

Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Target Timelines for ACEP:
Entering into New Agreements and Obligations and Target Dates for Prior-Year Agreements

ACEP FY 2021 Enrollment and Acquisition Actions	Target Completion Date*	Notes
ACEP: Guidance and allocations for FY 2021 ACEP implementation provided to States.	January 2021	States review ACEP regulation, policy, and other guidance applicable to ACEP implementation in FY 2021. Prepare State materials and make updates as needed.
ACEP: States announce availability of ACEP funding and any FY 2021 application cutoff dates.	On or about January 4, 2021	States establish FY 2021 ACEP application signup cutoff dates and batching periods and make public announcements of ACEP availability. Applications cutoff date must be at least 30 days after announcement and no earlier than February 3, 2021.
ACEP: States complete FY 2021 CART ranking pools and post ranking criteria to State web sites.	Prior to first ACEP application cutoff date	FY 2021 ranking criteria must be posted to State website prior to first ACEP application signup cutoff date (see NI 440-310 updated for FY 2021).
ACEP-WRE: Requisition of easement boundary surveys on prior year enrollments	January 15, 2021	Funds for easement boundary surveys that were obligated to the supplement to the enrollment agreement for the preliminary obligation of acquisition-related costs in FY 2020 were mass released and must be obligated (see NB 300-21-5).
ACEP: Recommended first ACEP application cutoff date for FY 2021 funding consideration.	30 days from announcement, no earlier than February 3, 2021	States may establish their own cutoff dates based on workload but must provide at least 30 days from the announcement of the application cutoff date for the first batching period. States should conduct onsite investigations, ranking, and eligibility determinations as soon as applications are received.
ACEP-WRE: States interested in offering the ACEP-WRE Reservation of Grazing Rights enrollment option in FY 2021 or requesting authorization to provide ACEP-WRE cost-share funds for certain grazing-related practices must submit the required information to the Easement Programs Division (EPD) for approval prior to implementation	March 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For grazing reserved rights submit the draft exhibit E for each area of interest through the Program Activity Management Solution (PAMS). - For authorization to provide cost-share for certain grazing-related practices, submit the request through PAMS.
ACEP-WRE: States interested in requesting a waiver for enrollment lands meeting the adjacent lands eligibility criteria in excess of State conservationist authority must submit the required information to EPD for approval prior to implementation.	March 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - States requests must be submitted through PAMS and must include the information as identified in 440-CPM-528-K-528.105I, including a copy of the State's WRGC
ACEP-ALE: For new ACEP-ALE Program Agreements to be executed in FY 2021, States must submit the draft, unexecuted ACEP-ALE Program Agreement to EPD for approval prior to execution. NOTE: Eligible entities with an existing ACEP-ALE Program Agreement executed in FY 2020 or FY 2019 may simply submit NRCS-CPA-41A parcel applications for individual Parcel Contracts to be added to their existing Program Agreement. Submission of a NRCS-CPA-41, Entity Application, in FY 2021 is not required.	March 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - States must submit the unexecuted ACEP-ALE program agreement, all agreement Exhibits, and the NRCS-CPA-41, Entity Application, in accordance with specific ACEP-ALE program agreement guidance to Nrcs.programagreements@usda.gov (see 440-CPM-528, NI 300-306, and applicable FY 2021 guidance). - State conservationist may execute the properly completed and reviewed ACEP-ALE program agreement only after receiving written approval from EPD. - ACEP-ALE program agreements executed in FY 2021 must address the regulatory provisions in place at the time of the agreement execution.
ACEP: Enter all applications into NEST or ProTracts, including ALE funded and substitute parcels.	March 12, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACEP-WRE applications: Enter into NEST - ACEP-ALE Program Agreements, Entity and Parcel applications: Enter into ProTracts - ACEP-ALE Cooperative and Grant Agreement, Entity and Parcel applications: Follow guidance provided by national program manager. - RCPP-ACEP-WRE and RCPP-ACEP-ALE: Enter into NEST

