

## Washington State Fact Sheet

# State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Coastal Roosevelt Elk Project

June 2008

### Overview

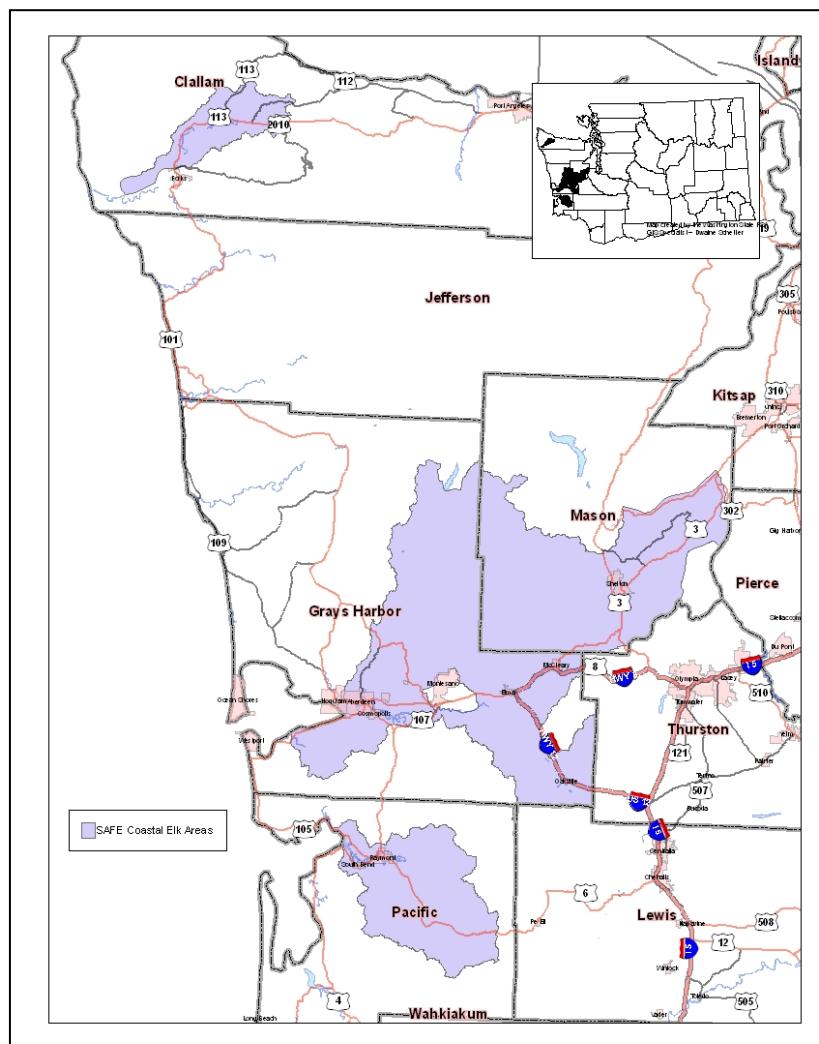
The Coastal Roosevelt Elk Project State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) is a special initiative of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Like traditional CRP, SAFE is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible land owners and operators to address priority natural resource concerns. SAFE, however, gives special consideration to wildlife. The initiative is a state and federal partnership between the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

The goal of the Washington Coastal Roosevelt Elk Project is to create 500 acres of high quality Roosevelt elk winter forage fields in river bottom and floodplain areas. The secondary goal is to manage SAFE short grass habitat to benefit other declining species such as shorebirds, and dusky geese.

Cooperating landowners receive rental payments, establishment and maintenance cost-share and incentive payments in return for entering a contract to provide specific wildlife habitat.

### Land Eligibility

The Coastal Roosevelt Elk SAFE is one of four projects approved for Washington state. Land with a cropping history and within the project area is eligible for SAFE enrollment. Land must have been cropped at



**Coastal Roosevelt Elk Project SAFE Area**

least four years between 1996 and 2001 to have a cropping history.

The project area includes parts of Grays Harbor, Pacific, Clallam or Mason counties in Western Washington. Land must be within the designated areas.

### Payments

Landowners who voluntarily agree to 10 to 15-year contracts will receive the following payments:

- Signing Incentive - \$100 per acre, except for re-enrolled CRP.
- Practice Incentive - 90 percent cost-share to install conservation practices.
- Maintenance payments - \$2 per acre, per year for weed control.
- Annual rental payment - based on the weighted average soil rental rate for the soils in the offered acreage.

SAFE contracts begin the first of the month following FSA approval of the contract. For example, if a contract is approved June 15, it will become effective and annual rental payments will begin to accrue on July 1.

## Payment Limitation

Annual rental payments, including the incentives, are subject to a payment limitation of \$50,000 per person, per year. The limit applies collectively to all CRP contracts the producer has throughout the U.S. There is no limit on the cost-share payments.

## Contract Requirements

Landowners entering into a SAFE contract are required to plant specific wildlife seed mixes and maintain the stand. Areas must be seeded with the following species per acre:

- 10 pounds PLS orchard grass (*Dactylis glomerata*)
- 10 pounds PLS red clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and/or white clover (*Trifolium repens*)
- 5 pounds PLS gray oats (*Avena sativa*)
- 10 pounds PLS perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*).

In addition, the following management must occur:

- Every third year, fields should be fertilized with 200 pounds of nitrogen per acre or other prescription determined by soil testing.
- Fields need to be mowed annually to remove rank growth, stimulate new growth and provide desired shorebird habitat. Mowing is to be done outside of the April 1 – Aug. 1 nesting season.

Weed control is required on SAFE acreage.

Technical assistance to develop a conservation plan will be provided by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The SAFE contract will be approved after all required documents are completed and signed, including:

- SAFE worksheet
- SAFE contract
- Conservation plan
- Landlord/tenant certification
- Payment limitation forms
- Conservation compliance form
- FSA acreage measurement (a small fee applies).

## Access

Hunting and other public access to land enrolled in the SAFE program will be at the landowner's discretion.

## Sign-Up Process

Landowners wishing to participate in the SAFE program may apply at their local Farm Service Agency office. Applications are accepted year-

round. It is a non-competitive sign-up process, unlike regular CRP. After an application is submitted, a no-obligation eligibility review will be conducted and landowners are provided a final opportunity to decide whether to enroll land in the program.

## Additional Information

For more information about SAFE, contact your local USDA Service Center or Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) biologist. Also, visit the FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa> or the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/>.

Or call WDFW:  
Greg Schriato  
(360) 490-0781.

This fact sheet is a summary of the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) program and is not intended to cover all situations or program provisions.

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