

Fact Sheet

March 2008

Eau Claire and Jackson Counties



Karner Blue Butterfly SAFE

Overview

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), in partnership with the West Wisconsin Land Trust is offering a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) practice tailored to provide enhanced habitat for the Karner blue butterfly and other wildlife. This practice, established through FSA's State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative, is available to eligible participants in Eau Claire and Jackson counties.

Goals

The goal of this practice is to expand the population of the Karner Blue butterfly through increased habitat in the specified counties. This practice provides an opportunity for enhanced knowledge about wild blue lupine establishment, linking Karner Blue butterfly use and occupation with grass prairie restoration and enhancement.



▲ Wild Blue Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*)

Practice Specifications

SAFE practice CP-38E (Grass) establishes native prairie. Contract length is between 10 and 15 years.

The purpose of this practice is to restore the functions and values of the Karner blue butterfly habitat while reducing soil loss and sedimentation, improving surface and groundwater quality, and enhancing wildlife habitat on land retired from agricultural production.

Land Eligibility

To be eligible for placement in a SAFE CRP practice, land must be:

- Cropland (including field margins) that is planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity 4 of the previous 6 crop years from 1996 to 2001
- Physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity
- Located within the state designated SAFE area
- A maximum of 1,000 acres, for both counties, are available for this practice
- 1/3 of the field must contain soils appropriate for Wild blue lupine

Participant Eligibility

CRP participants must have:

- Owned or operated the land for the previous 12 months, some exceptions apply
- An average adjusted gross income of less than \$2.5 million unless 75% or more of income is from farming, ranching, or forestry operations



▲ Karner blue butterfly (*Lycaeides Melissa samuelis*)

CRP Payments

Participants are eligible for four types of USDA payments:

- Signing Incentive Payment— A one-time payment of \$100 per acre. USDA makes this payment within 30 days after the contract has been approved
- Annual rental payments based on the relative productivity of the soils within the offered area and the average dryland cash-rent or cash-rent equivalent, including a maintenance payment.
- Cost share assistance of 50 percent for installing the practice on contracted land
- Practice Incentive Payment— Approximately 40 percent of the total cost for establishing the practice

Management

Participants are required to perform mid-contract management activities. This will include mowing or burning in order to create a disturbance, allowing for regeneration of wild blue lupine. A 50% cost-share payment is paid in the year the management is performed.

Acreage devoted to a SAFE practice is ineligible for both managed and emergency haying or grazing.

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement

Monitoring and Compliance

Monitoring

The West Wisconsin Land Trust will complete monitoring activities annually for all SAFE practices. These reviews will determine the success of the practice in accomplishing the stated goals. Annual reports will be submitted to the National FSA Office. Monitoring for goal success is separate and distinct from participant compliance obligations.

Compliance

SAFE practices are implemented through the Farm Service Agency's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and are therefore subject to all CRP regulations, including but not limited to:

- Control of noxious weeds
- Control of any vegetation not prescribed by the conservation plan
- Establishment and maintenance of the cover as stipulated by the contract and conservation plan
- Adherence to primary nesting season policies (May 15—August 1)
- Annual submission of crop report



▲ Karner blue butterfly (*Lycaeides Melissa samuelis*) underside of wing

For More Information

For more information about this program contact your USDA Service Center:

Eau Claire County
 227 First Street West
 Altoona, WI 54742
 Phone 715.839.5081

Jackson County
 311 County Highway A
 Black River Falls, WI 54615
 Phone 715.284.4515

Partnering Agencies and Organizations

US Department of Agriculture

- Farm Service Agency
- Natural Resources Conservation Service

US Department of the Interior

- Fish and Wildlife Service

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

- Biology Department

University of Wisconsin-Extension

Land Conservation Department

West Wisconsin Land Trust

The Prairie Enthusiasts

- Chippewa Savanna Chapter

Resource Conservation and Development

- Prairie Partners

Habitat Forever



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