

Partner Webinar April 26, 2022



State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement - SAFE

Photo's courtesy of NRCS

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State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement

Introductions

- Scott Marlow, Deputy Administrator of Farm Programs
- Alan Lange, Natural Resources Specialist - Wildlife Biology

Housekeeping:

- *This meeting is being recorded.*
- *Please ensure you're muted.*
- *Type Questions in the Chat.*



Photo courtesy of NRCS

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement

Agenda

- Background of CRP SAFE
- Current SAFE Enrollment
- Changes in 2021
- Policies
- Review Notice CRP-966
- Submitting Modified or New Proposals
- Questions



Photo courtesy of USDA

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) initiative
- Began in March 2007
- Administered by Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- Technical lead by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Partnership between State level FSA and a sponsoring entity
- Address local wildlife habitat needs
- Targeted restoration of critical habitats



Photo courtesy of NRCS

SAFE Enrollment (February 2022)

CP38A Buffers = 4,488 ac

CP38B Wetlands = 19,680 ac

CP38C Trees = 34,203 ac

CP38D Longleaf Pine = 514 ac

CP38E Grass = 2,366,253 ac

Total = 2,425,138 ac

11% of total CRP acre enrollment

30% of continuous CRP acre enrollment

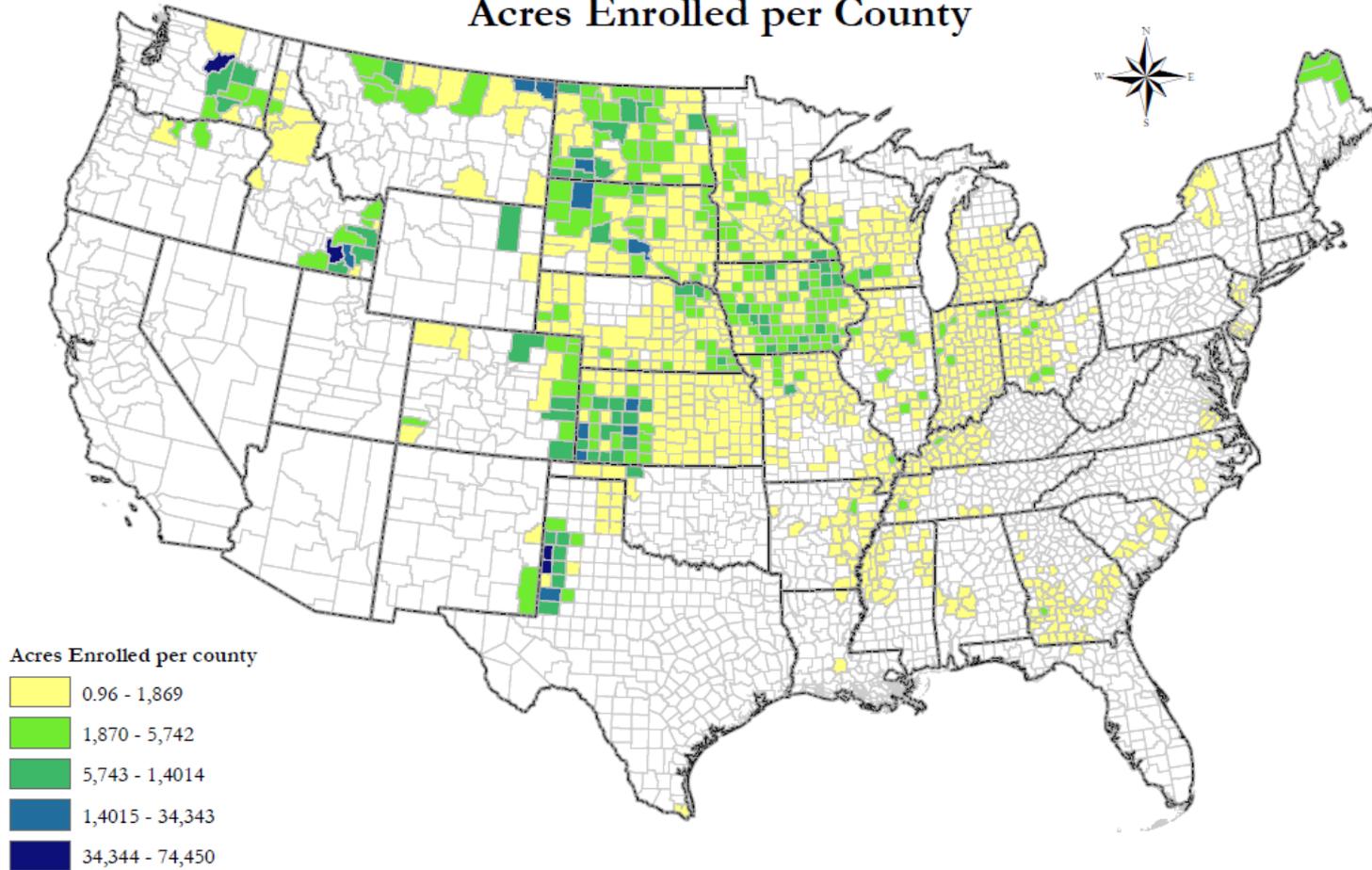


Photo courtesy of NRCS

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State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Acres Enrolled per County



Map created by dafp/cd/csb April 25, 2022



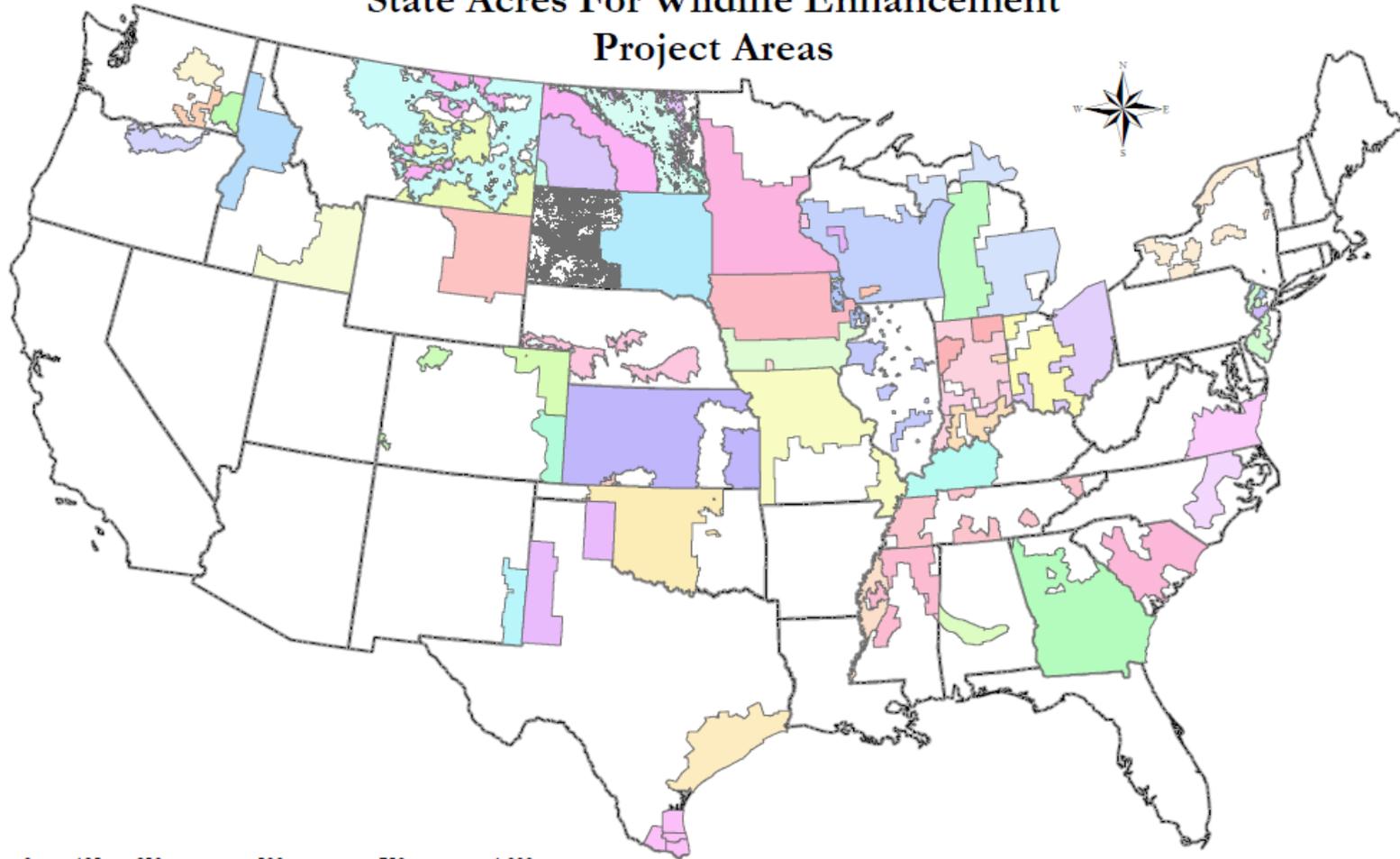
Photo courtesy of NRCS

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35 States Participating in 65 projects

