NRCS Assisted Watershed Dams in Texas
30th Congressional District

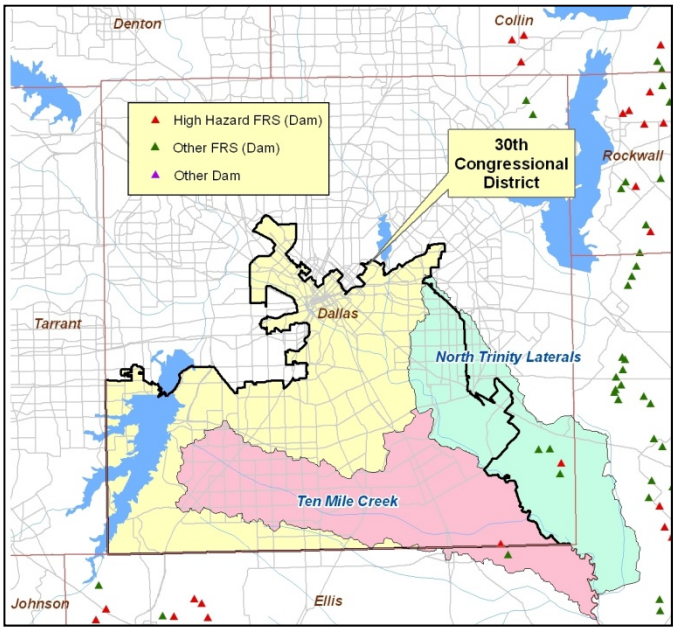
In the mid-1930s, Congress began looking at ways to complement the downstream flood control program of the Corps of Engineers. It passed flood control acts in 1936, 1944, and 1954 and assigned responsibility of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program to the USDA Soil Conservation Service, 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 30th Congressional District provide **$502,000** in annual benefits, as well as capturing over 17,800 tons of sediment annually. Seven bridges and numerous county, state, and federal roads are also protected.

There is only **one watershed dam** actually in the 30th Congressional District. *See the table on the back of this page for the annual benefits provided by watershed projects in the 30th Congressional District.*



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.

Funding for repairs is needed for the dam in the 30th Congressional District with an estimated cost of $76,000.

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. The watershed dam in this district is over 50 years old.

The majority of the 30th 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. The floodwater retarding dam in the 30th Congressional District is classified as a high hazard dam. It needs to be upgraded to high hazard criteria at an estimated cost of $1.5 million, including $525,000 in sponsor's cost.

Annual Watershed Benefits in 2011 Dollars
(Entire Watersheds)

Watershed	Total Dams Constructed	Dams in District 30	Monetary Benefits	Bridges Benefited	Wetlands Created/Enhanced (acres)	Reduced Sedimentation (tons of soil)
North Trinity Laterals	4	0	$345,000	3	29	10,300
Ten Mile Creek	2	1	$157,000	4	51	7,500
Total	6	1	$502,000	7	80	17,800

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 30th Congressional District:

Bois D'Arc Island Levee District
Dalworth Soil and Water Conservation District
Ellis County Commissioners Court
Ellis-Prairie Soil and Water Conservation District
Kaufman-Van Zandt-Rockwall 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/tx/programs/planning/wpfp

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