



# Success Story: Lake Texoma Watershed Management Plan

## Protecting a \$744 Billion Economic Engine Through Watershed Innovation

*Securing Regional Growth Through Strategic Water Resources Management*

A strategic collaboration between the Oka' Institute at East Central University, the Chickasaw Nation, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the State of Oklahoma has led to the creation of a comprehensive watershed health management plan for the Lake Texoma Watershed—one of the most economically significant and ecologically vital regions in the south-central United States.

The watershed, which spans the mainstem of the Red River in Oklahoma and Texas, is essential to water supply, energy production, flood control, and recreation. Supporting over 2,700 jobs and generating more than \$83.6 billion in GDP within the Upper Red River counties, Lake Texoma also attracts six million visitors annually, contributing \$600 million in economic activity.

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### ➔ Highlights & Outcomes

- **Regional Economic Impact:** Lake Texoma provides 20% of the North Texas Municipal Water District's water supply for over 2 million people. Plans are underway to build a new pipeline by 2030 to increase supply reliability for the growing Dallas-Fort Worth region, which boasts a \$744 billion GDP.
- **Watershed Restoration:** The Lake Texoma Watershed Management Plan targets sedimentation, nutrient pollution, erosion, and invasive species through best land and habitat management practices.
- **Scientific Capacity Building:** The partnership hired a Ph.D. Soil Scientist at ECU and a Ph.D. Hydrologist at the Chickasaw Nation. Both institutions are working jointly in the Curl Lab on ECU's campus to monitor watershed health and improve water quality across the Chickasaw Nation's treaty territory.
- **Fire and Habitat Management:** A \$4 million agreement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Chickasaw National Recreation Area is establishing a Chickasaw Nation Fire Program to manage hazardous fuels and mitigate wildfire risk.

### ➔ Partnerships

This project marks a milestone in collaborative watershed stewardship. The Chickasaw Nation established the nonprofit Watershed Sustainability Alliance to drive cooperation among federal, tribal, state, and local partners. Facilitated by the Oka' Institute, this alliance exemplifies how inclusive partnerships can protect vital natural resources, strengthen economies, and ensure long-term sustainability across multiple watersheds.