



CITY OF KINGFISHER: SMALL TOWN MAKES IT BIG

RITA J. HENZE, CFM, R/W-NAC, RWA
DAVE SLEZICKEY, CITY MANAGER



FOUNDED IN 1889 AT CONFLUENCE OF 2 CREEKS



LONG HISTORY OF FLOODING

- ❑ History of flooding
 - 1912 Photo
- ❑ Typhoid Outbreak in 1948
- ❑ Train derailment in 2004
- ❑ 1 Death in 2007
- ❑ \$55M in reported losses



HISTORY OF FAILED STUDIES

1957 USACE

- ☐ US Corps of Engineers
- ☐ Designed levee project
- ☐ **NEVER** IMPLEMENTED
- ☐ LACK OF PUBLIC SUPPORT

1959 SCS (NRCS)

- ☐ Soil Conservation Service (NRCS)
- ☐ Feasibility study to construct 40 dams & control 50% watershed flooding
- ☐ **NEVER** PURSUED
- ☐ LACK OF PUBLIC SUPPORT

HISTORY OF FAILED STUDIES

1985 CONSERVATION DISTRICT

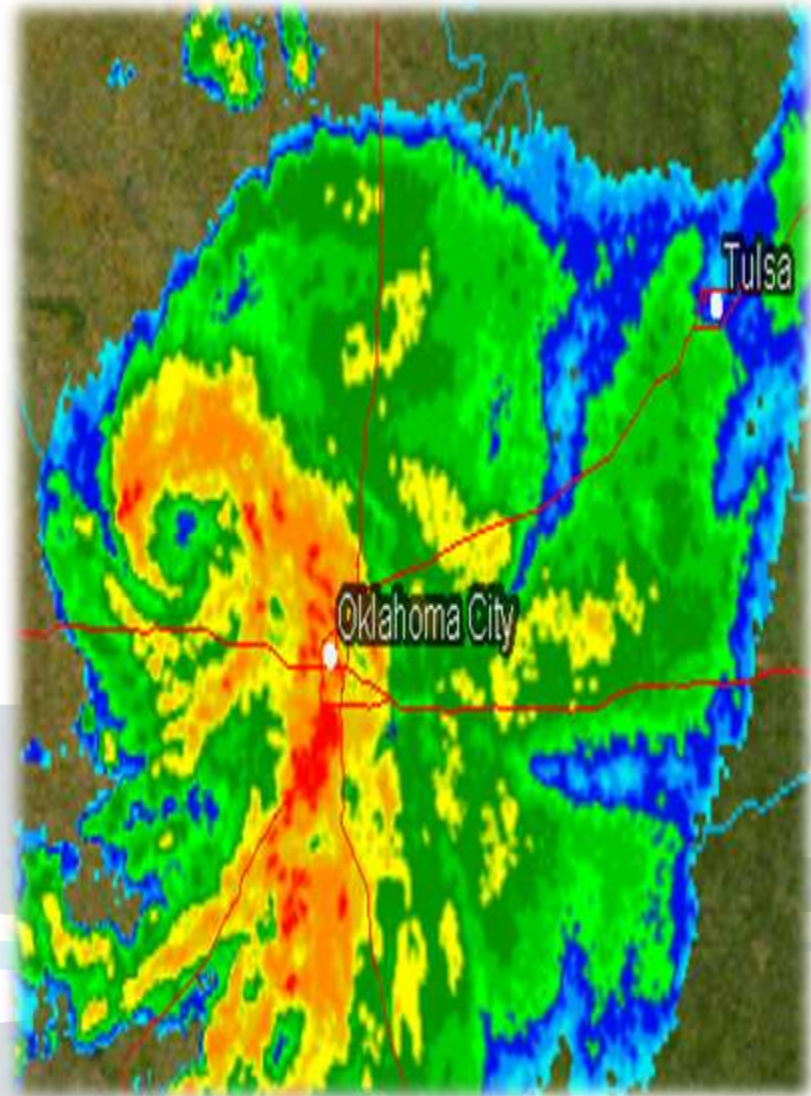
- ☐ Kingfisher Conservation District
- ☐ Dam feasibility study to construct 17 dams
 - 5 had BCA of 1.0
- ☐ **NEVER** IMPLEMENTED
- ☐ LACK OF PUBLIC SUPPORT

1995 NRCS

- ☐ NRCS
- ☐ Updated 1985 feasibility study
 - 4 dams cost-effective
 - 3 dams marginal
- ☐ Limited flood control for City

HURRICANE ERIN – GRANDDADDY OF FLOODS

- ❑ August 2007
- ❑ 13" rainfall reported
- ❑ Flash flooding



CAN YOU FIND THE STOP SIGN!



