

PART 2, CHAPTER 6

FARMLAND

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PART 2, CHAPTER 6

FARMLAND

6.1 OVERVIEW

This chapter outlines the procedure for evaluating project impacts on farmland (see [Figure 6-1](#)). The **Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981, 7 United States Code (U.S.C.) §§ 4201–4209** [regulations located at **7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 658**], was established to minimize the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses by federal programs or by projects using federal assistance. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is responsible for ensuring that **FPPA** is implemented.

The term “farmland” as used in this chapter means prime or unique farmlands as defined in **7 CFR § 658.2(a)**, or farmland that is determined by the appropriate state or unit of local government agency or agencies with concurrence of the USDA Secretary to be farmland of statewide or local importance. See **Section 523.20, Designating Important Farmland Soils**, of the NRCS **Farmland Protection Policy Act Manual**.

FPPA requirements apply to farmlands even if not in active use as cropland. Qualifying farmlands can be forest land, pastureland, cropland or other land, but not land already in or committed to urban development or water storage. The process for agricultural lands not falling under these protections are provided in [Part 2, Chapter 4, Community Impact Assessment](#). Farmlands are considered a Community Effect topic; however, it follows a different process for analysis than the Community Impact Assessment (CIA) topics identified in [Part 2, Chapter 4, Community Impact Assessment](#).

Potential effects on farmlands may be identified in the Preliminary Environmental Discussion (PED) of the Planning or Programming Screens during the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process (see the [Efficient Transportation Decision Making Manual, Topic No. 650-000-002](#)). However, a farmland evaluation occurs later in the project development process after Right of Way (ROW) needs have been identified.

The **FPPA** applies only to Federal Actions other than federal permits, and therefore the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Federal Projects. FDOT State Projects such as a Non-Major State Action (NMSA) or State Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) are not subject to the provisions of the **FPPA**.

6.2 PROCEDURE

The farmland evaluation starts by determining if the project is subject to the **FPPA**. For projects screened through the ETDM process, Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) comments for the “Farmlands” topic in the **Programming Screen Summary**

Report should be reviewed. Comments by NRCS may state specifically that the project may affect farmland. While screening information is preliminary, it is useful in determining the level of effort for farmland evaluation later during the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase which requires coordination with the NRCS. [Figure 6-1](#) shows the process that Districts use to document a farmland evaluation for a project. Most FDOT projects will be linear or corridor type projects requiring use of the **Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for Corridor Type Projects Form NRCS-CPA-106**; other projects such as parking areas, buildings, or rest areas require use of the **Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form AD-1006**.

During the PD&E phase, the District:

1. Determines whether the project is exempt from the **FPPA** as discussed in [Section 6.2.1](#); no further evaluation of Farmlands is required if the project is not subject to provisions of **FPPA**. However, agricultural lands not falling under these protections may still need to be evaluated with the Community Impact Assessment ([Part 2, Chapter 4, Community Impact Assessment](#)). Documentation of projects that are exempt from the **FPPA** is provided in [Section 6.2.1.1](#);
2. Completes the appropriate Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form for projects requiring coordination with NRCS as discussed in [Section 6.2.3](#), and
3. Evaluates and document projects requiring coordination with NRCS to determine whether they have farmland involvement and are subject to the provisions of **FPPA** as discussed in [Section 6.2.4](#).

The District completes Parts I and III of **Form NRCS-CPA-106** or **Form AD 1006** and sends the form to the State Soil Scientist with the NRCS for farmland involvement determination. See [Section 6.3](#) for a link to these forms; copies are also provided in [Figure 6-2](#) and [Figure 6-3](#), respectively.

If NRCS determines the project does not involve farmlands, then the **Form NRCS-CPA-106** or **Form AD 1006** will be returned to the District. The District will include the Form in the project file within the StateWide Environmental Project Tracker (SWEPT) and document the information in the project's Environmental Document. No further evaluation is required.

If NRCS determines the project involves farmlands, then NRCS will complete Parts II and IV of **Form NRCS-CPA-106** or **Form AD 1006** and compile a total point score on Part V of the Form before it is returned to the District. The District will then complete Part VI of the Form and add the total points in Parts V and VI to determine the suitability of the site for protection as farmland.

