**Purpose**

The State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Initiative restores vital habitat in order to meet high priority state wildlife conservation goals. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides farmers and landowners with several opportunities like this to achieve many conservation goals. Participation in the Texas Gulf Coast Prairies SAFE Initiative is aimed at creating and restoring 20,000 acres of grassland and shallow water habitats in the Gulf Coast Prairie region of Texas.

**Benefits**

This SAFE Initiative will contribute to the establishment of a network of large, high quality coastal prairie habitats that will provide alternative income and land use opportunities through the enhancement of the native wildlife habitat. Grasslands and seasonal wetlands are valuable sites during winter and breeding periods to the Mottled Duck, Northern Bobwhite, Attwater's Greater Prairie-Chicken, Short-Eared Owl, Henslow's Sparrow, LeConte's Sparrow, Sprague's Pipit and other declining bird populations.

**Eligibility**

CRP enrolls existing cropland into conservation cover. Land offered for enrollment must satisfy basic CRP eligibility and cropping history requirements. Landowners should check with their local FSA office to determine individual eligibility.

Enrollment is limited to Aransas, Austin, Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Jackson, Jefferson, Lavaca, Liberty, Matagorda, Orange, Refugio, San Patricio, Victoria, Waller and Wharton counties. These counties represent the historic range of coastal prairie habitat and offers the greatest potential to restore grassland and seasonal wetlands.
Financial Assistance

Financial assistance through this SAFE Initiative may include:

- CP-4D, Permanent Wildlife Habitat
- 50% cost share for practice establishment
- 10 year contracts
- 85% Soil Rental Rate annual payments possible for Permanent Wildlife Habitat (CP4-D) whole-field enrollments
- 90% Soil Rental Rate payments, 32.5% Signing Incentive Payment, and 5% Practice Incentive Payments may be possible for Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds for field edges or pivot corners (CP-33).

More Information

This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only; other restrictions may apply. For details, contact your local FSA office. To find your local service center and USDA Farm Service Agency office: farmers.gov/service-center-locator

Practice Requirements

Program participants must apply conservation practices CP-38E (Grasses) and/or CP-38B (Wetlands). Eligible practices under grasses include CP-4D (Permanent Wildlife Habitat) and CP-33 (Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds). Eligible practices under wetlands include CP-9 (Shallow Water Areas). All plantings shall follow NRCS Conservation Practice Code Standards for 327 - Conservation Cover, or 420 - Wildlife Habitat Planting. Only native species are permitted. The purpose of these practices is to restore grassland and shallow water habitats for waterfowl and other wildlife species. Secondary benefits include reduction of soil erosion from wind and water, and improved soil and water quality.