MAIN STREET & ROBBERTS



After years of flooding
& studies what could
be done?

City took action!!

FUNDING

- ❑ City leaders met with State Representative(s)
- ❑ 2009 Legislature allocated \$25 Million
 - To repair damage to “conservation infrastructure” due to flooding
 - Kingfisher received \$4 Million grant



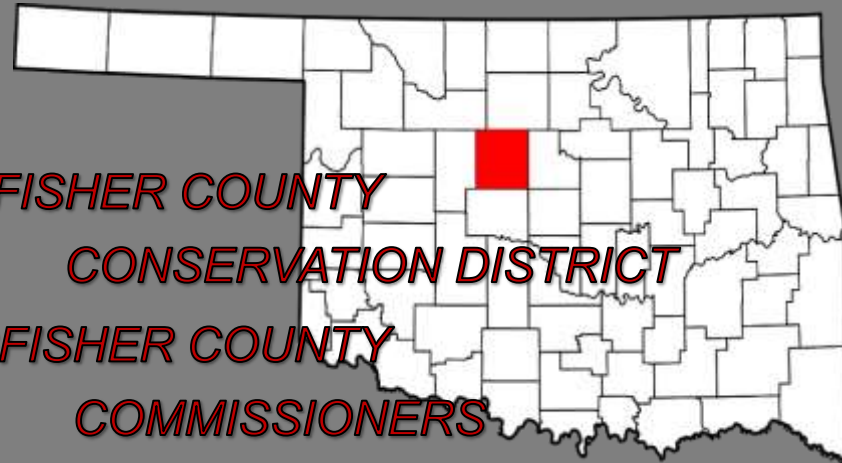
START OF COOPERATIVE PROCESS

- ❑ Oklahoma Capitol Improvement Authority (OCIA) charged with managing bond
- ❑ Funds appropriated to Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC)
- ❑ OCC designated \$4 Million in Kingfisher funding:
 - As cooperative project among agencies
 - Address flooding
 - Grant with no local match!!!!!!

COALITION TO SOLVE FLOODING PROBLEM



*KINGFISHER COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
KINGFISHER COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS*



THE 2009 PLAN

KINGFISHER FLOODING INITIATIVE

A Plan for Flood Damage Reduction

Prepared by the
City of Kingfisher - Project Sponsors
Co-Sponsored by
Kingfisher County Conservation District
Kingfisher County Commissioners

With assistance from the
Oklahoma Conservation Commission
And the
Natural Resources Conservation Service

August 2009



Main Street in Kingfisher, August 2007

❑ 2009 Plan to solve problem:

- Acquire residential structures
- Floodproof commercial structures

❑ \$4 Million in state funds

- \$1 Million in small drainage projects underway

❑ Issues:

- Town of 5,000 population
- Small administrative staff
- Lack of experience
- Clock ticking on OK grant funding
 - OCC pushing for progress

❑ Positives

- Proactive City Council
- Progressive community
- Solid leadership
- Recognition of need for expert advice





❑ City consulted with experts

- Learned of FEMA HMGP funding
- Committed to leveraging its \$3 Million in remaining funds
 - With FEMA funds

TIMING ISSUES



- ☐ Availability of HMGP funds expiring **March 5, 2011**
- ☐ City Hazard Mitigation Plan expiring **April 19, 2011**
- ☐ State grant clock ticking



□ Final Product

- \$7.76 Million total
- 48 structures
 - No Alternates
- Public skepticism
- Fear of government

PROJECT BENEFITS

- ❑ 48 structures had 2' to 6' projected flooding
- ❑ 12 RLs (25%)
 - RLs paid \$1.0 Million in claims
- ❑ BCA of 2.79
- ❑ \$22 Million in Project Benefits
- ❑ FEMA approval April

