

# Indiana Henslow's Sparrow SAFE

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)



## Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Indiana Department of Natural Resources—Division of Fish and Wildlife are partners in implementing a State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) project to enroll agricultural land in 51 counties in the central, southern, and northwestern parts of Indiana. The purpose of the Indiana Henslow's Sparrow SAFE is to provide quality grassland habitat for Henslow's Sparrows as well as pollinators, and other grassland dependent birds of greatest conservation need in Indiana.

## Background

SAFE is part of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP is a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with landowners and agricultural producers to establish and manage vegetative covers that control soil erosion, improve water quality, and provide wildlife habitat.

SAFE is a unique type of CRP that offers organizations the opportunity to partner with the USDA to establish habitat for high-priority wildlife species on agricultural land. SAFE sponsors work with the USDA to identify the wildlife species, the vegetative cover that provides habitat for the target species, and the location in the state where the habitat is needed. A partnership is formed between the SAFE sponsor and the USDA, and federal funds are made available to allow for CRP enrollment on eligible land within the SAFE project location.

## Target Wildlife Species

The goal of the Indiana Henslow's Sparrow SAFE project is to provide habitat for Henslow's Sparrows. Henslow's Sparrows are important to Indiana not only for biological significance since they are a state endangered species but are also particularly important for economic and social reasons.

## Habitat

Landowners and agricultural producers participating in Indiana Henslow's Sparrow SAFE are required to develop a conservation plan with assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or a technical service provider. The conservation plan will provide details on how to plant, establish, and manage habitat for Henslow's Sparrows. The habitat being established shall consist of thick, established grasslands with dense litter layers (preferably in large expanses) with short remnant woody or stem-like perching locations (typically generated from old forbs or shrubs). After the habitat is established, it will need to be maintained and managed via prescribed burning, vegetative release (spraying), disking, or inter-seeding in accordance with an approved conservation plan. Proper habitat establishment, maintenance, and management will maximize benefits for Henslow's Sparrows.



Photo by Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

## Project Location

The Indiana Henslow's Sparrow SAFE project location can be found in 3 eco-regions: Bird Conservation Region (BCR) 22-Tallgrass Prairie, BCR 23-Prairie Hardwood Transition, and BCR 24-Central Hardwoods. They can be found in all 3 eco-regions, but are sparsely populated statewide, being an endangered species in the state. In as much, the focal regions for this agreement target all 3 eco-regions-BCR 22 (Tallgrass Prairie), BCR 23 (Prairie Hardwood Transition) and BCR 24 (Central Hardwoods).

This Indiana Henslow's Sparrow SAFE project exists exclusively within the boundaries of Indiana. The counties targeted in the proposal include: Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Spencer, Perry, Crawford, Dubois, Pike, Gibson, Knox, Daviess, Martin, Orange, Lawrence, Greene, Sullivan, Vigo, Clay, Owen, Monroe, Morgan, Putnam, Parke, Vermillion, Johnson, Shelby, Rush, Fayette, Union, Franklin, Decatur, Bartholomew, Brown, Jackson, Jennings, Ripley, Dearborn, Ohio, Switzerland, Jefferson, Scott, Clark, Washington, Harrison, Floyd, Lake, Porter, LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, and Marshall.

## Eligible CRP Practices

This SAFE project uses the following CRP practices:

- ◆ CP38E-2, Establishment of Permanent Native Grass
- ◆ CP38E-12, Wildlife Food Plot

## Haying and Grazing

The seeded area of any accepted offer in the proposal shall not be harvested or grazed by domestic livestock for the life of the CRP-1 contract.

## Eligibility Requirements

Because SAFE is part of CRP, certain land and participant eligibility rules apply. To begin with, land must be in the project area and meet cropping history. CRP participant eligibility rules also apply to SAFE.

## Payments and Incentives

In exchange for participation in CRP SAFE, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with annual per acre rental payments, cost-share to assist with habitat establishment expenses, and in some cases additional monetary incentives.

## For More Information

This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only; other restrictions or requirements may apply. Consult your local FSA office for details. For more information, contact your local service center and USDA Farm Service Agency office: [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator).



Photo by Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

# Indiana Henslow's Sparrow SAFE Project Map



## Legend

 FSA County Boundary

 Indiana Henslow's Sparrow SAFE Project Area