,917 acres of cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality
- ◆ 227,405 acres of land with conservation applied to improve water quality
- ◆ 238 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) written
- ◆ 247 CNMPs applied
- ◆ 82,957 acres of land with conservation applied to improve irrigation efficiency
- ◆ 170,872 acres of grazing and forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base
- ◆ 37,055 acres of non-federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality
- ◆ 5,169 acres of wetlands created, restored or enhanced
- ◆ 15,983 acres of land and water resources benefitted by Resource Conservation and Development projects
- ◆ 10 local businesses created or retained in rural communities

Emergency Watershed Protection



The purpose of the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program is to undertake emergency measures, including the purchase of flood plain easements, for runoff retardation and soil erosion prevention to safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion on any watershed whenever fire, tornado, flood or any other natural occurrence is causing or has caused a sudden impairment of the watershed.



(Above) Flood waters in April 2008 eroded the bank along a stream near Nashville, Ark. (Below) A streambank stabilization project funded through EWP and completed in April 2009.

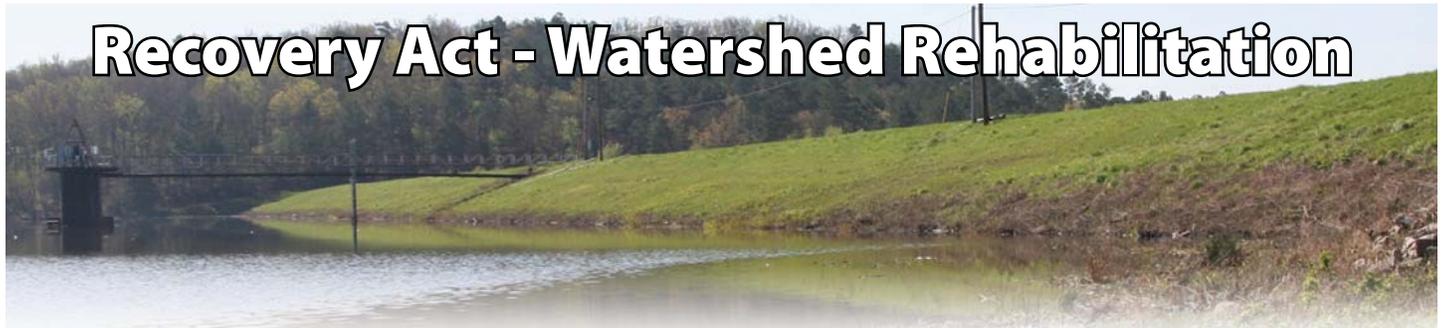


County	Contracted Amount
Benton	\$21,420
Clay	\$1,267,550.50
Clay/Greene	\$39,078
Craighead	\$360,652.34
Faulkner	\$20,182.80
Fulton	\$94,897.85
Howard	\$136,498.70
Izard	\$21,645
Jackson	\$18,700
Lawrence	\$166,514.40
Madison	\$86,507
Mississippi	\$76,500
Perry	\$32,193
Polk	\$20,250
Pope	\$23,973
Randolph	\$253,536.47
Sharp	\$24,773.96
Stone	\$8,325
Van Buren	\$92,202.14
Washington	\$22,968
Total	\$2,788,368.16

Highlights – 2009

- ◆ The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provided \$2,788,368.16 for Emergency Watershed Program work in 20 counties.
- ◆ NRCS provided \$143,592.14 for work in Benton, Izard, Stone and Van Buren counties to finish cleaning up from the 2008 tornadoes
- ◆ NRCS provided \$340,064.60 for construction costs in Faulkner, Fulton, Howard, Madison and Perry counties to clean up after the 2008/2009 floods.
- ◆ NRCS obligated \$2,008,548.31 for sediment removal in Clay, Greene, Craighead, Lawrence, Mississippi, Pope and Randolph counties.
- ◆ After the 2009 Polk County tornado, NRCS obligated \$20,250 for clean up work.
- ◆ NRCS contracted for \$275,913.11 of ice storm debris removal in Clay, Fulton, Jackson, Lawrence, Randolph, Sharp and Washington counties.

