

ROGERS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023



Board of Directors left to right: Ken Froese, Joe Parker (Sec/Treas), George Fraley (Chair), Angie Harmon, Lyle Blakley (Vice Chair)

Rogers County Conservation District

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www.Rogerscountyconservationdistrict.org

CONSERVATION COST-SHARE PROGRAM

The Oklahoma Legislature established the State Cost-Share Program in 1998 to assist land owners with conservation practices such as but not limited to herbaceous weed spraying, burning, grass planting, nutrient management, ponds and cross-fencing. All cost share programs are open to Rogers County land owners, except Rogers County Conservation District employees, who fill out an application during open enrollment periods. Enrollment periods are always announced on our District website. Each applicant is ranked according to certain criteria set by our Board of Directors and certain rules as set by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and money is dispersed accordingly.

This year because of the state wide drought our State Legislature, in addition to the regular cost share programs, enacted the Emergency Drought Cost Share Program. This cost share program included the following programs: pasture and hay planting, pumping plant, watering facility, pond cleanout, pasture tap, pipeline, heavy use protection area, water well and cover crop.

This past fiscal year the District completed State Cost-Share Program Year 24, the Emergency Drought Program and has initiated Program Year 25. This fiscal year alone the District has distributed \$340,844.98 in funds with the landowners contributing \$181,953.09.

Since the inception of the original cost share program the District has distributed \$594,170.90 in funding with landowners contributing \$508,635.32 with the conservation practices totaling \$1,102,806.22

Services and programs provided by the Rogers County Conservation District and NRCS are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, marital status or physical disability.

THE ROGERS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT: CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Annual Report: July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023

ABANDONED MINE LAND PROGRAM

Rogers County has approximately one-half of all abandoned mine land in Oklahoma. The District works closely with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the Abandoned Mines and Land Reclamation Office to eliminate many hazards left from abandoned coal mines. This reclamation has traditionally been funded through a federal tax on currently mined coal. In FY 23, the District assisted with 4 different AML sites.



Reclaimed Mine

WATERSHED PROGRAM

A portion of northeast Rogers County lies within the Pryor Creek Watershed. The District is the sponsor for the watershed program which has six flood control structures. The goal of this program is making sure the dams function as they are designed and remain safe. The District works with NRCS in making annual inspections of these flood control dams and providing maintenance work on the dams including: clearing trees from the dam and earthen spillway, beaver control, mowing and repairing erosion problems. All structures operated properly this past year.



Upstream Flood Control Structure in Rogers County



Yard by Yard Participant

YARD BY YARD PROGRAM

A Community Resiliency Project to help and support Rogers County residents do the right things for their yard and community. The program brings recognition for participant's efforts and the chance to encourage others. It allows participants to enjoy wildlife neighbors like birds, butterflies and bees, cut down the amount of waste going into a landfill, enjoy the blossoms of native plants, savor the taste of home-grown fruits and vegetables, improve the health of soil and conserve our most precious resource of all: water.

THE ROGERS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT: CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

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INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

The Rogers County Conservation District partners with other districts, state agencies, federal agencies and private partners to convey the message of conservation and the importance of Oklahoma's natural resources in a variety of ways including: Operating and managing the Rogers State University Conservation Education Reserve, we assist with educational activities in our community and state and maintain a website to further assist in conservation education. Some of our community outreach educational activities this year have included assisting with the Rogers County Free Fair, assisting with TRIO a federal program that promotes first generational college students, assisting with Aaron's Camp a Tulsa group, assisting with the Will Rogers Pasture, Range and Land Judging competition as well as going to different elementary schools and community groups to teach conservation programs. The District has taught classes for 4,970 students of all ages this fiscal year with our numbers rising significantly if you count all of the general public that have walked the trails at the Reserve or have visited our website. We were also able to reach out to approximately 2,900 people at the Rogers County Free Fair and 304 people at other community events.



Students learning at the Reserve

THE RESERVE

The Reserve is a 100-acre outdoor classroom that is located adjacent to the RSU campus in Claremore, Oklahoma. Our District Manager handles daily field trips from school groups, homeschool groups and other community organizations from surrounding towns and all across Oklahoma. The Reserve is also maintained by the District allowing the general public year-round walking trails and ponds to fish in. The Reserve has 2 miles of brand new paved trails that allow for easier walking, easier access for strollers and makes the Reserve much more handicapped accessible for our scheduled groups and the general public as well as several miles of unpaved trails.



RCCD Booth at the Rogers County Free Fair

THE ROGERS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT: GENERAL INFORMATION

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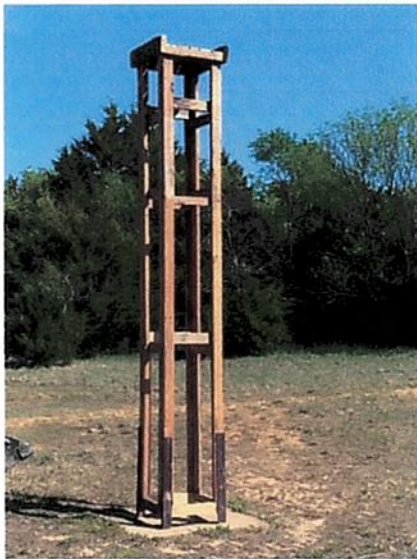
The Rogers County Conservation District Board of Directors submits this annual report to inform the public of fiscal year 23's conservation accomplishments.

The Rogers County Conservation District is a local subdivision of state government formed in 1941 to ensure local people are involved in local conservation decisions.

The goal of the District is to provide services to land users in protecting and conserving natural resources, promote conservation education and provide a link to state and federal conservation agencies and programs.

A board of five conservation district directors (three elected and two appointed) governs the Conservation District. Any resident of Rogers County, who is a registered voter in the county and signs a Cooperator agreement with the District may run for a place on the board. Elections are held in June of each year.

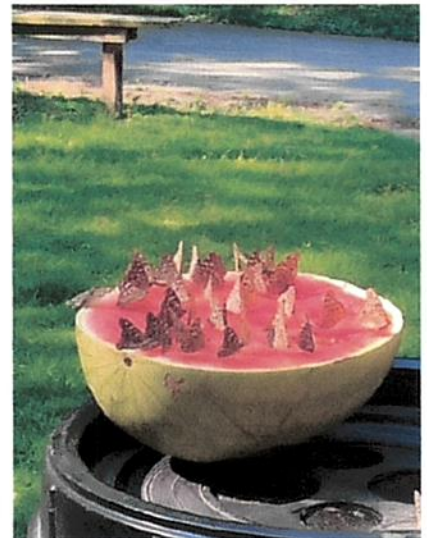
We invite all citizens to become familiar with activities of the Rogers County Conservation District and to visit us in hopes that we might better serve our constituents. We also invite the public to attend our monthly board meeting held on the first Thursday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at the Aqua Lab located on the Rogers State University Campus in Claremore, Oklahoma.



Bird of Prey Nesting Tower used for teaching purposes at the Reserve.



Rat Snake at the Reserve.



Butterflies used for teaching purposes at the Reserve.