

WHAT'S NEXT?

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT NOW THAT I AM IN A CONSERVATION PROGRAM?

NRCS requires the participant adhere to the following once they enter into a Conservation Program Contract (CPC):

1. Start at least one practice in the contract within the first 12 months of the contract.
Note: Secure prior approval from NRCS before initiating construction on practices requiring an engineering design.
2. Complete contract items as scheduled in the CPC. Contract items may be accomplished anytime prior to the year scheduled. (Exception: Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) contract items do not have funds obligated to them ahead of schedule and therefore cannot be completed in advance.) If a practice will not be completed on schedule, you will need to contact your local NRCS office and work with them to review your contract's schedule. All required treatment must be installed at least 12 months before the end of the contract period.
3. Submit to NRCS an application for payment (Form NRCS-CPA-1245) when practice(s) are completed (CSP, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)).
4. Submit receipts for practices completed. This is not required, but encouraged to assist NRCS in maintaining current cost data.
5. Permit free access for NRCS and/or its agents to provide technical assistance and to inspect the work at any reasonable time during the life span of the installed practices.

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6. Forfeit all rights to further payments under the contract, refund to NRCS all contract payments received, and pay liquidated damages upon termination of the contract as outlined in the CPC Appendix.
7. Forfeit all rights to further payments under the CPC if the land under contract is transferred.
8. Upon cancellation of the contract, refund to NRCS all payments made under the contract as outlined in the CPC Appendix and as determined by specific program requirements.
9. Maintain the conservation treatment or practice installed on the land *for the life span of each practice*, as identified on the contract documents.
10. Share responsibility for ensuring that your conservation plan and contract documents are accurate and complete. The NRCS has no authority to compensate participants for practices and/or activities that are not in the contract at the time of obligation.
11. Ask questions! If you do not understand specific items or terms of the contract and its associated Appendix, let your local NRCS know. They will be happy to answer questions you may have.



USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

Other Online Resources:

GOVDELIVERY 

www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov



Twitter:

[@USDA_NRCS_GA](https://twitter.com/USDA_NRCS_GA)



www.youtube.com/user/nrcsga



Georgia NRCS

Individual Steps for: Applying for Conservation Programs Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)



Your State NRCS Office is located at:

**355 E. Hancock Avenue
Athens, GA 30601**

Tel: Office: 706-546-2272
Fax: 855-417-8490

www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov

Helping People Help the Land

INDIVIDUAL STEPS...

Individual – any individual who controls the enrolled land and uses their personal *social security number (SSN)* to apply for conservation program assistance.

1. **Applicant** indicates interest in a conservation program by signing appropriate program application forms.
2. **Applicant** establishes a customer record in the Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS). This will require the applicant set up an appointment with the [Farm Service Agency \(FSA\)](#) to complete record and necessary applicant eligibility information.
3. **Applicant** completes forms* to determine eligibility for USDA programs:
 - [AD-1026](#) Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Certification
 - [CCC-902-I](#) Farm Operating Plan for Payment Eligibility Review
 - [CCC-931](#) Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)

These eligibility forms can be accessed on-line for your convenience. Please visit our eForms site at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eForms/welcomeAction.do?Home>

***The process of establishing applicant eligibility may take several weeks. Some forms may need to be updated annually. You must maintain eligibility status throughout the life of the conservation program contract in order to receive program benefits.**

4. **Applicant** sets up an appointment with local NRCS office to visit the operation and develop a current **conservation plan**. This process can take several visits—both in the office and in the field.

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5. **NRCS** develops a program application package based on the approved conservation plan and discussions with the applicant.
6. **NRCS** reviews program applications and selects eligible applications for funding based on ranking criteria and available funding *when funding is available*. Because NRCS programs rely on funds being available, this step may occur weeks or months after your program application package is submitted.
7. **Applicant** provides additional information if NRCS determines their application *may be considered* for funding. This additional information includes:
 - Completed [SF-1199](#) Direct Deposit Form. All program payments will be direct deposited using this banking information.
 - Power of Attorney Form ([FSA 211](#) may be used) if the authorized individual wants to allow another individual to sign on their behalf.
8. **Applicant** must document control of the land for the contract period using any of the following:
 - Deed
 - Lease or
 - Other written authorization from the landowner (“NRCS—Farm Bill Conservation Programs Land Eligibility Certification Form” may be used)
 - Land must be considered an *eligible land use* for the program.



Water Troughs with Heavy Use Area

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Failure to provide the required information may cause your application to be considered “ineligible” for the program year.

If your application is not considered for funding in the year you apply, your application may be considered in future years based on funding and meeting the requirements outlined above.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, complete, sign, and mail a program discrimination complaint form, available at any USDA office location or online at www.ascr.usda.gov, or write to:

USDA
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20250-9410

Or call toll free at (866) 632-9992 (voice) to obtain additional information, the appropriate office or to request documents. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).