

SAFE - HABITAT FOR PHEASANTS

North Dakota Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

July 2020

Overview

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative is a voluntary program available as part of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to address species of special concern or considered a species of economical importance.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible under continuous sign-up practices, land must be within a SAFE project area and meet basic CRP eligibility requirements. Eligible land is cropland that was planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity during four of the six years from 2012 to 2017. Expired or expiring CRP is also eligible if it meets the minimum cover practice standards. The land must be physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Producers with land within a SAFE geographic area may enroll in their State's SAFE project(s) provided they meet the following eligibility requirements:

- the offered acreage meets the cropping history requirement under CRP (four of the six years from 2012 to 2017)
- the site is located within a SAFE project area
- the offered acreage is planted to or meets the minimum cover standards and size as outlined by the SAFE project.

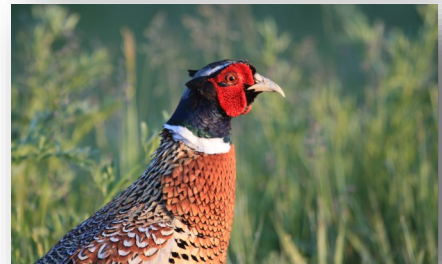
To determine individual eligibility for the initiative, landowners should check with their local FSA office.

Benefits

This SAFE project will provide blocks of grass cover for ring-necked pheasants and other upland birds in the form of nesting, brood rearing, roosting, escape and winter cover. Enrollment can increase the overall population of ring-necked pheasants by restoring eligible cropland to perennial cover. This opportunity will create alternatives for farmers, ranchers, and other private landowners that are simple, attractive, and effective. SAFE—Habitat for Pheasants will develop habitat for an economically significant species. Small game hunting which includes pheasants and other upland games species contributed \$99.3 million in hunter expenditures in North Dakota during the 2017-2018 hunting season.

Goals

Restore 100,000 acres of quality nesting, brood rearing or winter cover for Ring-necked pheasants, with no monoculture (single species) existing or planted stands permitted. Pheasants require 8-14 inches of vertical cover for nesting and mixes including legumes are preferred. Numerous other farmland wildlife species will benefit from grassland habitat restored through SAFE Habitat for Pheasants.



Eligible Practices

General CRP Practices

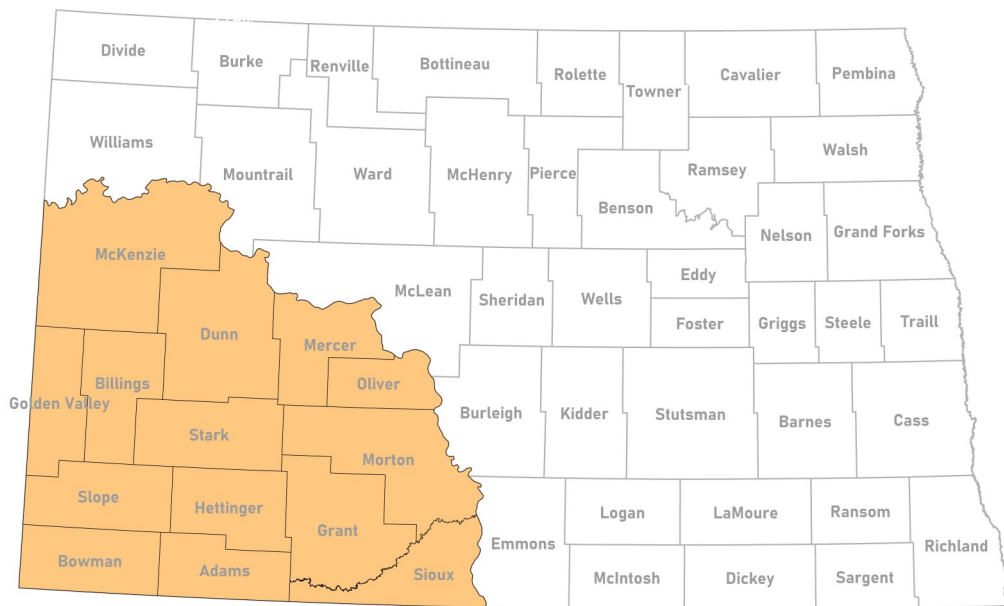
CP38E-1 - Introduced Grasses and Legumes

CP38E -2: Native Grasses and Legumes

CP38E-4D: Permanent Wildlife Habitat

CP38E-12: Wildlife Food Plot

SAFE - Habitat for Pheasants



Rental & Incentive Payments

- Annual Rental Payment – calculated using county soil rental rates. General CRP practices are calculated at 85% of the weighted SRR average.
- Cost share assistance - Cost share is equal to 50% of the eligible cost of establishing the approved practice cover.
- Required management is required for all enrolled practices.