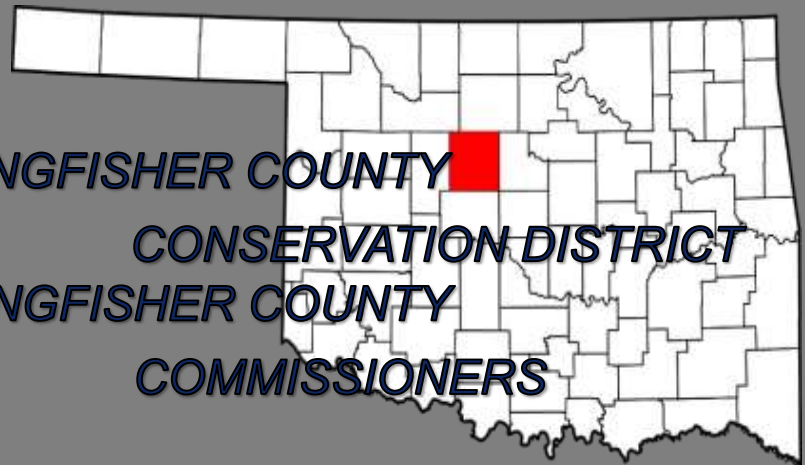
6, 2012



EXPANSION OF COALITION



KINGFISHER COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
KINGFISHER COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS



COOPERATIVE GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

GOOD NEWS

☐ City now had:

- Viable plan
- \$7.8 Million
 - \$3 Million State
 - Local match
- Public interest
- Supportive public officials

NOT SO GOOD NEWS

☐ Changes at State level:



- New governor
- New executive appointees
 - Department heads, boards, commissions & vacancies
- Staff insecurities

- ❑ City coordinated with State prior to FEMA award
- ❑ Change in government resulted:
 - Reorganization
 - New players
 - New rules
 - New names – “DCAM” became “OMES”
 - Turf battles & game playing



OCIA



STATE RULES

PRE-FEMA AWARD

- ☐ Relocation payments **required** for owner-occupants & tenants
- ☐ URA consistent with FEMA grant terms **required**
- ☐ **Favorable** toward leveraging FEMA funds

POST-FEMA AWARD

- ☐ Relocation payments to owner-occupants & tenants **denied**
- ☐ URA consistent with FEMA grant terms **denied**
- ☐ **Unfavorable** toward fund leveraging
 - **Denied** costs for relocation services & FEMA grant

AGENCY COLLABORATION

POSITIVES

- ❑ Ability to leverage funding
- ❑ Ability to share ideas & resources
- ❑ Collaboration allowed for Phase 2 funding

NEGATIVES

- ❑ Conflicting regs & rules
- ❑ Less local control
- ❑ Time consuming
 - More players
- ❑ Subject to politics
- ❑ Subject to turf wars & “game playing”



THE Kingfisher Times & Free Press

Established April 1889 125 Years of continuous service to the families and businesses of Kingfisher County!

Fifty Cents

Kingfisher, Kingfisher County, Oklahoma

USPS No. 295-420

In Brief

Legion's rifle salute clarified

In response to Wednesday's article about the Kingfisher American Legion Post No. 5 Memorial Day service, Kingfisher High School teacher and Legion member A.J. Johnson provided the following clarification concerning the rifle salute:

"With regards to the rifle salute given by the military or American Legion to the dead, people assume that because there are often seven shooters, this constitutes a '21-gun salute.'"

"This is just not so and, simply dying, even if you are a veteran, doesn't earn someone the unique honor of a 21-gun salute. Only heads of state, Presidents and former Presidents are ever accorded the full 21-gun salute and these guns are fired individually at a specified interval over several minutes."

"In reality, the salute given the dead is 'three volleys' of musketry or rifle shots, derived from the Civil War where the shots were fired to show the enemy the weapons were empty and burial services were being conducted."

Okarcheto vote on franchise

Kingfisher County Election Board Secretary Shawna Butts has released several items of information regarding the June 11 special town election at Okarche.

Flood buyback demolition begins

Officials debunk TV report as 'error-riddled'

As the first structures are demolished in Kingfisher's floodplain acquisition project, an Oklahoma City TV station aired a critical report, which the city manager and project coordinators said was "riddled with errors."

"From the limited coverage of it that I viewed, it was quite evident that thorough research and acceptable standards of true journalism were not applied, as a very small percentage of it was fact and a majority of it was speculation," City Manager Dave Slezick said.

"It was disheartening to see an external entity attempt to conjure speculation for a program that started on behalf of citizen efforts within the community to prevent damages and mitigate loss due to flooding."

The TV report, which also was published on the Internet under the headline, "Rural Water Dam Bond Money Misused," claimed that the \$4 million in state bond money earmarked for Kingfisher County flood control was intended for dam construction, not property purchases, that "city leaders" are receiving preferential treatment in the buyout and that failure to construct dams leaves city residents at risk for future floods.

However, none of those claims is borne out by documents reviewed by the *Times and Free Press* or the historical record.

"This is a voluntary program which was opened to 83 residential and non-residential properties based on the greatest flood risk," Rita Henze, planning and real estate specialist with Meshek and Associates, which is managing the buyout, said.

