

Utah Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse SAFE

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)



Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Pheasants Forever of Utah, and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources are partners in implementing a State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) project to enroll agricultural land in three Northern Utah areas, including Box Elder, Rich and Cache Counties. The purpose of the Utah Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse SAFE is to increase quality grassland, shrub steppe, mountain brush, and riparian habitat for the Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse.

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 Utah Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse SAFE project is to provide habitat for the Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse. The Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse is important to Utah because it will enhance CRP habitat in the areas of Northern Utah by improving on and adding to the existing habitat that CRP currently provides.

Habitat

Landowners and agricultural producers participating in Utah Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse 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 Utah Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse. The habitat being established is bunchgrass prairie and shrub/bunchgrass rangelands in good-excellent condition with a small percentage of the landscape in tall, deciduous shrub thickets provided by shrubby riparian zones, mountain shrub patches, and aspen stands. After the habitat is established, it will need to be maintained and managed by grazing (outside the primary nesting season), seeding of forb plots (during the primary nesting season), mechanical and chemical work must occur outside of the primary nesting season. A second application is only allowed if initial seed bed prep was sufficient to dissuade birds from nesting in seeding area. Proper habitat establishment, maintenance, and management will maximize benefits for Columbian Sharp-tail Grouse.



Project Location

The Utah Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse project location is partially located in Box Elder, Cache, and Rich counties.

Eligible CRP Practices

This SAFE project uses the following CRP practices:

- ◆ CP38C-3, SAFE Tree Planting
- ◆ CP38C-3A, SAFE Hardwood Tree Planting
- ◆ CP38E-2, SAFE Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses and Forbs
- ◆ CP38E-4D, SAFE Permanent Wildlife Habitat

Haying and Grazing

Grazing is allowed under all non-emergency provisions of CRP policy. Grazing is prohibited under emergency provisions according to CRP policy. Haying of SAFE acres is not allowed.

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

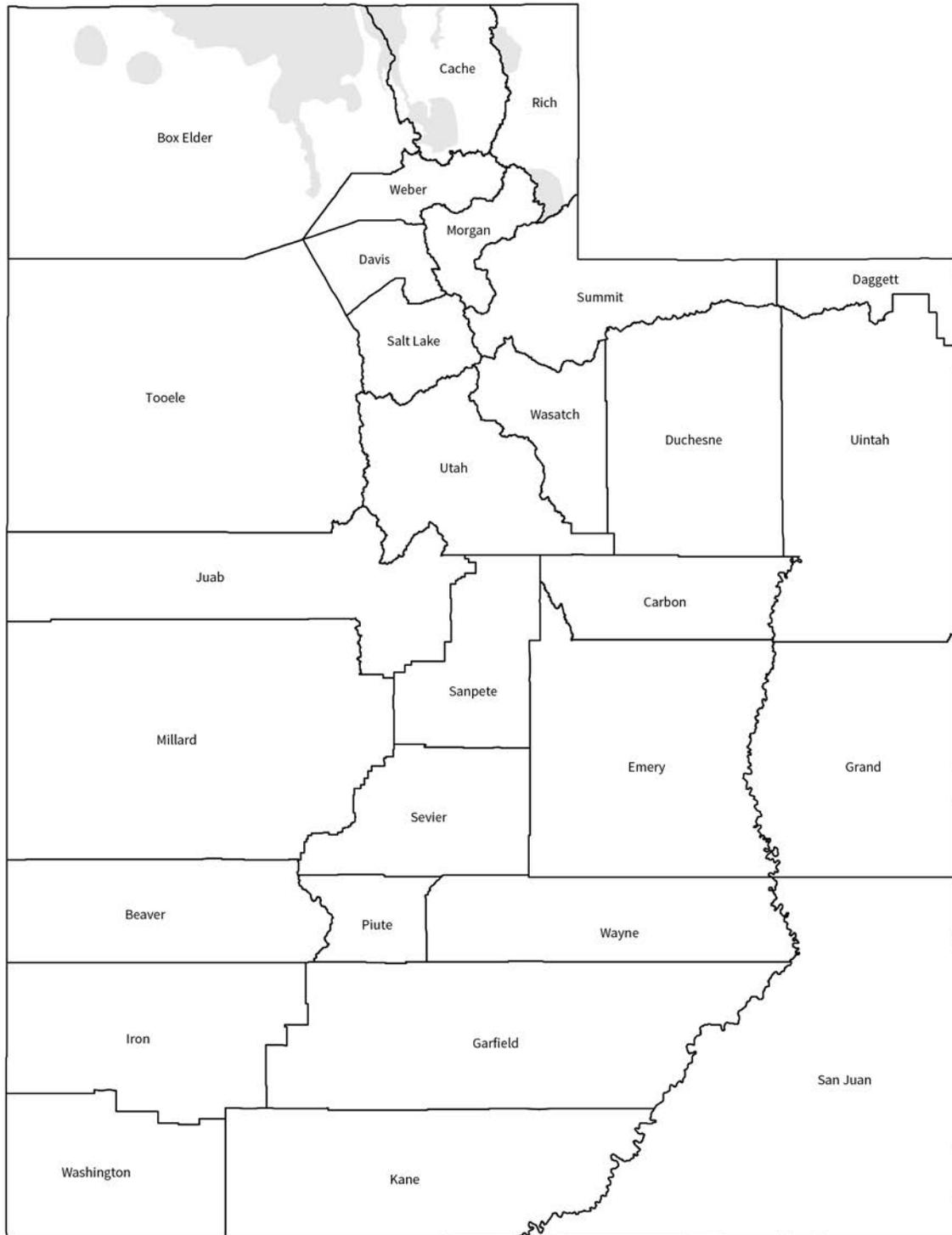
In exchange for participation in CRP SAFE, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with annual per acre rental payments, cost-share to assist with habitat establishment expenses, and in some cases additional monetary incentives.

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.



Utah Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse SAFE Project Map



Legend

-  FSA County Boundary
-  Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse SAFE Project Area