

CRP – State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) – Illinois

This is a practice that has a division with the title “Western Illinois Pheasant Habitat Restoration Project” which was proposed by the Spoon River Eco Project, Inc. in cooperation with the Mississippi Western Five Ecosystem Partnership. A modified version has now been approved.

Goal: To increase the amount of pheasant habitat within the areas shown on the second page (which includes a boundary map) by 1,500 acres.

Guidelines for participation: Whole fields are eligible. There is continuous sign up with ten and up to fifteen year contracts. Sign up bonus is \$100 per acre. Normal CRP rental rates apply. Parcels do not have to contain highly erodible soils.

Conservation practices shall only include CP1 (Cool Season Grasses and Legume mix), CP2 (Warm Season Grass and Legume mix), or CP4D (Wildlife Habitat mixture of Warm Season Grasses, legumes, shrubs, food plots). Habitat plantings under this proposal may include grasslands, shrub lands, and food plots. Grassy area seed mixtures shall contain a combination of at least three grasses plus a minimum of two forbs. The mixtures shall be based upon the recommendations of the Il. Dept. of Natural Resources wildlife biologists and Pheasants Forever. You must meet CRP guidelines on previous cropping history.

Benefits: What makes this program unique is the lack of restrictions. For example, nearly all cropland qualifies no matter if it is HEL or NHEL, a whole field or a partial field, prairie soil or timber soil, hydric or non-hydric soil. Grass mixtures can be a simple mix to provide erosion control or a diverse mix to promote wildlife.

This program is also flexible enough to solve many resource concerns, from erosion to wildlife, to maximizing profit. SAFE can help you meet your goal. Some places that this program will be useful include unproductive areas of your farm, gravelly areas, wet areas, headlands (especially going up and downhill), around houses, along tree lines, landlocked areas that are difficult to access, property lines and field boundaries. The possibilities are endless!

Contacts: For more information or to begin an application please contact your local USDA Service Center. Phones are all area code 309 and FSA offices are extension 2) Fulton 547-2233, Henderson 924-1173, Henry 937-3377, Knox 342-5138, Mercer 582-5153, Peoria 671-7040, Stark 286-2261, Warren 734-9308.