

# Colorado Upland Bird SAFE

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)



## Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) are partners in implementing a State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) project to enroll agricultural land in portions of 8 counties in north-east Colorado. The purpose of the Colorado Upland Bird SAFE is to maintain and improve core populations of grassland dependent birds including grasshopper sparrow, plains sharp-tailed grouse, ring-necked pheasant, greater prairie-chickens, and northern bobwhite quail through establishment and maintenance of vegetation required to meet these species needs.

## 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 Colorado Upland Bird SAFE project is to provide habitat for grasshopper sparrow, plains sharp-tailed grouse, ring-necked pheasant, greater prairie-chickens, and northern bobwhite quail. These bird species are important to Colorado because of the social and economic benefits to local communities in the area as well as their historic presence and role in the ecology of the region.

## Habitat

Landowners and agricultural producers participating in Colorado Upland Bird SAFE are required to develop a conservation plan with assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service or a technical service provider. The conservation plan will provide details on how to plant, establish, and manage habitat for grasshopper sparrow, plains sharp-tailed grouse, ring-necked pheasant, greater prairie-chickens, and northern bobwhite quail. The habitat being established is diverse grasslands including grasses, forbs and legumes. After the habitat is established, it will need to be maintained and managed by discing and interseeding as needed and authorized. Proper habitat establishment, maintenance, and management will maximize benefits for the targeted bird species in this project.

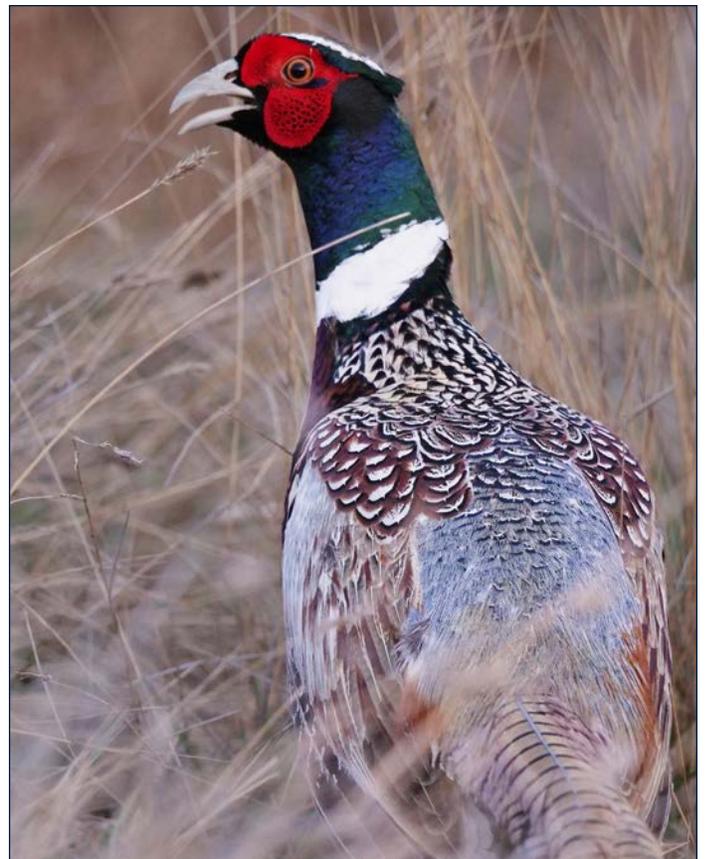


Photo Courtesy: Jerry Neal, Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

## Project Location

The Colorado Upland Bird SAFE project location is portions or entirety of Weld, Logan, Morgan, Washington, Philips, Sedgwick, Yuma, and Kit Carson Counties in the area of the South Platte, Republican, and Arikaree Rivers.

## Eligible CRP Practices

This SAFE project uses the following CRP practices:

- ◆ CP38E-CP4D, SAFE Permanent Wildlife Habitat

## Haying and Grazing

Haying is not permitted. Grazing can only be used when the existing cover is exemplary, well established, and meets seed matrix specifications and during established timeframes. Emergency haying and/or grazing is not permitted.

## 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](https://farmers.gov/service-locator).



Photo Courtesy: Noe, Marymore; USDA NRCS.

# Colorado Upland Bird SAFE Project Map



## Legend

-  FSA County Boundary
-  Colorado Upland Bird SAFE Project Area