Recovery Act - Watershed Rehabilitation



Project Description - Poteau River Watershed Site 5

- ◆ Location: City of Waldron in Scott County, 4th Congressional District
- ◆ Federal Funding: \$1,495,000
- ◆ Sponsor Funding: \$420,000

The dam will be brought up to current safety standards. This project will raise the top of the dam and extend the dam's service life by an additional 100 years. The principal and auxiliary spillways, which release water during small rainfall events, will be lengthened.

The Poteau River Multipurpose Dam No. 5 and reservoir provide flood prevention and water supply for Waldron, Ark. The city's water supply serves approximately 4,000 people in a 17-square-mile area around the city. The dam, approximately 47-feet high, is located on the East Fork of the Poteau River about 3.5 miles northeast of Waldron.

Partners

- ◆ USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ◆ City of Waldron
- ◆ Poteau River Watershed Improvement District
- ◆ Poteau River Conservation District



Photo by Creston Shrum

The principal spillway, which releases water during small rainfall events, will be increased by 0.9 feet.

Benefits

Rehabilitation of the dam will prevent flooding, protecting the lives and property of 80 residents. Twenty homes and commercial businesses, farms and poultry operations, and a highway will be protected. The dam also will provide 2,100 acre-feet of water supply storage.

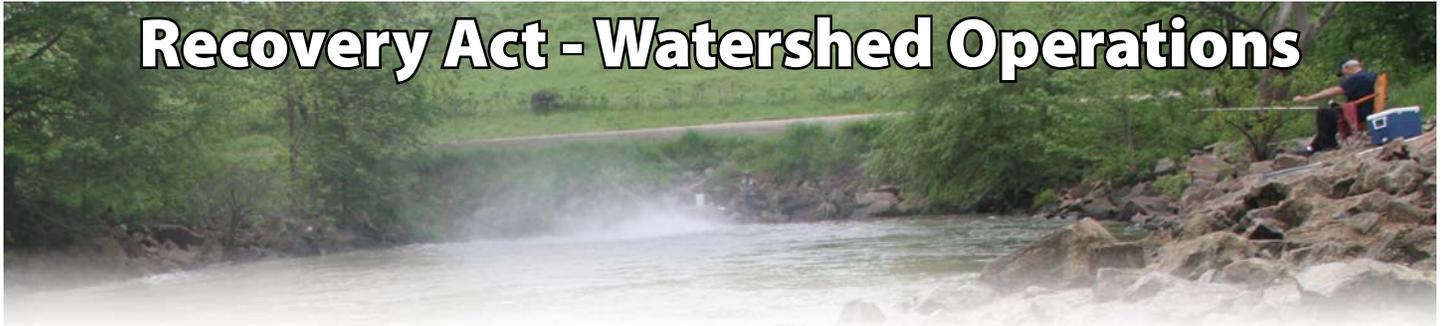
Opportunities

The project will immediately contribute to the economic growth by creating or saving construction jobs. It will provide \$101,900 of flood prevention benefits annually. For every dollar spent on the project, a benefit of \$1.30 is expected. In addition to the jobs created, there will also be an increased demand in other industries' goods and services that could put an estimated \$3.1 million into economies of the Poteau River Watershed and surrounding counties.



An aerial view of Site 5 of the Poteau River Watershed.

Recovery Act - Watershed Operations



Project Description - Upper Petit Jean Watershed Site 9

- ◆ Location: City of Booneville in Logan County, 3rd and 4th Congressional Districts
- ◆ Federal Funding: \$134,000

The project uses a chemical grout to seal and bond stress cracks between the principal spillway inlet structure and outlet pipe. The cracks pose no immediate threats, but over time, they would allow corrosion of the steel in the reinforced concrete.

