

Nebraska Upland Wildlife SAFE

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)



Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Nebraska Game and Parks are partners in implementing a State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) project to enroll agricultural land in sixty-nine counties across the state. The purpose of the Nebraska Upland Wildlife SAFE is to prioritize wildlife and pollinator habitat and to provide habitat needs for target species that will also benefit a variety of other grassland wildlife.

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 Nebraska Upland Wildlife SAFE project is to provide habitat for greater prairie-chicken, northern bobwhite, ring-necked pheasant, and sharp-tailed grouse. These species are all important to Nebraska because of the significant decline of upland game bird populations, which has led to an economic impact on hunting in Nebraska. A successful SAFE program will assist in restoring local populations while increasing participation in hunting.

Habitat

Landowners and agricultural producers participating in Nebraska Upland Wildlife 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 greater prairie-chicken, northern bobwhite, ring-necked pheasant, and sharp-tailed grouse. The habitat being established is diverse grassland habitat that will provide nesting cover, brood-rearing cover, in-field winter food resources (large seed forbs), loafing and escape cover, and winter cover. After the habitat is established, it will need to be maintained and managed by controlling weeds, and either grazing, burning, applying herbicide, disking or interseeding to maintain plant diversity. Proper habitat establishment, maintenance, and management will maximize benefits for the greater prairie-chicken, northern bobwhite, ring-necked pheasant, sharp-tailed grouse, and other upland game birds and non-game grassland birds.



Photo by Nebraska Pheasants Forever

Project Location

The Nebraska Upland Wildlife SAFE project location includes the following counties: Antelope, Banner, Boone, Box Butte, Boyd, Buffalo, Burt, Butler, Cass, Cedar, Chase, Cheyenne, Colfax, Cuming, Custer, Dakota, Dawes, Dawson, Deuel, Dixon, Dodge, Dundy, Franklin, Frontier, Furnas, Gage, Garden, Garfield, Gosper, Greeley, Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock, Holt, Howard, Jefferson, Johnson, Keith, Kimball, Knox, Lancaster, Lincoln, Madison, Morrill, Nance, Nemaha, Nuckolls, Otoe, Pawnee, Perkins, Pierce, Platte, Red Willow, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Scotts Bluff, Seward, Sheridan, Sherman, Sioux, Stanton, Thayer, Thurston, Valley, Washington, Wayne, Webster, and Wheeler counties.

Eligible CRP Practices

This SAFE project uses the following CRP practices:

- ◆ CP38E-4D, Permanent Wildlife Habitat
- ◆ CP38E-12, Wildlife Food Plot.

Haying and Grazing

Haying and grazing is allowed according to CRP emergency and non-emergency as defined below:

- ◆ Non-emergency haying and grazing is allowed on Upland Wildlife Habitat SAFE enrollments according to 2-CRP, Part 19.

- ◆ Emergency haying will be allowed on Upland Wildlife Habitat SAFE enrollments but will be limited to 50% of the field. 100% of the field may be hayed in the circumstance it is necessary to aid in stand establishment.
- ◆ Emergency grazing is allowed on SAFE enrollments according to 2-CRP, Part 19.

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.

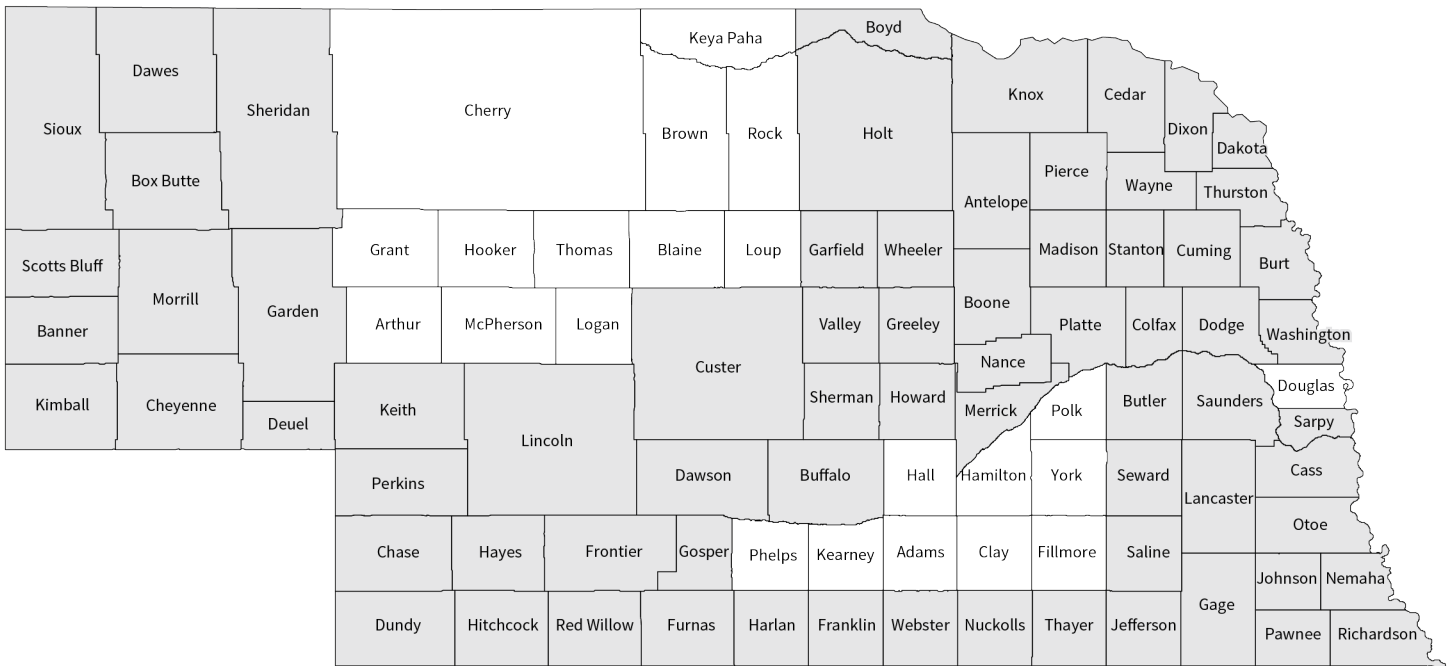
For More Information

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.





Photo by Nebraska Pheasants Forever

Nebraska Upland Wildlife SAFE Project Map



Legend

-  FSA County Boundary
-  Nebraska Upland Wildlife SAFE Project Area