



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Announces State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Sign-up

Farm Service Agency Program Begins June 23, 2008

(Jackson, Mississippi) – June 23, 2008 – On March 22, 2007, FSA announced a new initiative, SAFE, to allow States to address local wildlife conservation needs. SAFE allows producers to install practices that benefit high priority State wildlife conservation objectives through the use of targeted restoration of vital habitat. Three proposals were developed.

SAFE signups begin on June 23, 2008, and will continue until a project's acreage goal is met or Farm Bill authority for CRP expires, whichever comes first. The three projects approved for Mississippi are: Black Bear, Quail and Black Belt Prairie.

Black Bear: This project will benefit the federally threatened Louisiana black and the state endangered American black bear by restoring native bottomland hardwood forests and wetland ecosystems in portions of the Mississippi Alluvial Valley that multiple conservation planning efforts have identified as important zones for black bear recovery. This is not a shallow water area practice for wildlife (duck pond). This project has an allocation of 7,950 acres

Quail: This project will increase native grassland habitats in 29 focal counties in Mississippi for restoration of northern bobwhite habitat and populations. This project has an allocation of 2,950 acres.

Black Belt Prairie: This project will restore the functions and values of the critically endangered habitat of the Black Belt Prairie in Mississippi with the goal of improving through restoration, native grassland habitats for rare, threatened, endangered, and declining species that are dependent on native prairie communities found within the Black Belt Prairie. This project has an allocation of 2,500 acres.

For details on the eligible project areas and how to sign up, please visit your local office.

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