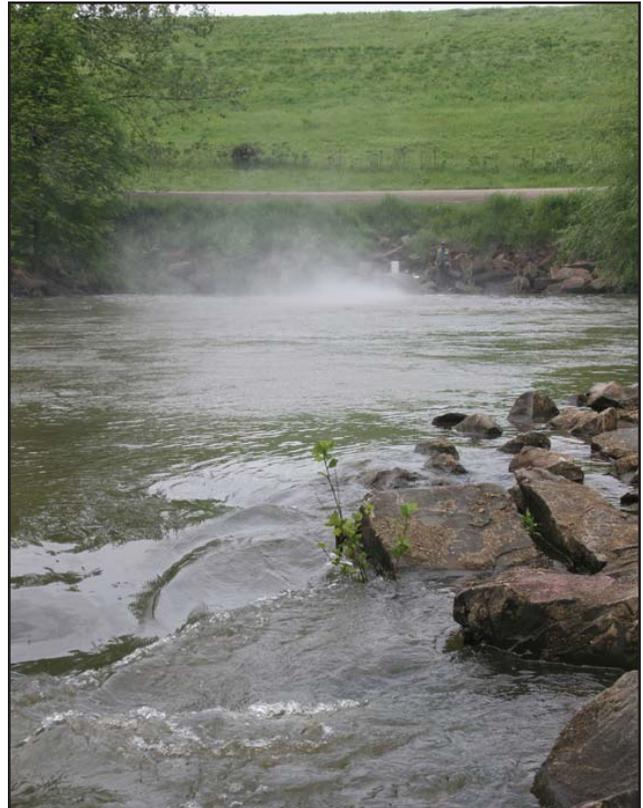
Partners

- ◆ USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ◆ Magazine Soil and Water Conservation District
- ◆ City of Booneville, Arkansas

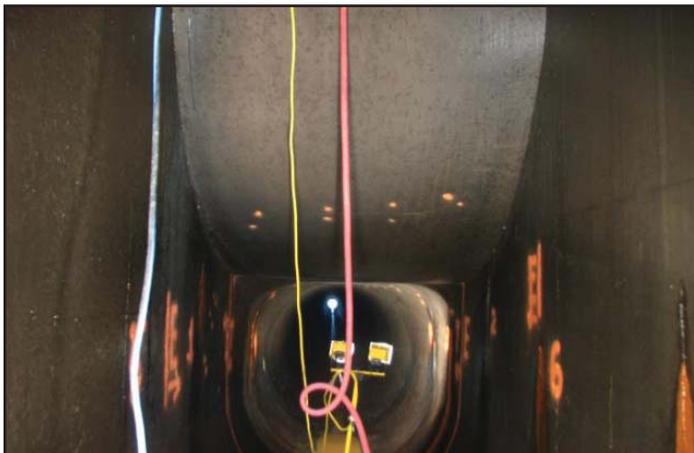
Benefits

This project will protect a water supply for 4,500 people in the City of Booneville and surrounding area. The 310-acre reservoir also provides flood control for 19,872 acres.

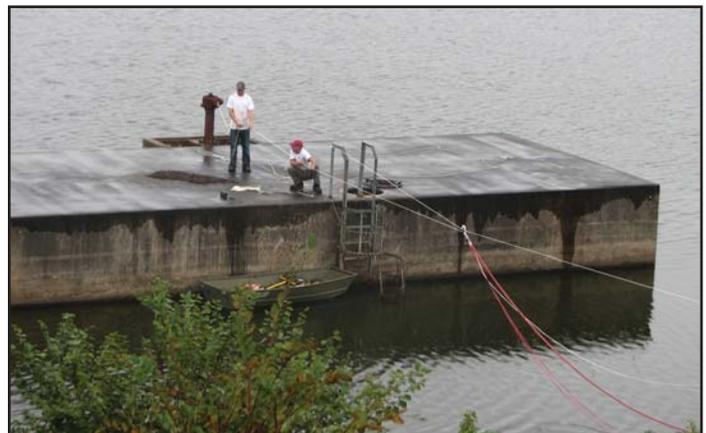
Site 9 provides \$540,000 of flood prevention benefits annually. For every dollar spent on the project, a benefit of \$1.30 is expected. In addition to the jobs created, there will also be an increased demand in other industries goods and services that could generate an estimated \$208,000 for economies of the Upper Petit Jean Watershed and surrounding counties.



The outlet pipe at Site 9 of the Upper Petit Jean Watershed shoots mist into the air after a heavy rainfall.



Paint marks the cracks in the riser that will be pressure grouted with epoxy grout.



Contractors haul hoses and cords to the riser to run the grinders, drills and lights.

Recovery Act - Floodplain Easements



Crop damage, erosion and flooding will be eliminated on 1,462 acres in Arkansas through floodplain easements.

