

Texas Association of Watershed Sponsors

TSSWCB Flood Control Program

Background as of August 31, 2026

USDA Background:

- USDA built approximately 11,800 flood control structures or earthen dams in the US
- USDA built 2039 of those earthen dams in Texas
- The Texas Natural Resources Conservation Services provides technical support and some rehabilitation funding for dams
- Link to USDA-NRCS Texas: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/state-offices/texas>

Texas Commission Environmental Quality

- Dam Safety Section regulates all dams in Texas
- Determines the hazard classification of dams
 - high hazard dams – lives are at risk
 - significant hazard dams – significant property is at risk or downstream includes a bridge along a bus route
 - low hazard dams – limited property and/or lives at risk
- Link to TCEQ Dam Safety: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/compliance/investigation/damsafetyprog.html>

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

- The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board is the Texas partner with USDA in supporting and funding operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation and upgrade of those dam
- Legislature created Flood Control Program in 2010
- Dams in Texas
 - Total 2028
 - High Hazard 763
 - High Hazard needing upgrades 617
 - Due to development approximately 20 dams are reclassified as high hazard by TCEQ
- Grants
 - Operation and Maintenance - 90% grants
 - Structural Repair and Rehabilitation
 - Significant repair projects can receive 100% grants
 - Limited to high and significant hazard dams
 - Rehabilitation can take place in two ways
 - 65% federal funding + 35% state funding
 - 100% state funding (upgrade)
 - Limited to high hazard dams
- Available Funding:
 - Currently the Texas Legislature provide the Flood Control Program about \$50 million per two-year funding cycle
 - Each year approximately \$5 million is allocated for O&M, \$1 million for administration and \$19 for structural repairs, upgrades and funding match for federal grants.
- Funding needs:
 - \$4 billion backlog for rehabilitation and upgrade

Local Sponsors

USDA-Soil Conservation Service provided watershed improvement plans to reduce flooding damages and risks to life. Each plan was implemented by a local SWCD and, generally, a unit of government that had taxing and condemnation powers. In Texas, these included cities, counties and water districts depending on the location.

