



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**®
Kansas City District

Chariton River/Rathbun Lake Watershed Project

Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act, 1996
Local Sponsor: Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation Dist.



Location & Description: Rathbun Lake Watershed is located in south central Iowa, encompassing portions of Appanoose, Clarke, Decatur, Lucas, Monroe and Wayne counties. Rathbun Lake supplies water to the Rathbun Regional Water Association (RRWA). The RRWA provides six million gallons of water daily to over 70,000 people in 18 counties in Southern Iowa and Northern Missouri. The watershed of Rathbun Lake includes over 354,000 acres, subdivided into 61 sub-watersheds ranging in size from approximately 2,589 acres to 16,430 acres. Twenty-two of these sub-watersheds have been identified as priority hydrologic units in terms of the amount of sediment that they contribute to Rathbun Lake.

Problem & Need: The consequences of increased erosion include: significant degradation of in-stream and lake habitats for fish and aquatic organisms, increased water treatment costs, and reduced sediment storage in Rathbun Lake. This project will identify locations for over 200 structures (small ponds or wetlands) that will reduce the amount of sediment delivered to Rathbun Lake while increasing wildlife habitat and aquatic habitats, improving water quality in Rathbun Lake and increasing wetland acreage in the watershed.

Proposed Activities for FY08: A phase change is required to move from Feasibility to the Design & Implementation Phase. No funds were received for the project in FY06. We anticipate limited funding in FY07. Activities that could be completed in FY08 include complete planning and design on five representative projects within the basin.

Issues and Other Information: Mention should be made that over 75 percent of the land in the watershed is currently enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. More than 44,000 acres will be released from the program in the next three years. It is expected that as many as 10,000 acres of this highly erodible land will not be re-enrolled in the program, much of which will return to row crop production. The use of this and other highly erodible land in the watershed to produce row crops will likely increase the amounts of sediment and farm chemicals that impact Rathbun Lake (RLWA, 2001). This project will help to offset these anticipated impacts to Rathbun Lake and improve water quality within the basin.