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ACEP: States complete initial eligibility determinations, and assessment and ranking in CART.	March 19, 2021	Eligible applications received by the application cutoff date must be ranked and prioritized using the most current State ranking criteria. As applicable, ranking scores for eligible applications must be entered into the appropriate business tool (NEST or ProTracts)
ACEP: Prepare and submit packages to procure due diligence and as needed, individual easement valuation items. Note: It is critical that WRE appraisals and appraisal technical reviews be contracted for at the same time.	March 31, 2021	Procure environmental record searches (ALE and WRE), title commitments for WRE, and where applicable, individual USPAP appraisals and appraisal technical reviews for WRE (contact national appraisers for assistance with identifying qualified local appraisers for WRE). Coordinate with FPAC-BC Acquisition Division as needed on procurement procedures and requirements
ACEP-ALE: Closing deadline for existing 2014 Farm Bill ALE-agreements based on FY of enrollment.	March 31, 2021	Closing deadline for— - FY 2016 – previously extended attachment Cs; - FY 2017 – previously extended attachment Bs - FY 2018 – previously extended attachment As. Parcels must close by this date or the internal closing deadline must be extended in accordance with the terms of the agreement.
ACEP-ALE: Recommended date for submitting attachment expiration deadline extension packages to FPAC BC Grants and Agreements Division (GAD) for remaining FY 2018 ALE-agreements.	March 31, 2021	Unless extended, all active FY 2018 ALE agreement Attachment As will expire on August 31, 2021. (Refer to GAD guidance for package contents requirement.)
ACEP: Complete 1 st funds assessment to submit requests for additional funding in FY 2021.	March 2021 (anticipated)	Guidance will be provided in FY 2021 regarding the supplemental funds assessment. Submit fund returns through the Allotment Planning and Management Application (APM) as soon as it is known the funds are not needed; do not wait for the funds assessment.
ACEP: Identify projects preapproved in Select Agreement Tool (SAT) for funding for FY 2021.	April 15, 2021	- ACEP-WRE: Preapprovals must also be completed in NEST; digitize all easement practices, conservation activities and restoration practices preapproved for ACEP-WRE funding in CD. - ACEP-ALE: Preapprovals must be completed in ProTracts; digitize all easement practices preapproved for funding in CD.
ACEP: Submit ACEP waiver request packages requiring NHQ review (e.g., 24-month ownership)	April 15, 2021	Packages will be reviewed in the order submitted. Earlier and complete submittal allows for faster review. Late or incomplete packages will not be reviewed until after timely and complete packages, as time allows. States will be notified of late, incomplete, or noncompliant submittals that must be deferred until FY 2021.
ACEP-WRE: Complete the necessary steps in NEST to create a funds reservation in FMFI.	April 30, 2021	States will follow the funds reservation process outlined in FY 2021 NB on easement financial management procedures.
ACEP-WRE: Pending publication of updated AWMA statement of work and specification, begin procurement of the FY 2022 AWMA.	Upon publication of new AWMA SOW. Estimated April 2021	States that will use an AWMA for FY 2022 must not begin acquisition of an ACEP-WRE AWMA (new or updated to existing) for use in FY 2022 until updated SOW and guidance is published.
ACEP-ALE: Complete all State-level IC reviews. NOTE: Applies to all ALE-agreement types.	May 19, 2021	State must complete State-level IC reviews prior to executing ACEP-ALE parcel contracts associated with executed ACEP-ALE program agreements. All State-level IC reviews must be documented in PAMS , including those for ACEP-ALE enrollments through Certified Eligible Entities. NOTE: ACEP-ALE program agreements and associated parcel contracts are not submitted to FPAC-BC GAD.

