

Data Project Report—Tributary to Arkansas River

September 29, 2025

Brandee Harris

Arkansas Trib.: Harris

Osage County

36.164808, -96.20892

WBID#: OK120420-01-0285M



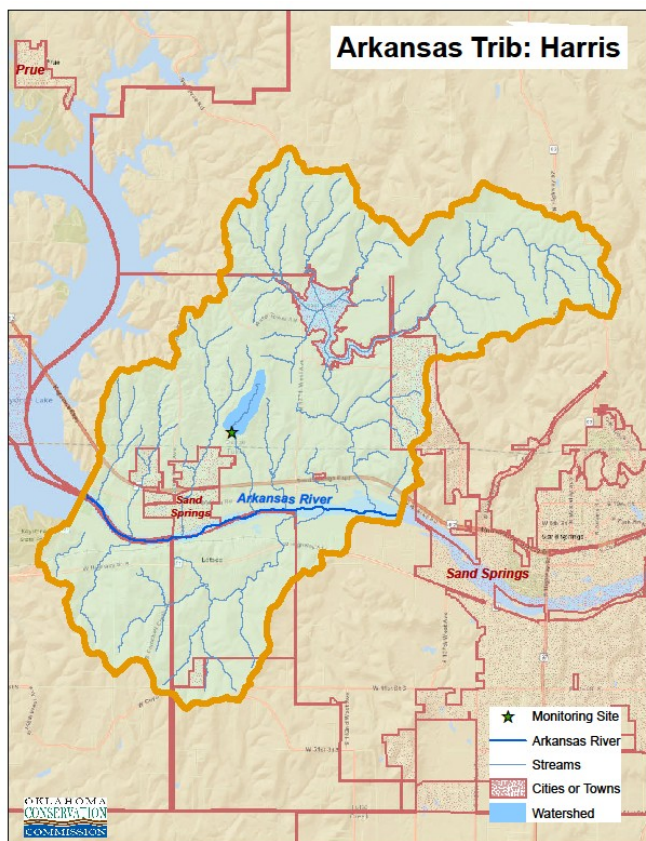
Blue Thumb Volunteer Brandee Harris has been monitoring this tributary to the Arkansas River since early in 2021. Brandee has provided information to the public about her stream in the spring, summer, and fall of 2025 and this report documents a portion of her efforts.



Brandee worked in conjunction with the City of Sand Springs to educate Sand Springs and other area residents about the condition of the tributary and how to protect it. Throughout the month of June a Blue Thumb exhibit was at the Charles Page Public Library for all visitors to see as they visited the library. The exhibit shared information about the life in the stream and the watershed, had library books themed on water, encouraged urban conservation practices, and highlighted local watersheds in the area that needed volunteers.

Left photo above: Left—Julie Monnot, City of Sand Springs Stormwater Manager and right—Blue Thumb Volunteer Brandee Harris. The photo to the right is a bit more of a close-up to see the exhibit that stayed at the library for a month.

Information about Tributary to the Arkansas River was provided to the public either as the back of a fish print sheet or with information of an upcoming Blue Thumb Volunteer training.



This tributary of the Arkansas River is monitored by Blue Thumb Volunteers!

This small tributary of the Arkansas River is considered a “headwaters” stream and is small.

Most of the landuses in the watershed are rural.

Most of the stream is covered with good canopy—meaning that trees provide shade over the water when the seasons are very warm

The stream is very small—at the time of the habitat assessment there was no area measured that was over .3 meters deep, which is about 1 foot.

What We Know about This Creek

This stream is west of Sand Springs just inside Osage County. Stream habitat is fair to good, with cobbles and boulders making good habitat.

The water chemistry is reasonable. Dissolved oxygen saturation was below 50% four times over three years of monitoring, so low dissolved oxygen is not viewed to be a problem.

Small amounts of nutrient pollution tended to be found most months. Did this create a problem for the stream? Probably not, but continued monitoring will note whether or not these amounts are increasing.

Benthic Macroinvertebrate collections show a good “bug” population.

The fish collection found only two species of fish: green sunfish and bluegill sunfish. These are both considered tolerant fish. Additional fish collections will tell if typically there are more species to be found or if the stream’s very small size is the primary factor in the low diversity.

Protecting Oklahoma’s streams requires thoughtfulness from all Citizens. Consider please:

Reducing lawn chemicals and improving your soil (check out the Yard by Yard Community Resiliency Project, <https://okconservation.org/yardbyyard>)

Keeping your car well-maintained

Picking up pet waste

Being a steward of our Earth with your decisions and actions.





Also in conjunction with the **Charles Page Public Library**, Brandee and Julie were at their summer reading program kick-off on Saturday, June 7. Visitors learned about the Blue Thumb Program and the tributary. Fish Printing was a major component of the day. Probably 25 visitors came to the summer reading kickoff, but the library estimated that 1000 people passed through the library doors and had a chance to see the exhibit the month it was up.

