

6 Steps to Conservation Easements



Do you own farmland, forest, or wetlands and want to protect and/or restore them?

Natural Resources Conservation Service offers technical and financial assistance to help you protect your land.

1 Land & Project Pre-screening Contact our Easement Professionals for a **free evaluation and consultation.** Starting with a map and deed of your property, we'll see if one of our conservation easement programs meets your goals and explain the process and available financial assistance.

2 Application & Eligibility We'll walk you through the application and the landowner or entity eligibility process, including, but not limited to:

- The program application: CPA-1200
- Necessary eligibility forms
- DUNS and SAM registration (may be required)

3 Field Visit & Land Eligibility We'll visit your property and meet with you to **determine if your land is eligible for an NRCS conservation easement.** NRCS reviews the application, verifies landowner and parcel eligibility, orders an environmental records search, reviews the hazardous materials checklist with the landowner, and when a wetlands easement is appropriate, creates a restoration plan.

4 Ranking & Agreement NRCS will review and rank applications based on **conservation and resource criteria like:**

- Natural resource features
- Land conversion pressure from population growth
- Infrastructure factors and proximity to other protected land

5 Acquisition & Closing NRCS will help guide the landowner or entity **through the acquisition and closing process.** The easement purchase price is determined, a boundary survey is done to determine final easement acres, a title search and review is completed to ensure clear title, final deed language is reviewed and approved, and the easement is closed and recorded.

6 Monitoring & Restoration After the easement is in place, **monitoring occurs to ensure compliance; for a wetlands easement, restoration and habitat enhancement is initiated.** For both types of easements, a monitoring report is submitted annually by the easement holder in perpetuity.

Approximate Timeline: (Congressional actions can affect timelines including, but not limited to, the release of program funds.)





**NEW
HAMPSHIRE**

Conservation Districts

Belknap County Conservation District

64 Court Street
Laconia, NH 03246
603-527-5580
www.belknapccd.org

Carroll County Conservation District

P.O. Box 533
Conway, NH 03818
603-447-2771

Cheshire County Conservation District

11 Industrial Park Dr.
Walpole, NH 03608
603-756-2988
www.cheshireconservation.org

Coos County Conservation District

4 Mayberry Lane
Lancaster, NH 03584
603-788-4651

Grafton County Conservation District

19 Archertown Rd., Suite 1
Orford, NH 03777
603-353-4651
www.graftonccd.org

Hillsborough County Conservation District

#468, Rte. 13 South
Milford, NH 03055
603-673-2409
www.hillsboroughccd.com

Merrimack County Conservation District

10 Ferry St., Suite 211
Concord, NH 03301
603-223-6023
www.merrimackccd.org

Rockingham County Conservation District

110 North Rd.
Brentwood, NH 03833
603-679-2790
www.rockinghamccd.org

Strafford County Conservation District

264 County Farm Rd.
Dover, NH 03820
603-749-3037
www.straffordccd.org

Sullivan County Conservation District

95 County Farm Rd.
Unity, NH 03743
603-542-4891
www.sullivancountynh.gov

New Hampshire Association
of Conservation Districts:

www.nhacd.org



Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

The 2014 Farm Bill combined the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP), Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), into two types of easements: Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) and Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE).

Agricultural Land Easements (ALE):

- ◆ NRCS will pay a maximum of 50% of the appraised easement value, and will not hold the easement.
- ◆ A sponsoring entity must submit the application package to NRCS (including the landowner application and eligibility forms, parcel, and entity workbooks), hold the easement, and match a minimum of 50% of the NRCS contribution (or 25% of the appraised easement value).
- ◆ The entity is also responsible for obtaining a title search, boundary survey, appraisal, baseline documentation, and negotiating the deed language between NRCS and the landowner.
- ◆ Funds are obligated to the sponsoring entity through a Cooperative Agreement. The Cooperative Agreement template is posted on the NH NRCS web page.
- ◆ The sponsoring entity (typically a Land Trust or Conservation Commission) must have a DUNS number and have an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) at the time of fund obligation. These rules do not apply to the landowner if they are an entity (such as an LLC, Corporation, Trust).
- ◆ Land Eligibility Criteria: 1) minimum 50% prime, unique, statewide, or locally important soils; or 2) historical or archeological significance; or 3) furthers a state or local initiative. All parcels are limited to a maximum of 66% forestland, however, active sugar bush can be considered cropland. The entity match must be demonstrated at the time of application.

Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE):

- ◆ There is no entity sponsorship required, the agreement is directly between NRCS and the landowner, the easement is held by NRCS, and the land must have been owned by the applicant for a minimum of two years prior to filing an application.
- ◆ A minimum of 50% of the land must be: 1) former or degraded wetland (previously drained, filled, or altered for agricultural or silvacultural production); or 2) riparian land that connects to other riparian land already under a conservation easement.
- ◆ NRCS is continually accepting applications on form CPA-1200. They will be processed and ranked as they are received. Eligible applications meeting the minimum ranking threshold will be tentatively selected for funding and funded monthly as available funds allow. Entity land owners, such as trusts using an employee identification number, LLC's, or corporations must obtain a DUNS number and register in the system for Award Management (SAM).

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NRCS Easement Team:

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New Hampshire State Office

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Dover, NH 03820
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603-868-7581

Concord Field Service Center

Serving Merrimack and Belknap Counties
10 Ferry St., Suite 211
Concord, NH 03301
603-223-6023

Conway Field Service Center

Serving Carroll and Belknap Counties
73 Main St.
Conway, NH 03818
603-447-2771

Epping Field Service Center

Serving Rockingham and
Strafford Counties
629 Calef Highway, Suite 203
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603-679-1587

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