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ACEP-ALE: Submit required items for national-level preobligation IC review for individual ACEP-ALE parcel contracts associated with approved ACEP-ALE program agreements.	May 26, 2021	States must follow ACEP-ALE program agreement guidance provided in 440-CPM-528, NI 300-306, and applicable FY 2021 IC guidance. Submit request for national-level preobligation IC review through PAMS .
ACEP-WRE: Procurement contracts in place for FY2022 AWMA for ACEP-WRE. States that will use USPAP appraisals only in FY 2022, start preparing the easement compensation package for submission to NHQ.	June 1, 2021	Forthcoming guidance will provide direction to States on submission of FY 2022 easement compensation packages and GARCs. States that will use an AWMA for ACEP-WRE in FY 2022 must notify EPD in accordance with the applicable FY 2022 easement compensation guidance. Upon receipt of the AWMA, submit a copy to the national appraiser for review of the AWMA.
ACEP: Complete reviews of due diligence and title search documents to make final determinations regarding eligibility and selection for funding or deferral for FY 2021.	June 1, 2021	If hazardous materials issues, title or access issues, onsite or offsite issues, or ALE agreement or deed terms issues are identified that present eligibility concerns that cannot be readily resolved by the landowner or ALE eligible entity, the application must be deferred or determined ineligible accordingly.
ACEP-WRE: Finalize the preliminary WRPOs and cost estimates in CD and enter information on the "Supplement to the Enrollment Agreement for the Preliminary Obligation of Acquisition-Related and Restoration Costs".	June 11, 2021	Sufficient documentation, including conservation plan map and schedule of operations, must be retained in the official easement case file and uploaded to NEST to support the calculations used to determine the acquisition-related cost and restoration cost estimates identified on the supplement.
ACEP-WRE: Complete State-level reviews, upload documents and submit request for national-level preobligation IC review.	June 18, 2021	All documents needed for IC reviews should be uploaded into NEST by this date. Submit request for national-level preobligation IC review through PAMS . Earlier submittal along with accurately uploaded and named documents allows for faster review.
ACEP-ALE: For Parcel Contracts associated with executed ACEP-ALE Program Agreements only, States send individual ACEP-ALE parcel cost-share contracts to the eligible entity to obtain required signatures.	July 1, 2021	States do not sign the individual ACEP-ALE parcel contracts until after the eligible entity has signed.
ACEP: Complete 2 nd funds assessment to submit requests for additional funding in FY 2021.	July 2021 (anticipated)	Guidance will be provided in FY 2021 regarding the supplemental funds assessment. Submit fund returns through the APM as soon as it is known the funds are not needed; do not wait for the funds assessment.
ACEP-WRE: States issue WRE offers of enrollment (agreements) to selected eligible landowners. ACEP-ALE Program Agreements only: States provide unexecuted ACEP-ALE parcel cost-share contract documents associated with existing ACEP-ALE program agreements to eligible entities for their execution.	July 16, 2021	States may issue enrollment offers only after completion of all required eligibility determinations and preliminary due diligence reviews and upon conclusion of required IC reviews.
ACEP-WRE: States must complete enrollment activities, complete required steps for documenting obligating funds needed in NEST and create agreements in NEST.	July 30, 2021	States must enter all required fields in NEST, upload one file in NEST with all obligation package supporting documentation in NEST prior to entering the enrollment funds to commit and electronically signing in NEST. States release of funds reservations must be specifically requested as needed (see NB 300-21-XX).
ACEP: Last date to return funds to be accepted back by NHQ	August 13, 2021	See FY 2021 Allocation Letter
ACEP-WRE: Submission of FY 2022 easement compensation packages for ACEP-WRE.	August 13, 2021	FY 2022 ACEP-WRE easement compensation packages must be submitted by all States, regardless of whether States will use individual USPAP appraisals only or will use an AWMA. NOTE: States that use AWMA must include the option to conduct individual appraisals in their easement compensation package approval document.

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ACEP-ALE: Attachment expiration deadline for all extended ACEP-ALE cooperative and grant attachments depending on FY of enrollment.	August 31, 2021	ALE-agreement attachments will automatically expire on this date unless an extension (to August 31, 2021) is appropriate based on the terms of the agreement and executed prior to expiration.
ACEP: Final deadline to enter an enrollment funds to commit and electronically sign in NEST.	ESTIMATED: September 9, 2021	Date is subject to change depending on FY 2021 deadlines established by FPAC BC.**
ACEP: States complete entry of all FY 2021 ACEP applications into the appropriate business tool (NEST or ProTracts) and conduct quality assurance on NEST and ProTracts data.	September 11, 2021	All applications, whether selected or not selected must be entered, and statuses must be set as outlined in applicable NEST and ProTracts guidance.
ACEP: Final deadline for submission of preobligation or prepayment National IC review requests.	September 13, 2021	See NB 300-21-8 and NI 300-300 for additional detail
ACEP-WRE: Easements must not be closed during this period.	September 20-30, 2021	As in prior FYs, ACEP-WRE easements must not be closed during this blackout period for closing to minimize negative impacts of unreconciled late-September closings and payments on the NRCS financial statement.
<p>* States are encouraged to complete ACEP new enrollment actions in a timely manner; States should be aware that failure to complete the actions by the target dates in this timeline jeopardizes the successful enrollment of new agreements and obligation of funds in FY 2021.</p> <p>** Farm Production and Conservation Business Center (FPAC BC) encompasses the former Accounts Payable Services Branch (APSB) and Budget Support Services Branch (BSSB).</p>		

NOTE: FY 2021 ACEP-ALE Cooperative or Grant Agreements.—EPD will provide specific instruction to those States that request and receive EPD approval to enroll ACEP-ALE parcels in FY 2021 through an FY 2021 ACEP-ALE Cooperative or Grant Agreement. Such agreements must be submitted to FPAC-BC GAD for review and approval through Service Now and in accordance with any FPAC-BC GAD instruction specific to ACEP-ALE. Additionally, all required IC documents must be completed and uploaded into the appropriate business tool immediately after the upload to FPAC-BC GAD.