White Bison Farmers Market

Slightly SE of Sand Springs the White Bison Farmers Market is held each Saturday and tends to get a good crowd. Around forty visitors stopped by the Blue Thumb exhibit on Saturday, August 16 and learned about stream protection. They also got detailed information about Tributary to the Arkansas River and the upcoming Tulsa Blue Thumb Training.

Left: Notice the binder at the corner of the table. It is full of information specific to Brandee's stream.



Part of the Farmers Market Blue Thumb exhibit showed the streams of Sand Springs and their watersheds.

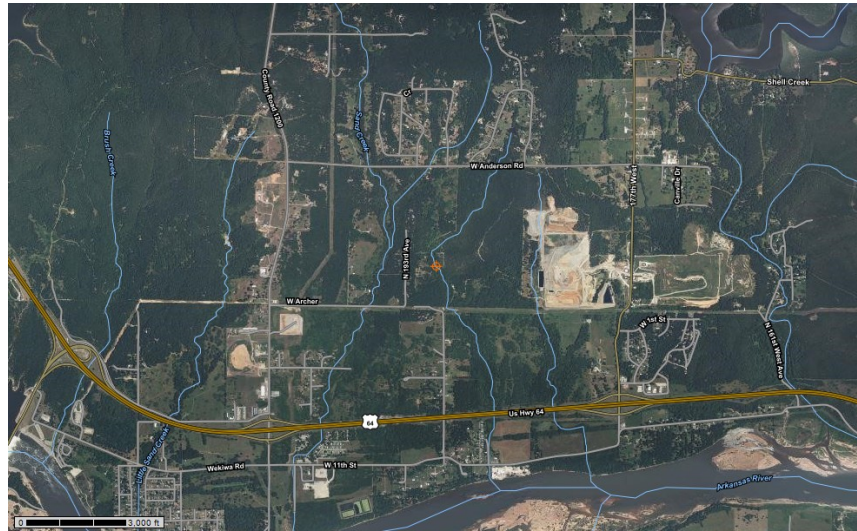
Right: Urban conservation practices, like those encouraged by the Yard by Yard Community Resiliency Project were promoted.



Left: Many of the folks who stopped to learn lived in Sand Springs and near the tributary. Many signed up to receive the "Creek Chronicles" newsletter.



Tributary to Arkansas River: Harris



Tributary to Arkansas River: Harris Fish Collection Summer 2024

Green Sunfish (qty 32)
Lepomis cyanellus

<https://www.fws.gov/species/green-sunfish-lepomis-cyanellus>



Bluegill Sunfish (qty 13)
Lepomis macrochirus

<https://www.fws.gov/species/bluegill-lepomis-macrochirus>



Both are tolerant species.

Habitat Assessment

6/26/2024

64.3

High

Canopy Cover Shading

Streamside Cover

Medium

Instream Cover

Pool Bottom Substrate

Presence of Rocky Runs or Riffles

Bank Vegetation Stability

Low

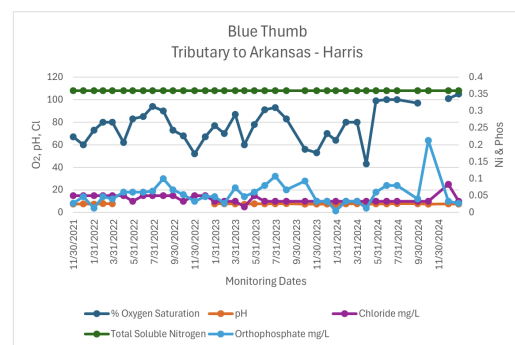
Pool Variability

Flow

Channel Alteration

Channel Sinuosity

Bank Stability





My stream is near a landfill and empties directly into the Arkansas River. Even though it is a tiny headwater stream, I think it is important to know what is going on with it.

All stream water quality is important. Monitoring streams and educating the public can help improve our environment and quality of life. More people should know that little things can make a big difference. Small events like summer reading kickoffs at public libraries and or booths at farmers markets can be an opportunity to share information with more people. I have learned so much from Candice and Cheryl and am happy to share that knowledge with others. Plus I enjoy being outside in nature.

Brandee Harris, Volunteer





Monarchs on the Mountain

Saturday, September 20, 2025

Chandler Park, Tulsa

It was an exciting day for monarchs and stream education at Chandler Park. Blue Thumb Volunteers were working very hard to let the public know that

1. They value the streams and rivers around them and
2. Their streams have something to say!

Notice what is going on in the two photographs above. In "A" all kinds of fun is being had while young adults create a fish print! Paint daubers and rubber-like fish make for an easy and beloved art activity.

Things take a bit of a turn in photo "B". The visitors are reading information on the back of the fish print. They can find out about the importance of a riparian zone, see the watershed for Brandee's stream, review what Brandee's years of monitoring say about the stream, and learn how we can all do a better job of protecting our streams and rivers. In photo "C" we have a child simply enjoying the benthic macroinvertebrates that were at the event.



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