

Iowa Pheasant Recovery SAFE

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)



Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Iowa Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Bureau are partners in implementing a State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) project to enroll agricultural land in Iowa's primary pheasant range counties. The purpose of the Iowa Pheasant Recovery SAFE is to restore pheasant habitat in Iowa's core pheasant range. All enrolled contracts will provide a habitat block of nesting cover, winter cover and a winter grain food plot.

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 Iowa Pheasant Recovery SAFE project is to provide habitat for ring-necked pheasant. Ring-necked pheasant are important to Iowa because they are an economically important species, with an estimated annual economic impact exceeding \$200 million dollars, and populations have declined over 50% from historical levels.

Habitat

Landowners and agricultural producers participating in Iowa Pheasant Recovery 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 ring-necked pheasant. Offers may be anywhere from 20 to 160 acres in size. All enrolled offers will provide nesting cover, winter cover and a winter food plot. Nesting cover must be a block of mixed native grasses and wildflowers minimum of six species, more diversity is encouraged. Winter cover will be a block of switchgrass, minimum 25% of offer not to exceed 20 acres. Minimum winter food plot size is 2 acres with maximum size of 5 acres and plot(s) cannot exceed 10% of total contract acres. Shrubs/shelterbelts are allowed but not required. After the habitat is established, it will need to be maintained and managed by prescribed burning, grazing, interseeding or disking on nesting and winter habitat acres. When managing nesting cover, a diverse native plant community, it is recommended to avoid spraying herbicide. Proper habitat establishment, maintenance, and management will maximize benefits for ring-necked pheasant.



Female ring-necked pheasants in poor winter habitat. Photo by Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Project Location

The Iowa Pheasant Recovery SAFE project location is Adair, Adams, Audubon, Benton, Black Hawk, Boone, Bremer, Buchanan, Buena Vista, Butler, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Cedar, Cerro Gordo, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Clay, Crawford, Dallas, Delaware, Dickinson, Dubuque, Emmet, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Greene, Grundy, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Harrison, Henry, Howard, Humboldt, Ida, Iowa, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Jones, Keokuk, Kossuth, Linn, Louisa, Lyon, Madison, Mahaska, Marshall, Mitchell, Monona, Montgomery, Muscatine, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Plymouth, Pocahontas, Polk, East, Pottawattamie (East), Pottawattamie (West), Poweshiek, Sac, Shelby, Sioux, Story, Tama, Taylor, Union, Wapello, Washington, Webster, Winnebago, Winneshiek, Woodbury, Worth, and Wright counties.

Eligible CRP Practices

This SAFE project uses the following CRP practices:

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

Haying and Grazing

Emergency haying and grazing is not authorized. Non-emergency haying and grazing is authorized according to CRP non-emergency policies and as defined in an approved conservation plan.

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.

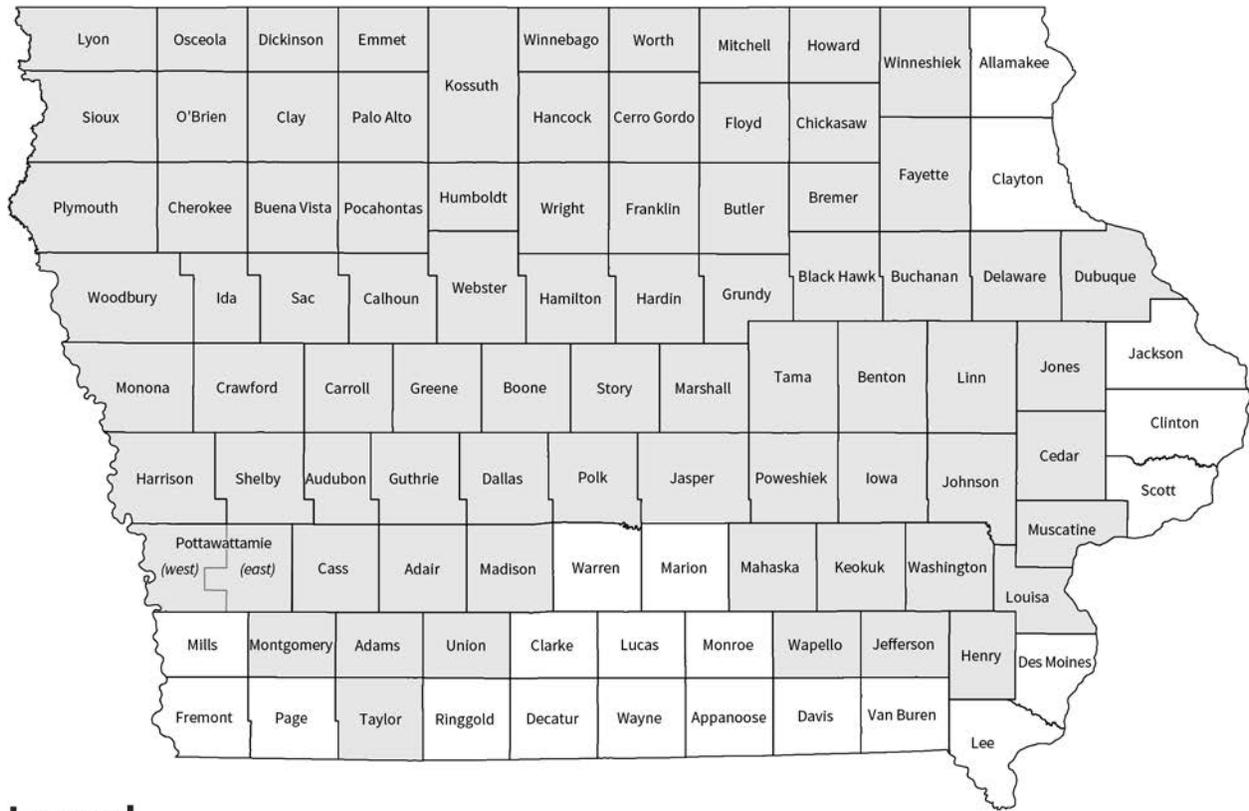
For More Information

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 or nearest DNR office: iowadnr.gov/crp.



Iowa Pheasant Recovery SAFE site, switchgrass, food plot, and nesting habitats. Photo by Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Iowa Pheasant Recovery SAFE Project Map



Legend

-  FSA County Boundary
-  Iowa Pheasant Recovery SAFE Project Area