

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the Blackwood Creek watershed south of Hayes Center is among 55 watershed projects nationwide receiving USDA stimulus funding.

Vilsack said \$2 million dollars is committed to a Blackwood Creek watershed structure. The funds for this project are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.

USDA is directing technical and financial assistance through this funding toward projects ready to begin. NRCS engineering designs are nearly complete and construction repair is planned to begin this fall.

“Fortunately the Blackwood Creek reservoir did not cause any damage when it failed other than the excess water and sediments spread out on the grasslands below it, said Steve Chick, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist.

“Last August, one of 11 structures in this watershed washed out after two days of rain in excess of nine inches according to local landowners,” he said.

The Blackwood Creek watershed structure was built in 1985. Its purpose is to reduce flooding and improve water quality by reducing erosion.

Funding provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 will enhance the structure’s ability to provide flood protection and improve water quality.