State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement
Project Areas



0 125 250 500 750 1,000
Miles

Map created by dafp/cd/csb April 22, 2022



Photo courtesy of NRCS

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SAFE Changes in 2021

- All active SAFE projects were moved to Continuous Signup
- Adjustment to rental rates
 - Soil productivity index
 - 10% inflationary adjustment
- Incentives
 - Climate-Smart Rental Rate
 - Water Quality Rental Rate
 - CP38A (Buffers) CP38B (Wetlands)
 - Signing Incentive Payment (SIP)
 - Practice Incentive Payment (PIP)

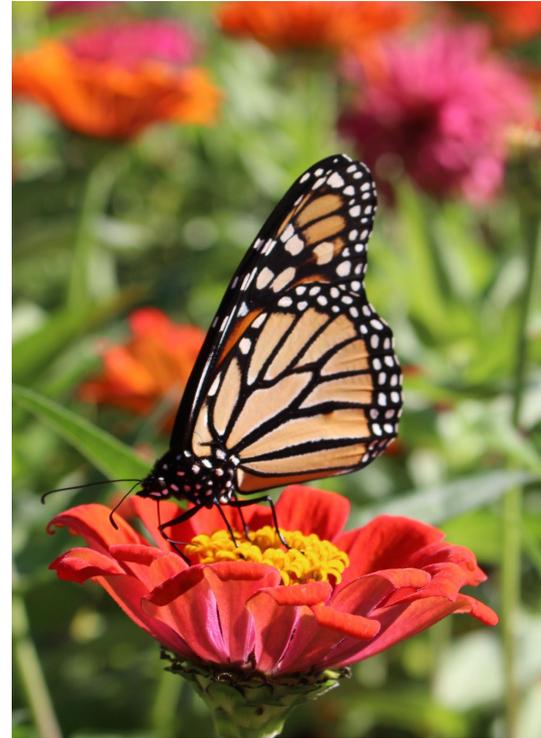


Photo courtesy of NRCS

CRP Policies

**CRP policies contained in 2CRP located at:
<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/laws-and-regulations/handbooks/index>**

Conservation and Environmental Protection

Handbook	Handbook Title (file size)	Last Amendment (file size)	Date Last Updated
1-BCAP	Biomass Crop Assistance Program (PDF, 1.39 MB)	4 (PDF, 496 KB)	6/9/15
1-CRP (Rev. 1)	Conservation Reserve Program (PDF, 1.45 MB)	51 (PDF, 30 KB)	5/22/07
2-CRP (Rev. 6)	Agricultural Resource Conservation Program (PDF, 17.1 MB)	7 (PDF, 10.4 MB)	1/26/22

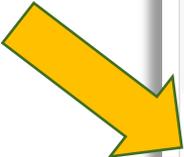


Photo courtesy of NRCS

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CRP Policies

Exhibit 11

Exhibit 11

(Par. 31, 34, 66, 171, 181, 184, 211, 237, 262, 270, 366, 426, 428, 429, 490, 511, 512, 832, Ex. 26)
National CRP Practices

CP1 Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes

A Purpose

This practice is to establish new or maintain existing vegetative cover of introduced grasses and legumes on eligible cropland that will enhance environmental benefits.

B Program Policy

Apply this practice to establish or maintain existing permanent introduced grasses and legumes on eligible cropland.

