



Farm Service Agency Conservation Reserve Program

Texas - Lower Rio Grande Valley Thornscrub State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Project

Fact Sheet
November 2022

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 Lower Rio Grande Valley Thornscrub SAFE project allows landowners to restore Tamaulipan thornscrub habitat for the endangered ocelot and other wildlife species by creating and maintaining 5,000 acres of native woody shrub and grassland habitat in Cameron, Hidalgo, Kenedy, Starr and Willacy counties.

Benefits

The potential benefits of this SAFE Initiative include:

- Increase in ocelot use of established acreage
- Increase bird use of established acreage
- Increase corridors and connectivity between habitat patches
- Improve air quality and soil health by preventing wind erosion
- Reduce irrigation needs for enrolled cropland

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.

Practice Requirements

Contracted acres must be planted and managed to an approved mix of native grasses, wildflowers, and forbs, or woody shrubs according to NRCS practice standards for 327 - Conservation Cover, 420 - Wildlife Habitat Planting, and 612 - Shrub Establishment. Only native plant species are permitted. Maintenance and management activities are required according to program guidelines.



Source: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

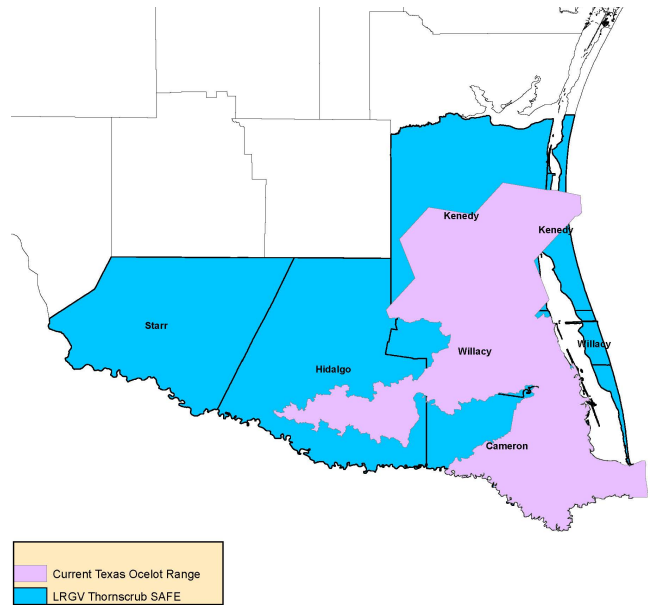
Financial Assistance

Financial assistance through this SAFE Initiative may include:

- 10-15 years of annual rental payments
- Payments of up to 50% Cost-Share for practice establishment
- Practices enrolled through CRP Continuous Sign-up will also receive
 - A 50% Practice Incentive Payment (PIP)
 - Sign-up Incentive Payment (SIP) equal to 32.5% of first full year's annual rental payment
 - A Climate Smart Annual Practice Incentive of 3, 5, or 10% based on the practice cover

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-locator



Texas Lower Rio Grande Valley Thornscrub SAFE
Current Texas Ocelot Range and Project Area Map