Officials with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) signed agreements with landowners to purchase easements on 1,462 acres for \$1,462,000. The funding is provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The six floodplain easements are in Arkansas, Clay, Phillips, Prairie, Pulaski and Yell counties.

“Floodplain easements restore, protect, maintain, and enhance the functions of the floodplain; conserve natural values including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, flood water retention, groundwater recharge, and open space; reduce long-term federal disaster assistance; and safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion,” said Kalven L. Trice, NRCS state conservationist.

“The six easements selected for funding in Arkansas will help restore the natural functions of the floodplain they are found in. This will be accomplished by converting cropland often damaged by flooding, to permanent native vegetation and restoring natural topography to the 1,462 acres included in these easements” Trice said. “Once restored, these projects will reduce flood damage to crops, filter

runoff water, reduce soil erosion, and protect and preserve endangered species and migratory birds,” he said.

Restoration work includes establishment of native bottomland hardwood trees and native grasses; and de-leveling precision-leveled fields.

Arkansas NRCS received 56 applications from 22 counties totaling over \$17 million in requested funding on 15,350 acres.

County	Easements Funded	Acres	Dollar Value
Arkansas	1	240	\$240,000
Clay	1	52	\$52,000
Phillips	1	93	\$93,000
Prairie	1	130	\$130,000
Pulaski	1	333	\$333,000
Yell	1	614	\$614,000
Total	6	1,462	\$1,462,000

Outreach in Arkansas



Claire Whiteside, northwest area grassland specialist, helps farmers with plant identification during a Pasture Ecology course for Asian landowners in Franklin, Logan, Crawford and Johnson counties.

Highlights – 2009

- ◆ Heifer International - assisted with conducting workshops for limited resource livestock producers
- ◆ East Arkansas Enterprise Community - gave three workshops on NRCS wildlife programs to underserved groups
- ◆ Farmers Markets - provided marketing opportunities for organic and other niche product producers
- ◆ NRCS staff attended meetings at Arkansas Land and Farm Cooperation to discuss Farm Bill updates
- ◆ Provided a display and information at the Women in Agriculture Conference
- ◆ Limited Resource Farmers and minority needs were addressed through specific funding categories
- ◆ Provided program training workshops at University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Rural Life Conference and Arkansas Land Farm Development Corporation
- ◆ Increased the amount of Environmental Quality Incentives Program funding for alternative crops

2002-2009 funding by program for limited resource, socially disadvantaged, female and beginning farmers or ranchers:

Program	Asian Female	Asian Male	Black Female	Black Male	Native American Female	Native American Male	Pacific Islander Male	White Female
EQIP	\$600,255	\$3,412,992	\$620,979	\$3,610,479	\$88,407	\$351,420	\$71,700	\$21,316,445
WHIP		\$18,900	\$3,000			\$21,991		\$858,002
CSP		\$120,170	\$1,009,500	\$1,097,388	\$4,760		\$120,170	\$41,488,600
Total	\$600,255	\$3,552,062	\$1,633,479	\$4,707,867	\$93,113	\$373,411	\$191,870	\$63,663,057

2009 funding by program for limited resource, socially disadvantaged, female and beginning farmers or ranchers:

Program	Asian Female	Asian Male	Black Female	Black Male	Native American Female	Native American Male	White Female
EQIP	\$62,995*	\$375,492*	\$42,219**	\$577,909**	\$33,407	\$64,720	\$1,440,775***
WHIP						\$21,991	\$177,747
Total	\$62,995	\$375,492	\$42,219	\$577,909	\$33,407	\$86,711	\$1,618,522

* Unknown Asian - \$9,887 **Unknown Black - \$329,213 ***Unknown White - \$2,817,084