6.2.1 Projects Exempt from the Farmland Protection Policy Act

The following project categories **do not** require compliance with the **FPPA** or coordination with the NRCS:

1. Project activities not subject to provisions of **FPPA**:
 - a. Federal permitting and licensing;
 - b. Projects planned and completed without the assistance of a federal agency;
 - c. Projects on land already in urban development or used for water storage;
 - d. Construction within an existing ROW purchased on or before August 4, 1984. (ROW maps can be provided to NRCS for verification);
 - e. Construction for national defense purposes;
 - f. Small acreage (i.e., 10 acres or less per linear mile or three acres where there is a project for an existing bridge or interchange) projects where a statewide, local, or tribal land evaluation site assessment (LESA) system has been approved by the State Conservationist. Acreage includes both direct and indirect conversions. These exemptions are to encourage improvements to existing highways, instead of new construction.

For additional exemptions see the **NRCS Farmland Protection Policy Act Manual**.

2. Projects situated **entirely** within urbanized areas on the **U.S. Census Bureau Mapper with no farmlands located adjacent to a project corridor**. See [Section 6.3](#) for a link to the **U.S. Census Bureau Mapper**. Maps for urbanized areas can be found in each District's planning section.

Note that the land use designation on the maps takes precedence over actual land use (i.e., lands currently being used for agricultural purposes but shown on the map as non-agricultural are considered as non-agricultural).

6.2.1.1 Documentation of Projects Exempt from the Farmland Protection Policy Act

Projects are exempt from the **FPPA** if they fall within the categories listed in [Section 6.2.1](#); however, documentation is still required in the Farmland section of the applicable Environmental Document as follows:

- a. Projects not subject to **FPPA** provisions:

This project is not subject to the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981 because (State the reason).

- b. Projects located in urbanized areas:

Lands within the project vicinity do not meet the definition of farmland as defined in 7 CFR § 658 and the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981 do not apply because the entire project area is located in the urbanized area of (Name of urban area) with no designated farmlands adjacent to the project corridor.

6.2.2 Projects Requiring Coordination with NRCS

The following projects require the completion of **Form NRCS-CPA-106** as specified in [Section 6.2.4](#), and coordination with the NRCS.

1. Projects situated **entirely** within urbanized areas on the **U.S. Census Bureau Mapper with designated farmlands adjacent to the project corridor**. These maps are located in each District's planning section.
2. All non-urbanized areas.

These areas may have been identified during the Programming Screen; however, it is recommended that the urbanized area maps be reviewed during the PD&E phase when ROW needs have been conceptually defined.

6.2.3 Completion of the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form

For projects which are not exempt from the **FPPA** per [Section 6.2.1](#), the District completes **Form NRCS-CPA-106** or **Form AD-1006** after ROW needs have been conceptually defined.

6.2.3.1 Initial Evaluation - Completion of Parts I and III

The initial evaluation consists of the District completing Parts I and III of **Form NRCS-CPA 106** or **Form AD-1006**, as described below, and submitting the form to the NRCS, which completes Part II. Note, descriptions are specific to **Form NRCS-CPA-106** and similar to **Form AD 1006**.

PART I

Name of Project:

Includes the local name of the project and Financial Management number (e.g., SR-7, Volusia Avenue, 123123-1).

Type of Project:

Includes the type of project such as new construction, widening, or intersection improvements.

Date of Land Evaluation Request:

Includes the month, day, and year when Parts I and III are completed.

Federal Agency Involved:

FDOT is added as the Federal Agency per ***National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Assignment***.

County and State:

Includes the county and state (Florida) where project is located.

PART III

A. Total Acres to be Converted Directly:

Includes an estimate of the number of farmland acres of additional ROW required for each project alternative. Note, the converted acres should include only the new ROW and not include the existing ROW if the corridor qualifies for the August 4, 1984 exclusion.

B. Total Acres to be Converted Indirectly:

Includes the estimated number of acres for each alternative that would be unusable for farmland due to access restriction.

C. Total Acres in Corridor:

Includes an estimate of the total number of acres of existing plus additional ROW required for each alternative.

