

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



This document is one of the project summaries from the EPA's Targeted Watershed Grants 2005 Annual Report published in December 2005. The reference number is EPA 840-R-06-001. You can find the entire document at <http://www.epa.gov/twg>.

EPA'S TARGETED WATERSHED GRANTS 2005 ANNUAL REPORT

December 2005



Rathbun Lake

IA

MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

- Excess sediments and nutrients
- Erosion along stream banks and shoreline
- Algal blooms
- Excess pesticides and herbicide atrazine
- Failing septic systems

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

The Rathbun Lake and Water Alliance is reducing water quality impairment through collaborative projects focused on agricultural best management practices, on-the-ground restoration activities, innovative technology, and education. The alliance and its partners have to date:

- Developed and applied Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to identify priority land that is the source for more than 70 percent of the sediment and phosphorous entering Rathbun lake from the watershed
- Assisted more than 200 farmers to evaluate and plan best management practices, well over half of whom are applying conservation practices to nearly 6,500 acres of land, including terraces, grade stabilization structures, and water and sediment control basins
- Conducted farm demonstrations, field days and workshops for more than 300 farmers on alternative uses for priority land, and on forage and livestock production as an economically viable alternative to row crop agriculture
- Leveraged more than \$4 million from project partners to provide technical and cost share assistance to farmers to apply best management practices for priority land
- Leveraged an additional \$4 million from project partners to restore 1,700 acres of wetland areas that will benefit water quality



Forage and livestock workshop.



The construction of a terrace will reduce sediment and phosphorus runoff.

2003 Grantee **UPDATE**

"Since we bought our farm in 1998, we've wanted to do something about the sediment runoff. We don't want our farm at the bottom of the lake . . . stewardship of the land is important. With this [Rathbun Lake Special Project] funding, we can now afford to do something about it. We are very appreciative of the efforts of this Alliance."

**– Charlene Vote,
Monroe County
farmer, Rathbun
Lake Watershed**