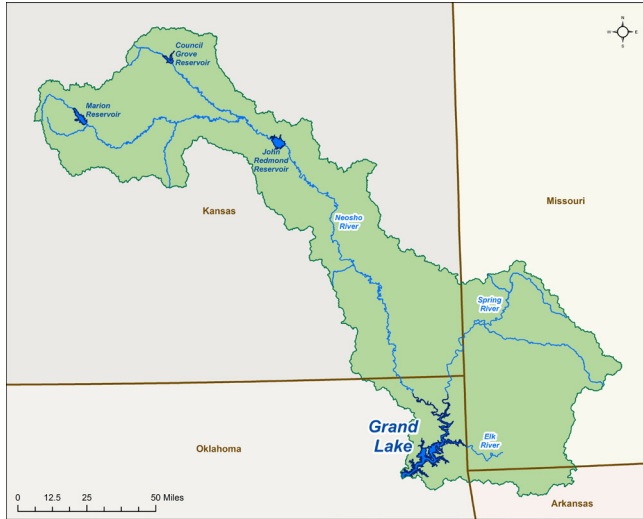




# The Grand Lake Watershed



Grand Lake O' the Cherokees, or more commonly known as Grand Lake, is the northeastern most lake in Oklahoma. It was initially filled in the summer of 1940 following the completion of Pensacola Dam. Most of the water in Grand Lake flows into Oklahoma from east-central Kansas through the Neosho River, with two other major rivers and several smaller streams feeding the lake. The Spring River, at 129 miles long, starts in Missouri and flows through Kansas into Oklahoma where it joins the Neosho at the area known as Twin Bridges. The Elk River's 32-mile journey also begins in Missouri and ends in Oklahoma near Reed Point. While the Elk River doesn't flow through Arkansas, a portion of its watershed is located in the northeast corner of the state.

It is important to know what a watershed is to better understand its importance and how you might affect it.



GRDA'S WATERSHED CONSERVATION PROGRAM

GRDA's Watershed Conservation Program

# Guard the Grand

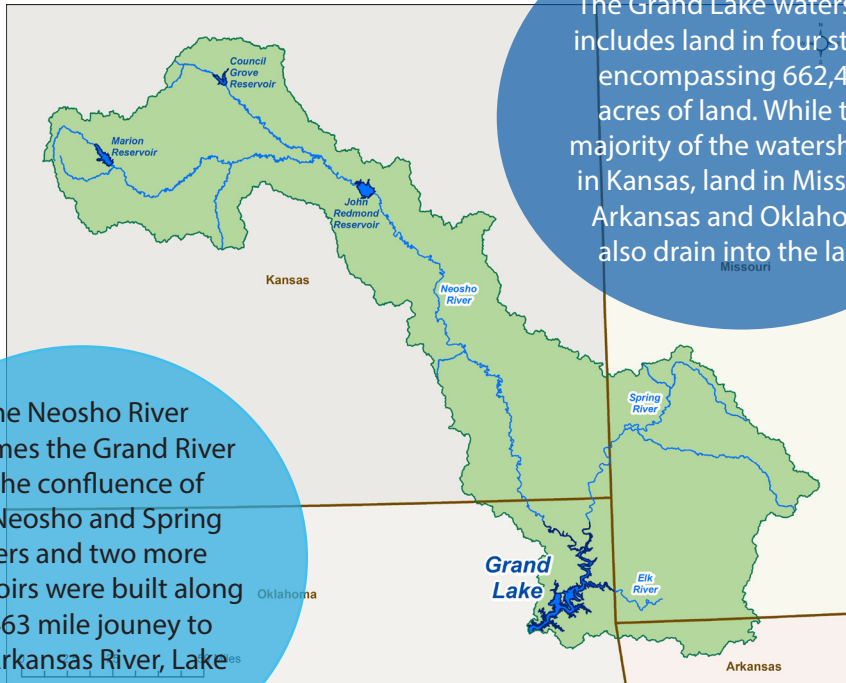
# What is a watershed?

A watershed is an area of land that drains the rain that falls on it and the streams that run through it to a common area, such as a pond, river, or lake. They can be as small as the area surrounding a pond, or as large as the one for the Mississippi River. No matter where you are, you are always in a watershed.

