

# **Benefits of CRP SAFE for Wildlife**



Native, healthy grasslands are important for many iconic Oklahoma species like northern bobwhite quail. Enrolling eligible cropland into CRP SAFE is a great way to enhance habitat for wildlife while receiving rental payments through the USDA's Farm Bill program.

## **CRP SAFE Conservation Benefits:**

- ✓ **Restores native grassland vegetation.**
- ✓ **Provides important year-round habitat for grassland-dependent wildlife.**
- ✓ **Increases food diversity for wildlife.**
- ✓ **Increases nesting habitat for birds.**
- ✓ **Provides nectar-producing wildflowers for butterflies and other pollinators.**
- ✓ **Increases biodiversity.**
- ✓ **Protects highly erodible soils.**
- ✓ **Improves water quality.**
- ✓ **Enhances soil productivity.**
- ✓ **Reduces downstream flood damage.**
- ✓ **Sequesters carbon.**

## **How CRP SAFE Works:**

- 1) Landowners in eligible counties apply through their county USDA office.
- 2) USDA biologists visit the property and/or assist landowners through the enrollment process.
- 3) Landowners follow guidelines and receive CRP SAFE payments annually from the USDA.

## **General Landowner Requirements:**

- Enrolled cropland is planted to native vegetation, including no less than 8 grasses and 10 forbs.
  - a. 50% forb mix when monarch butterfly is primary target (30% when monarch is secondary target).
- At least 1% of acreage will be planted to sand plums if these shrubs were present historically.
  - a. Plums will be planted on 3-5 foot spacings with a minimum patch size of 30 foot X 50 foot.
- Invasive and noxious weeds will be controlled through spot treatment.
- Mid-contract management will occur twice during the contract period including between years 5-8 and years 10-13. Mid-contract management options include:
  - a. Prescribed Burning
    - i. Conducted outside of the May 1 to July 1 primary nesting season.
  - b. Strip Disking
    - i. Conducted only between December 1 and March 1.
  - c. Strip Spraying
    - i. Conducted during the growing season but outside of the May 1 to July 1 primary nesting season.
  - d. Forb/Legume Interseeding
    - i. Requires some type of prior disturbance for optimum germination of the forb/legume seed.
  - e. Mowing
    - i. Conducted only from February 1 through March 15.

## **Habitat Type to be Restored:**

Mixed- and tallgrass prairie, sand sage/bluestem shrubland and sand plum shrubland.