"The prioritization of properties was based solely on flood depths and frequency of flooding with no consid-



DEMOLITION WORK on a Sykes Avenue building Wednesday will clear the property for a future "open space" use, to be determined by the city. The property was one of four taken down in the city's voluntary acquisition project, which is moving structures and residents out of harm's way of future flooding.

tures (other than that the structures were inhabitable at the time)."

Kingfisher's flood history

Current attention is focused on the most recent major event, the August 2007 flood when remnants of Hurri-

causing nearly \$20 million in damage to homes and businesses.

However, Kingfisher County in general and the city of Kingfisher in particular have a long history of flooding, over 60 years of documented flood

dollars) in documented flood losses.

In current dollars, repetitive flooding in the nine-year period from 1946-55 caused \$34 million in property damage and agricultural losses and created at least one major health event

2015 FLOOD



- ☐ 34 of 48 properties acquired & demolished
- ☐ 9 RLs removed from NFIP
- ☐ Families & businesses removed from harm
- ☐ Land returned to open space & natural uses
- ☐ Residual funding for Phase 2 due to State grant funds

SEED MONEY

□ Result

- 100% State grant funds expended upfront \$3,000,000
- 75% of \$3 Million reimbursed by FEMA \$2,250,000
 - Eligible as seed money
- 25% City Match expended in Phase 1 (\$1,259,817)

RESIDUAL CITY SEED FUNDS \$990,183

PROJECT CLOSEOUT

- ❑ **October 6, 2015** City submitted to OEM Project Closeout paperwork
- ❑ City returned over \$2 Million in unused funds to FEMA
 - 14 parcels opted out

- ❑ **July 2015** FEMA issued memo regarding a Pilot Project to use \$620 Million in residual HMGP funding form 2010-2013

- ❑ **December 28, 2015** SHMO offered City additional **\$6.75 Million to expand SOW**

START OF MAD RUSH



- ☐ City had to commit \$2.25 Million as local match
- ☐ 90 days to prepare \$9 Million for SOW Modification
- ☐ Needed commitments
 - Est. 65 owners
 - Est. 35 Alternates
- ☐ Extensive historic, tribal & archaeological task
- ☐ Simplified BCA using Pre-Calculated Benefits

PHASE 2 PROJECT

- ❑ **March 23, 2016** City submitted grant application to OEM
- ❑ **August 3, 2016** FEMA approved SOW Modification
- ❑ Additional \$6.7 Million matching funding
 - Time extension until August 3, 2019
 - Addition of up to 101 structures authorized
 - Extension of utilization of existing contractors

CURRENT PROJECT STATUS

- ☐ Project Closeout halted
- ☐ 1st closings projected by early summer
- ☐ Appraisals compete and offers presented to 16 owners
- ☐ 1st Reimbursement request underway
- ☐ 2nd set of appraisals scheduled to begin this month

PROJECT SUCCESSES

PHASE 1 SUCCESS

- ☐ No one flooded 2015 or last weekend
 - Buildings acquired
 - Additional flood storage available
- ☐ “Worse of worse” flooded structures were acquired or given opportunity
 - Based on flood depths

PHASE 2

- ☐ Everyone in Kingfisher Creek floodplain will have option to be acquired
- ☐ Opportunity for 24 structures in Uncle John’s Creek to be acquired

PROJECT SUMMARY

COALITION POSITIVES

- ☐ Excellent funding sources
 - 100% State grant!!!
- ☐ Ability to share ideas & resources
- ☐ Collaboration allowed for options
 - Expansion of funding
 - Example: Phase 2 funding

COALITION NEGATIVES

- ☐ Conflicting
 - Regs & rules
 - Purposes
 - Schedules
- ☐ Less local control
 - ☐ Time consuming
 - ☐ Subject to politics
 - ☐ Subject to turf wars & “game playing”

LESSONS LEARNED

- ❑ Anticipate potential “conflict” between agencies & rules
- ❑ Anticipate time delays & coordination due to multiple agencies
- ❑ Plan ahead to retain displacees within community:
 - Replacement dwellings outside floodplain
 - New development areas outside floodplain to relocate displaced businesses
 - Loss of skilled craftsmen who may be priced out of area

LESSONS LEARNED

☐ Plan ahead for:

- Potential impact on tax base due to open space vs. active real estate
- Increased annual maintenance costs due to vacant floodplain land
- Clean up cost of open space after flood events
- Potential redesign of utilities due to vacant land
- Opportunities to restore open space uses
 - Trails
 - Parks

QUESTIONS?