Think of it like a bathtub; all the water that comes into the bathtub, like through the showerhead, ends up flowing down the same drain. This is what happens to flowing water on land. If you are a resident with property in the Grand Lake watershed, the water that flows off your land flows into Grand Lake either directly or through a stream near your property.

While much of the watershed lies in other states, everyone living in the watershed can have an impact on the water quality of the lake. It is up to each of us to help improve it.

Below is a map showing the Grand Lake watershed. Think about where in the watershed you live, and how you might be able to make some small changes to help protect the area around and downstream of you.



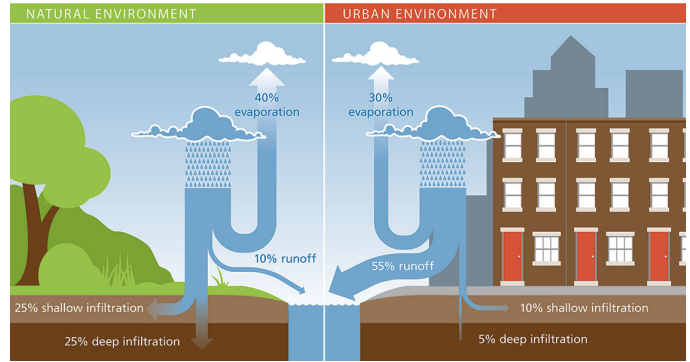
The Grand Lake watershed includes land in four states, encompassing 662,461 acres of land. While the majority of the watershed is in Kansas, land in Missouri, Arkansas and Oklahoma also drain into the lake.

The Neosho River becomes the Grand River at the confluence of the Neosho and Spring Rivers and two more reservoirs were built along its 463 mile journey to the Arkansas River, Lake Hudson and Ft. Gibson Lake.

# Stormwater 101

During a rain shower, water flows off of impervious surfaces, like streets, sidewalks, houses, cars and anything else that doesn't allow the water to filter into the ground. This water is now considered stormwater and as it flows it picks up pollutants along the way. Oil, grease, fertilizer, animal waste and trash are just a few of the things that it carries directly to a river or lake. Stormwater in Oklahoma is not treated before it flows into our waters, so everything we do on the land, can affect water quality.

As impervious surfaces increase, so does runoff which can result in increased flooding. While much of the Grand Lake watershed lies in other states, there are things that can be done right here to help reduce runoff and protect water quality.



- ◆ Build a rain garden at home or at a business location. Rain gardens collect water for a short period of time to allow it to soak in.



Rain Dog Designs, Gig Harbor, WA



- ◆ Install rain barrels around the house, or a larger collection system at a business to use during times of drought and to help reduce runoff.

- ◆ Improve soil health in lawns and pastures to help the soil hold more moisture, which will reduce flooding and reduce the need to water, or to help maintain greener pastures through drier times.



# Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can what I do make a difference?

A: Small changes can make a huge difference! Being mindful of what you let run off your driveway is a great first step to ensuring that the surrounding waterbodies in your watershed stay clean and healthy. Be sure to properly clean up any chemical, fertilizer, or oil spills on your driveway or sidewalk.

Q: How many communities get their drinking water from Grand Lake?

A: Grand Lake provides drinking water to 14 communities in northeast Oklahoma.

Q: Who manages the Grand River?

A: The Grand River Dam Authority was created by the Oklahoma legislature in 1935 to be a "conservation and reclamation district for the waters of the Grand River." GRDA manages over 70,000 surface acres of water in northeast Oklahoma. During periods of heavy inflows into the Grand River system, GRDA works under the direction of the United States Army Corps of Engineers to operate floodgates at its hydroelectric facilities on the Grand River

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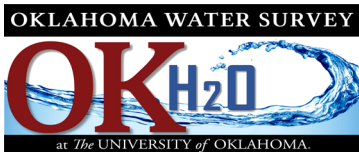
Guard the Grand is an educational program with the goal of fostering an ethic of environmental stewardship in Oklahomans residing in watersheds that flow into Grand Lake O' the Cherokees.

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This publication was developed under Assistance Agreement No. NE-01F627-01 awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It has not been formally reviewed by EPA. The views expressed in this document are solely those of Grand River Dam Authority and EPA does not endorse any products or commercial services mentioned in this publication.

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