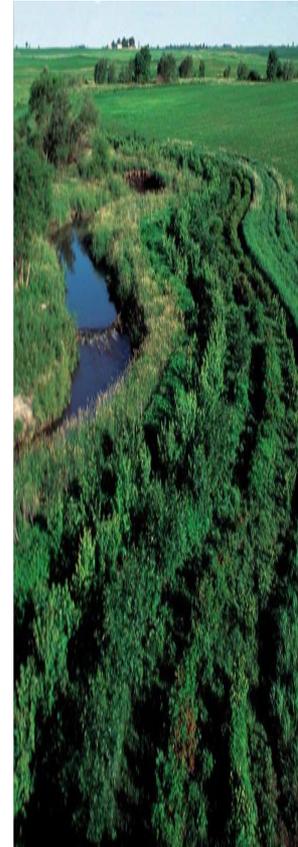


Photo courtesy of NRCS

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2022 SAFE

- Notice CRP-966 *Request for New or Modified SAFE Proposals*
- Approved proposals will become active in 2023

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice CRP-966

For: State and County Offices

**Announcing Request for New or Modified
State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Proposals**

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



Photo courtesy of NRCS

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FSA Notice CRP-966



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Farm Service Agency

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Laws and Regulations

Notices

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Notice Number

Status

Subject

Notice Post Date (Last 10 Posting Dates)



Photo courtesy of NRCS

FSA Notice CRP-966 - Purpose

- Opportunity to submit new proposals or modify existing SAFE projects
- Instructions and criteria for submitting new or modified proposals
- Authorizes additional NRCS conservation practice standards
- Authorizes use annual plants for early successional habitat
- Authorizes cost share and PIP at time of reenrollment when transitioning cover
- Deadlines



Photo courtesy of NRCS

CRP SAFE Policies – Land Eligibility

- Cropland According to 2-CRP, paragraph 151
- Located within the defined SAFE project boundaries.
- Marginal pastureland is not eligible unless criteria are met for a threatened or endangered species with specific habitat needs of marginal pastureland.



Photo courtesy of NRCS

CRP SAFE Policies – Eligible Practices

SAFE Practice	Practice Type	Authorized CRP Sub-Practices
CP38A	Buffers	CP8A, CP15A, CP15B, CP21, CP22, CP33, CP43
CP38B	Wetlands	CP9, CP23, CP23A, CP27, CP28, CP37
CP38C	Trees	CP3, CP3A, CP5A, CP16A, CP17A, CP25, CP31
CP38D	Longleaf Pine	CP36
CP38E	Grass	CP1, CP2, CP4D, CP12 <u>1</u> /, CP18B, CP18C, CP24, CP25, CP42

SAFE Policies - Incentives

2-CRP Paragraph 66

66 National Practices (Continued)

D CRP Practices, Signup Types, Contract Periods, and Incentives (Continued)

Practice Number And Name	Continuous	General	Contract Period	32.5 Percent SIP	*--50--* Percent PIP 3/	*--20--* Percent Rental Rate Incentive 4/	*--Climate-Smart Incentive Percent	*** Maintenance Incentive Rate
CP38A, SAFE – Buffers *--(CP8A, CP21.)--*	X		10-15	Y	Y	Y	3%	
--CP38A, SAFE – Buffers (CP15A, CP15B, CP33, CP43)	X		10-15	Y	Y	Y <u>6</u> --	5%	
--CP38A, SAFE – Buffers (CP5A, CP22.)	X		10-15	Y	Y	Y <u>7</u> --	10%	
CP38B, SAFE – Wetlands (CP9, CP23, CP23A, CP27, CP28, CP37)	X		10-15	Y	Y	*--Y <u>8</u> --*	3%	
CP38C, SAFE – Trees (CP3, CP3A, CP25)	X		10-15	*--Y	Y--*	N	10%	
CP38C, SAFE – Trees *--(CP16A, CP17A, CP31)--*	X		10-15	Y	Y	N	10%	
CP38D, SAFE - Longleaf Pine (CP36)	X		10-15	Y	Y	N	10%	
CP38E, SAFE – Grass *--(CP2, CP4D, CP12, CP18B, CP18C)	X		10-15	Y	Y--*	N	3% <u>9</u> /	
CP38E, SAFE – Grass *--(CP1, CP24, CP42)--*	X		10-15	Y	Y	N	5%	



Photo courtesy of NRCS

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SAFE Policies – Required Management Activity

- One management activity required
- Additional activities allowed
- Cost share not authorized for management activities
- 2-CRP (Rev. 6) Paragraph 428



Photo courtesy of NRCS

SAFE Policies – Haying and Grazing

- Haying and grazing is authorized for SAFE
- Proposals must specify is haying and grazing is authorized
- Proposal may be more restrictive
- Proposals may not be less restrictive
- 2-CRP (Rev. 6) Part 19



Photo courtesy of NRCS

SAFE Policies – Permissive and Restrictive Uses

- Proposals must comply according to 2-CRP Part 18
- Proposals may be more restrictive
- Proposals may not be less restrictive



