Landowner(s) submit or update existing application package, including FSA eligibility, hazmat/title issues, and application completeness evaluated.

Environmental Records Database Search, Title, and Appraisal services ordered.

On-site investigations and preliminary planning.

Services received; application package, investigations, and planning reviewed in-depth.

Finalization of investigations, planning, and cost estimates.

ELIGIBLE applications ranked in appropriate ranking pool.

Funding level evaluated.

Internal Controls (IC) review (State and National).

NRCS makes offer for enrollment based on NRCS-determined easement value.

Agreement/contract is signed by all parties.

Funds obligated, agreement/contract activated, and copy sent to landowner(s).

Unfunded applications deferred.

Applications tentatively selected for funding.

NRCS begins acquisition process.

*At any time, an application may be determined INELIGIBLE or screen too low and may be reconsidered once application is updated accordingly.

*See closing process workflows for continuation.

This flow chart represents a general process and is subject to modification based on individual circumstances of an application. The application process generally takes up to six months. The process may differ slightly for 30-Year Contracts; contact the NRCS State Office Easements Program Manager for more information.
Boundary Survey ordered
Finalize investigations and planning from application phase
On-site verification of Boundary Survey and hazmat/title issues
Prepare draft Easement Deed and closing instructions
Preliminary Title Opinion (PTO) from the Office of General Counsel (OGC)

Communication of closing instructions; resolve outstanding title issues before closing
Sign the final Wetlands Restoration Plan of Operations (WRPO)
Internal Controls (IC) review (State and National)
State Conservationist approval to proceed with acquisition
Schedule closing and disburse payment to escrow account

Closing; all parties sign Easement Deed and it is recorded
Final on-site verification (may also be completed just prior to closing)
Final Title Opinion (FTO) from the Office of General Counsel (OGC); verification closing instructions followed
Notification to Farm Service Agency (FSA) of easement recording
Restoration and maintenance phase commences

Prior to closing, NRCS may withdraw the land from enrollment at any time due to the lack of availability of funds, inability of landowner to provide clear title or sufficient legal access, sale of the land, or for other reasons.

This flow chart represents a general process and is subject to modification based on individual circumstances of a transaction. The closing process can generally take from 18 months up to three years. Waivers requested to any terms can add up to 90 days to the process. The process may differ slightly for 30-Year Contracts; contact the NRCS State Office Easements Program Manager for more information.