

# NEW CRP Options for Iowa Landowners

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Photo courtesy of FDC Enterprises INC.

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On January 1, 2017, the USDA issued a notice regarding the allocation of 700,000 acres of Continuous CRP (CCRP) State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), this was previously announced in December of 2016. Iowa was fortunate to receive 115,000 of the 700,000 acres. The acres were allocated based on State specific needs tailored to restore high-priority wildlife habitat. Currently over 1,450,000 acres are enrolled in SAFE CRP contracts nationwide.

In 2016, Iowa landowners had very few CRP options available to them. The General CRP signup was a bust in terms of contracts being accepted in Iowa. Three of the most popular CCRP practices (CP-38E SAFE Pheasant Recovery, CP-38E Gaining Ground and CP-23 Wetlands Restoration) used all the acres allocated, resulting in a large demand put on a lesser known CCRP practice, CP-42 Pollinator Habitat.

CP-42 is intended to create habitat for butterflies and bees and requires a high quantity and diversity of forbs (wildflowers) along with some perennial native grasses. While not the first choice for many landowners or managers, the practice became the main CCRP practice enrolled statewide in 2016. Virtually all crop ground is eligible for this practice if it meets the required cropping history, whole fields can also be enrolled. Recently a 100 acre per farm cap was issued on new CP-42 contracts. A Sign-up Incentive Payment (SIP) of \$150/acre and initial seeding cost share is also provided. CP-42 does not offer a Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) or a one-time initial payment covering additional establishment costs.

Pollinator Habitat is extremely important in helping to provide habitat for insects that pollinate crops (including soybeans) and for the monarch butterfly, which is in dire need of essential habitat. Many landowners and managers would much rather enroll in the SAFE or CP-23 practices as they align more closely with their management needs.

This new announcement of SAFE acres is great news for Iowans as three IA SAFE practices received a combined total of 115,000 acres available for sign-up starting January 9, 2017. The CP-38E Pheasant Recovery practice received 25,000 acres, the CP-38E Gaining Ground practice received 50,000 acres and the new CP-38E Quail practice received 40,000 acres.

While not all of the details regarding eligible counties and locations have been announced, it's likely the Pheasant Recover and Gaining Ground acres will be allocated similar to the initial sign-up. You can click on these links to learn about the previous allocation locations. (

[www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/Wildlife%20Stewardship/pheasant\\_safe.pdf](http://www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/Wildlife%20Stewardship/pheasant_safe.pdf); [www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/.../gaining\\_ground\\_wildlife.pdf](http://www.iowadnr.gov/portals/idnr/uploads/.../gaining_ground_wildlife.pdf))

Details on the new Quail SAFE practice are due out on January 11th and will likely be very similar to the Pheasant Recovery practice. We expect most of the Quail SAFE acres will be directed to the southern half to third of the state.

All three practices will include a SIP, PIP, and cost share for newly enrolled acres. SIP amounts have not yet been published but will likely be around \$100/acre. The PIP will pay roughly 40% of the establishment cost with not-to-exceed designated amounts. One thing to keep an eye on is there may be a soil rental rate cap of \$300/acre. This won't affect a large number of acres but may limit enrollment of highly productive soils or soils with a high CSR value.

If history repeats itself these acres are going to go fast. If you are interested in these practices, we encourage you to contact your local FSA office or Peoples Company Land Management at 515.222.1347 or [LandManagement@PeoplesCompany.com](mailto:LandManagement@PeoplesCompany.com). Contract start dates are expected to start in October 2017, so participants will still be able to farm the enrolled acres for the 2017 growing season.

Co-author Tom Schwartz is the Iowa sales manager for FDC Enterprises, Inc. (FDCE). FDC Enterprises, Inc. is the nation's leader in CRP and WRP establishment services and has established over 270,000 acres of CRP since 2003. FDCE provides CRP establishment services (seed, planting and herbicide) for the entire state of IA and has 5 IA locations (Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Mason City, Ottumwa and Sioux City). In 2016, FDCE planted over 16,000 acres of continuous CRP in Iowa. For more information about FDCE and to get a free quote for your CRP establishment project contact Tom at 866-270-4833 or email [tom@fdcenterprises.com](mailto:tom@fdcenterprises.com). Also feel free to visit the website at [www.fdcenterprises.com](http://www.fdcenterprises.com)