Photo courtesy of USDA

SAFE Policies – Cost Share

- 50% of eligible cost to establish practices
- PIP and cost share authorized to transition cover at reenrollment



Photo courtesy of NRCS

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SAFE Proposal Development

- May be submitted by any govt, non-profit or private organization
- Limited to CP38 and approved sub-practices
- States may have multiple projects
- Caution: overlapping current SAFE and CREP projects
- Work with your FSA state office



Photo courtesy of NRCS

SAFE Proposal Criteria

Must restore habitats of 1 or more of the following

- Rare, threatened or endangered species
- Suffered significant population decline
- SGCN according State Wildlife Action Plan
- Significant social or economic value



Photo courtesy of NRCS

Practice Modifications

- CRP practice policy in 2-CRP, Exhibit 11 may be modified to include additional requirements.
- Practice requirements may not be less restrictive



Photo courtesy of NRCS

Additional Conservation Practices Authorized

Conservation Practice Standard	Authorized CRP SAFE Practices
Wild Habitat Planting (420)	CP38E-1, CP38E-2, CP38E-4D, CP38E-25, CP38E-42
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (647)	CP38E-4D, CP38D-36



Photo courtesy of NRCS

Use of Annual Plants

- Restricted to proposals that include creating early successional plant conditions
- Must follow conservation practice standard Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (647)
- Authorized for CP38E-4D
- Proposals must include additional information per Exhibit 1 of Notice CRP-966



Photo courtesy of NRCS

New or Modified SAFE Proposals

- All active SAFE project must be reviewed
- All active SAFE projects must submit a modification if the partners want to continue
- To terminate a project SED must send a memo notifying CD
- State Technical Committee review
- State Committee review and recommendation



Photo courtesy of NRCS

SAFE Proposal Required Information Notice CRP-966 Exhibit 1

SAFE proposals will be formatted according to the following criteria:

- when possible, summarize information with bulleted lists, tables, or short narratives
- submit an electronic copy in Microsoft Word.

Include the following required information organized with the numbering, titling, and order as shown below. Proposals that do not include required information organized according to the following will not be considered.

SAFE Proposal Required Information

1. Proposal Title and Sponsor Information

1.1. Proposal Title

1.2. Primary Sponsor Organization, Address, Telephone Number

1.3. Primary Sponsor Organization Point of Contact, Name, Title, Address, Telephone Number, email

1.4. Partner organizations including support for the proposal

SAFE Proposal Required Information

2. Target Wildlife Species

2.1. List target animal or insect wildlife species, maximum 5

2.2. Brief biological description of the target species including lifecycle requirements and relevant facts

2.3. Information qualifying the target species meets 1 or more of the following criteria:

- rare, threatened, or endangered species
- species that have suffered a significant population decline
- species of greatest conservation need according to State Wildlife Action Plan
- species that provide significant social or economic value to the community

Provide information in summary format from reputable sources, such as peer reviewed publications, expert testimony, results of studies, etc. Unsubstantiated opinions or unsupported evidence will not be considered.

SAFE Proposal Required Information

3. Proposal Location

3.1. Description of proposal location

- 3.1.1. Current and historic range of target species
- 3.1.2. Description of the eco-region(s) the target species occupies
- 3.1.3. State(s) and county(s) included in the proposal area
- 3.1.4. HUC code (11- to 14-digit code)
- 3.1.5. Area of proposal location in acres
- 3.1.6. Description of land use in project area
 - 3.1.6.1. Agricultural production
 - 3.1.6.2. Existing wildlife habitat
 - 3.1.6.3. Urban land
 - 3.1.6.4. Other land use information impacting the target species
- 3.1.7. Brief description of existing conditions (human and environmental within the project area)
- 3.1.8. Other information of significance on the proposal location

SAFE Proposal Required Information

3. Proposal Location

3.2. Maps of proposal location (**Include maps as an attachment in PDF format**)

- 3.2.1. Current and historic range of target species
- 3.2.2. Proposal location including State and county boundaries
- 3.2.3. Land use and existing habitat types in proposal location
- 3.2.4. Map of SAFE proposal location with active CREP project location(s) within the State
- 3.2.5. Map of SAFE proposal location with active SAFE project location(s) within the State
- 3.2.6. Other maps of the proposal location impacting the target species

