



Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area SAFE

Parts of St. Croix and Polk Counties

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, is offering a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) practice tailored to provide enhanced habitat for bobolinks, grasshopper sparrows, Henslow's sparrows, and sedge wrens. This practice, established through FSA's State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative, is available to eligible participants in parts of St. Croix and Polk counties.

Goals

The goals of this project are to restore native mid-short grass and wetland habitats, improve and increase grassland/wetland habitat diversity, and to increase collaborative partnerships for grassroots action that improves habitat for wildlife and water conservation for all.



Sedge Wren

Practice Specifications

The practices in this project will include only specific seed mixtures to restore mid-short native grass prairie and wetland restoration. Wetland restorations will only be approved if 90 percent of the offered acreage provides suitable croplands for planting either the dry or dry mesic prairie restoration seed mixes. The project will seek to use only local ecotype prairie grass seed.

Land Eligibility

To be eligible for placement in a SAFE CRP practice, land must be:

- Cropland (including field margins) that is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity 4 of the previous 6 crop years from 2002 to 2007 (some existing grass may be eligible)
- Physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity
- Located within the state designated SAFE area
- A maximum of 2,500 acres in the designated counties are available for this project

Participant Eligibility

CRP participants must have:

- Owned or operated the land for the previous 12 months, some exceptions may apply
- An average adjusted gross income of less than \$1 million unless 66 percent or more of the average AGI is farm income

CRP Payments

Participants are eligible for four types of USDA payments:

- Signing Incentive Payment– A one-time payment of \$100 per acre. USDA makes this payment within 30 days after the contract has been approved
- Annual rental payments based on the relative productivity of the soils within the offered area and the average dryland cash-rent or cash-rent equivalent
- Cost share assistance of 50 percent for installing the practice on contracted land
- Practice Incentive Payment– Approximately 40 percent of the total cost for establishing the practice

Management

Participants are required to perform mid-contract management activities. These activities serve to increase the diversity of the habitat during the contract life-span. This could include mowing, prescribed burning, herbicide application, and interseeding. A 50 percent cost-share payment is paid in the year the management is performed.

Monitoring and Compliance

Monitoring

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will complete monitoring activities for all SAFE practices. These reviews will determine the success of the practice in accomplishing the stated goals. Annual reports will be submitted to the National FSA Office. Monitoring for goal success is separate and distinct from participant compliance obligations.



Bobolink

Compliance

SAFE practices are implemented through the Farm Service Agency's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

and are therefore subject to all CRP regulations, including but not limited to:

- Control of noxious weeds
- Control of any vegetation not prescribed by the conservation plan
- Establishment and maintenance of the cover as stipulated by the contract and conservation plan
- Adherence to primary nesting season policies (May 15 - August 1)
- Annual submission of crop report



Henslow's Sparrow

For More Information

For more information about this program, contact your USDA Service Center:

St. Croix County
1960 8th Avenue, Suite 121
Baldwin, WI 54002-0036
715-684-2874

Polk County
941 Mallard Lane, Room 101
Balsam Lake, WI 54810-9079
715-485-3138

Partnering Agencies and Organizations

US Department of Agriculture

- Farm Service Agency
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- River Country RC&D

US Department of the Interior

- Fish and Wildlife Service

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

St. Croix and Polk County Land Conservation Departments

Pheasants Forever

Ducks Unlimited

The Prairie Enthusiasts

Wisconsin Waterfowl Association

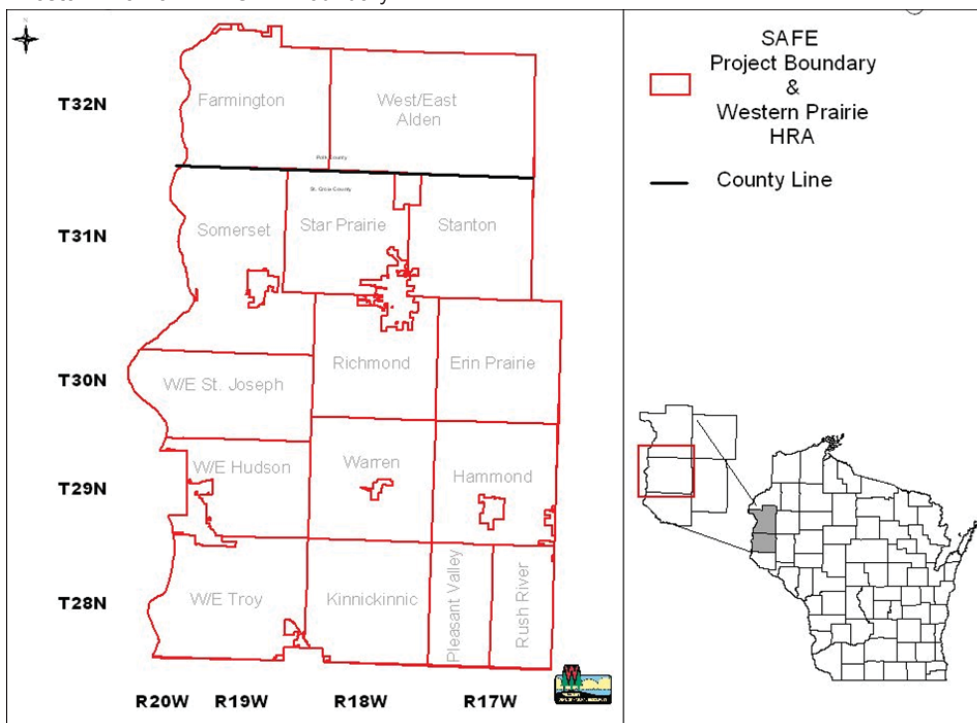
Star Prairie Fish and Game

Star Prairie Land Preservation and Trust

Kinnickinnic River Land Trust

West Wisconsin Land Trust

Western Prairie HRA - SAFE Boundary



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