CSP, EQIP & WHIP Funding 1996-2009



County	1996-2009 Contracts	1996-2009 Obligations
Arkansas	166	\$5,484,206.56
Ashley	60	\$890,209.90
Baxter	156	\$1,330,072.95
Benton	413	\$5,053,744.73
Boone	151	\$1,301,182.51
Bradley	81	\$878,363.86
Calhoun	67	\$405,132.93
Carroll	168	\$2,563,290.00
Chicot	65	\$1,293,162.60
Clark	80	\$971,986.96
Clay	256	\$3,114,111.48
Cleburne	279	\$3,112,183.27
Cleveland	142	\$1,936,065.16
Columbia	57	\$531,024.96
Conway	210	\$3,497,418.35
Craighead	268	\$9,959,567.58
Crawford	56	\$619,487.54
Crittenden	126	\$7,736,010.53
Cross	72	\$2,556,501.09
Dallas	29	\$196,585.05
Desha	79	\$1,817,600.79
Drew	125	\$1,065,216.68
Faulkner	130	\$2,525,190.62
Franklin	134	\$1,731,934.82
Fulton	417	\$3,144,157.93
Garland	35	\$195,481.11
Grant	27	\$207,638.28
Greene	374	\$5,836,225.11
Hempstead	96	\$1,223,721.37
Hot Spring	57	\$354,240.15
Howard	149	\$1,621,709.11
Independence	243	\$2,824,149.72
Izard	228	\$2,362,581.92
Jackson	116	\$3,548,317.17
Jefferson	307	\$13,487,391.17
Johnson	79	\$1,169,957.97
Lafayette	65	\$880,839.26
Lawrence	235	\$5,013,226.39

County	1996-2009 Contracts	1996-2009 Obligations
Lee	200	\$3,607,357.49
Lincoln	186	\$1,980,140.53
Little River	61	\$1,127,656.95
Logan	190	\$1,888,591.69
Lonoke	221	\$13,982,105.12
Madison	138	\$1,400,550.78
Marion	212	\$1,462,812.12
Miller	38	\$496,541.72
Mississippi	336	\$21,352,014.08
Monroe	111	\$2,290,106.21
Montgomery	42	\$297,195.65
Nevada	41	\$406,975.00
Newton	87	\$481,102.17
Ouachita	88	\$541,322.94
Perry	72	\$1,425,596.03
Phillips	345	\$1,880,931.54
Pike	83	\$900,573.47
Poinsett	155	\$11,727,594.66
Polk	136	\$1,366,911.37
Pope	113	\$1,459,831.72
Prairie	192	\$10,343,578.37
Pulaski	71	\$771,637.52
Randolph	400	\$5,273,794.40
Saline	24	\$199,574.02
Scott	65	\$637,010.30
Searcy	254	\$2,618,926.96
Sebastian	74	\$754,286.56
Sevier	147	\$1,633,085.75
Sharp	236	\$2,003,831.28
St. Francis	93	\$1,570,514.09
Stone	232	\$1,815,915.90
Union	129	\$1,013,478.08
Van Buren	160	\$1,460,271.33
Washington	146	\$2,184,053.91
White	182	\$4,616,287.17
Woodruff	70	\$1,329,097.17
Yell	88	\$1,226,428.05
Total	11,216	\$211,967,569.68

Farm Bill Program Funding - 2009

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Congressional District	Applications Funded	Funds Obligated	Applications Unfunded	Dollars Unfunded
First	420	\$6,660,802.71	768	\$16,303,526.31
Second	59	\$1,178,591.73	47	\$1,099,707.67
Third	164	\$1,869,042.81	88	\$573,564.91
Fourth	238	\$4,141,729.83	327	\$5,440,124.56
Total	881	\$13,850,167.08	1,230	\$23,416,923.45

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Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Congressional District	Applications Funded	Funds Obligated	Applications Unfunded	Dollars Unfunded
First	52	\$396,998.79	44	\$100,843.30
Second	19	\$243,352.05	7	\$73,327.21
Third	16	\$156,099.20	19	\$122,757.38
Fourth	3	\$33,375.00	8	\$56,259.42
Total	90	\$829,825.04	78	\$353,187.31

Conservation Security Program

Congressional District	Applications Funded	Funds Obligated
First	768	\$9,336,936.75
Second	47	\$174,096
Third	6	\$4,839
Fourth	40	\$737,030
Total	861	\$10,252,901.75

Wetlands Reserve Program

Congressional District	Easements Funded	Acres	Dollar Value
First	9	2,450	\$2,450,000
Second	3	2,323	\$2,323,000
Third	3	530	\$530,000
Fourth	4	1,271.8	\$1,271,800
Total	19	6,574.8	\$6,574,800

Helping People Help the Land