



Stearns County Soil & Water Conservation District

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For Immediate Release

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NEW CRP PRACTICE NOW AVAILABLE

A new Continuous Conservation Reserve Program practice is now available to landowners in Minnesota. The new practice, titled State Acres For wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), also known as CP38, has 23,100 acres available to Minnesota landowners. The program seeks to build upon existing wildlife habitats to enhance ringnecked pheasant, waterfowl, greater prairie chicken and other grassland bird populations. The conservation effort is expected to benefit bird species such as Henslow's sparrow, lark sparrow, loggerhead shrike, eastern meadowlark, bobolink, dickcissel, vesper sparrow, savannah sparrow and grasshopper sparrow.

Pheasants are an upland nesting bird preferring small blocks of undisturbed grassland nesting habitat. The pheasant is important both socially and economically. In 2006, nearly 130,000 Minnesotans purchased pheasant stamps, a license required to hunt pheasants in Minnesota. Pheasants are barometers of the environmental health of Minnesota's farmlands, as their populations ebb and flow with landowner participation in conservation. In addition to being the primary limiting factor for pheasants, grasslands have been identified as among the nation's most threatened ecosystems. This threat is evident in Minnesota where less than 1 percent of native prairie remains.

Through the new CP38 practice, landowners enter into a 15 year contract and agree to establish grassland cover on the enrolled acres. In return, the landowner receives cost share for establishment, annual rental payments and a one time signing bonus. CP38 can be designed to square up odd shaped fields, hard to farm small fields or irrigation corners.

CP 38 Requirements

Size Requirements: 10-40 acre blocks of eligible cropland.

Stearns County Payment Rate: \$73 - \$106 per acre.

Contract Length: 15 years.

Signing Bonus: One time payment of \$100 per acre.

Cost Share: up to 50% cost share plus 40% incentive payment to establishing the cover.

If you are interested in learning more about the CP38 program on your property please contact the USDA Service Center, (320) 251-7800 or go to www.stearnsfpf.org and go to the Habitat/Conservation tab to see a fact sheet on the program.

All programs and services of the Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.