Call NRCS to schedule a Conservation Consultation
1 - 4 weeks

Conservation Consultation
Landowner should first complete conservation plan worksheet items and confirm with Farm Service Agency eligibility for USDA programs. This meeting is intended to identify resource concerns and the landowner’s objectives for the farm. A site visit may or may not be needed at this stage.
1 - 2 weeks

Develop Conservation Plan
(A Conservation Plan is a schedule of landowner decisions to protect natural resources on his/her property.)
1 to 12 months

Discuss Program Options/Availability
Farm Bill Programs, sometimes including cost sharing, may be utilized to address resource concerns in the conservation plan when appropriate. Program availability is dependent on congressional appropriations for each program.
2-4 weeks

Possible Revision

Completion of Farm Bill Program Application
After the Conservation Plan is completed it must be signed and certified by the appropriate parties including the landowner, County Conservation District, and the FSA County Committee. Landowner signs a Conservation Program Application/Contract and a Conservation Plan or Schedule of Operations.
1 to 6 months (depending on application deadline)

Deferred

Notification of application status

Receive payment/cost share
After the practice(s) has been completed, applicant submits receipts to NRCS to receive cost share/incentive payments.

Pay contractor & submit receipts to NRCS
4 to 6 weeks

NRCS or TSP inspection and evaluation of the construction/implementation of practice is necessary for certification.

Implement/Construct Practice
1 to 6 weeks

Hire Contractor

TSP or NRCS Completes Conservation Practice Design

Develop & Sign a Conservation Contract Modification

Select a TSP from the TechReg register

Use a Technical Service Provider—Yes? No?
Technical Service Providers are experts outside of USDA who are certified to provide technical assistance on behalf of USDA. Technical assistance includes planning and implementing conservation practices. NRCS can reimburse producers for technical assistance provided by TSPs. A list of TSPs can be found at http://techreg.usda.gov

sign Legal & Binding Contract

Begin Practice Implementation 1 week to 1 year (depending on practice)