SAFE Proposal Required Information

4. Proposal Description

- 4.1. Describe the goal of the project
- 4.2. List of SAFE practice (CP38) and CRP sub-practices in the following format:
CP38A-8A, CP38C-3, CP38D-36, CP38E-1, etc.
- 4.3. With each applicable CRP sub-practice, list the proposed additional requirements if applicable
- 4.4. Habitat type to be restored and how the habitat will meet the target species needs addressing information, such as connectivity and life cycle requirements
- 4.5. Required cover type and habitat management requirements, including details of plant species, habitat elements, and management techniques needed to meet the target species needs

SAFE Proposal Required Information

4. Proposal Description (Continued)

- 4.6. Description required management activities that will be implemented according to 2-CRP, paragraph 428
- 4.7. Description of other Federal, State, local, and private efforts to achieve project goals and objectives
- 4.8. Description of how the proposal aligns with the State Wildlife Action Plan
- 4.9. Description of haying and grazing requirements or restrictions
- 4.10. Description of permissive and restricted uses if proposal contains additional restrictions beyond policies in 2-CRP, Part 18

SAFE Proposal Required Information

4. Proposal Description (Continued)

- 4.11.** If including conservation practice Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (647) in the proposal **and** using annual plants to create early successional habitat, the following information must be included:
- 4.11.1. How creating Early Successional Habitat (ESH) conditions with annuals are beneficial compared to applying disturbance to stands of perennials to create ESH
 - 4.11.2. Use of introduced or native annuals
 - 4.11.3. How often annuals will be seeded
 - 4.11.4. Percentage of contracted acres applying ESH management
 - 4.11.5. Strategy to control soil erosion and noxious weeds
 - 4.11.6. Approved annual plant species

SAFE Proposal Required Information

5. Anticipated Outcomes

- 5.1. SAFE enrollment acreage and number of contract goals to meet habitat needs of targeted species for the SAFE proposal
- 5.2. Provide measurable outcomes and timeframes of when outcomes would be achieved
- 5.3. Describe benefits (including societal, recreational, economic, and environmental) of the proposed project
- 5.4. Describe how enrollment in the SAFE proposed project will assist to achieve goals of the State Wildlife Action Plan
- 5.5. Provide estimated State, local, and private partners out-of-pocket costs

SAFE Proposal Required Information

6. Outreach

- 6.1. Describe the public outreach plan, including materials, media, and events needed to achieve project goals
- 6.2. Describe the plan to educate State FSA, NRCS, and partners who will be administering and planning to support the SAFE project

Notice CRP-966 Exhibit 2

SAFE Proposal Requirements

Each proposal submitted to CD by the FSA State Office must include, at a minimum, all the following:

- copy of FSA STC minutes
- copy of NRCS State Technical Committee minutes
- SED certification that active SAFE projects and new or modified proposals meet the requirements of this notice
- shapefiles of proposed project area, according to 1-GIS, Exhibit 31
- proposal according to requirements in Exhibit 1
- 2-CRP amendment, including modifications to 2-CRP, Exhibit 11 practice write-up for SAFE.

Deadlines

Date	Action
April 25 through June 24, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SAFE partners or stakeholders review existing SAFE projects and submit new or modified SAFE proposals to FSA.• FSA STC reviews proposals with the State Technical Committee.• SED certifies all existing SAFE projects and new and modified SAFE proposals meet required criteria and format according to this notice.• FSA State Office submits existing active projects and new and modified SAFE proposals to CD.

State Office Actions

- modify all active SAFE projects to ensure compliance with requirements in Exhibit 1
- Note:** If a State or sponsor elects to terminate a SAFE project, SED must send a memo notifying CD of the proposed termination by the deadline in paragraph 5.
- submit all new and modified SAFE proposals and required documents to David Taylor at david.taylor4@usda.gov at CD according to Exhibit 2 by **COB, June 24, 2022**

State Office Actions

- once SAFE projects are approved, FSA State Offices will collaborate with the partner on developing a fact sheet

Note: The State Office will reach out to provide guidance on development. Instructions from the National Office will be provided in future guidance.

- contact Alan Lange, Natural Resource Specialist, in the National Office with any questions about this notice.

Alan Lange

alan.lange@usda.gov

515-331-8449

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Questions

*Contact your FSA state office



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Recording & Presentation to be Posted on Outreach Webinar Page

Website Location:

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/outreach-and-education/webinars/index>

Webinar Questions?

fsaoutreach@usda.gov