6.2.3.2 Actions Taken After Completion of Parts I and III

Upon completion of Parts I and III, the District sends ***Form NRCS-CPA 106*** or ***Form AD-1006*** and a project location map [Geographic Information System (GIS) shapefile or if not available Zipped Keyhole Markup Language (KMZ) file of project boundaries and alternatives]] to the Soil Scientist. The project location map should include the existing and proposed ROW including ponds and intersection clips. The NRCS prefers to receive these forms by email. The Soil Scientist's email address may be obtained by calling the phone number below. Should hard copies be necessary, the forms should be sent to:

State Soil Scientist
USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
2614 NW 43rd Street
P.O. Box 141510
Gainesville, FL 32614-1510
(352) 338-9535

NRCS will either complete Parts II, IV, and V or mark a NO in Part II indicating that no farmlands are involved. NRCS will respond within 10 working days of receipt unless a site visit or land evaluation system design is needed (up to 30 working days are allowed if a land evaluation must be completed or a site visit must be made). If more than 10 days are required, NRCS will notify the District of the need for additional time.

Where NRCS fails to provide its response within the required period and if further delay would interfere with construction activities per **7 CFR § 658.4(a)**, the proposed project can proceed as though the site were not farmland. The Environmental Document must contain a statement that NRCS failed to provide land evaluation information within the required period, allowing the District to proceed as if the site were not farmland.

If no farmland involvement is indicated on the form, then the standard statement is provided in the Environmental Document as shown in [Section 6.2.4.1](#).

If farmland involvement is indicated on the form, then refer to [Section 6.2.3.3](#) for direction on completing Parts VI and VII of the form. Once **Form NRCS-CPA 106** or **Form AD-1006** has been updated, the District sends a copy of the completed form to the NRCS.

6.2.3.3 Final Evaluation - Completion of Parts VI and VII

PART VI

Part VI contains corridor assessment criteria to be completed by the District. These criteria assess the impact of each specific design alternative within a project corridor alignment for conversion of farmland. See **7 CFR § 658.5(c)** for an explanation of assessment and scoring criteria.

Upon assigning points to all criteria, all the points are added and the total is written in the row with the heading **TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS**.

PART VII

Relative Value of Farmland (From Part V):

Includes the relative value of farmland to be converted indicated in Part V.

Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI or a local site assessment):

Includes the total site assessment points from Part VI.

6.2.3.4 Actions Taken After Completion of Parts VI and VII

The total number of points indicated in Part VII is used to determine the site assessment given to farmland involved:

1. Corridors receiving a total score of **less than 160** points need not be given further consideration.
2. Corridors receiving a total score of **160 points or more** require stronger consideration for protection of farmland and additional coordination with NRCS. The form is returned to NRCS, who will make a determination of adverse impact for the project. The NRCS response will include a recommendation of ways to minimize the adverse impact. The NRCS recommendation for minimizing the adverse effects to protected farmland should be considered during alternative evaluation. The alternative with the lowest number of points should be selected. In the event this alternative is not selected, the Environmental Document should discuss the reasons.

6.2.4 Documentation of Projects Requiring Coordination with NRCS

Documentation of the assessment of farmland in a Type 2 Categorical Exclusion (CE), Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is in the form of standard statements, except where farmlands are involved. The following standard statements or documentation are included in the Environmental Document, depending on the level of involvement.

6.2.4.1 Projects with No Farmland Involvement

For Type 2 CE, EA, and EIS projects with no farmland involvement, the following standard statements should be included in the Farmland section:

- a. In urbanized areas:

Through coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, it has been determined that the project area which is located in the urbanized area of (Name of urban area) does not meet the definition of farmland as defined in 7 CFR Part 658. Therefore, the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981 do not apply to this project.

b. In non-urbanized areas:

Through coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, it has been determined that no farmlands as defined by 7 CFR Part 658 are located in the project vicinity.

Coordination documents with NRCS or **Form NRCS-CPA-106** or **Form AD-1006** indicating no involvement should be referenced in the Farmlands section of the Environmental Document and included in the Appendix and the project file within SWEPT.

When applicable, the standard statements should also be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Executive Summary.

6.2.4.2 Projects with Farmland Involvement

The following information is to be discussed in the Farmland section of the Environmental Document, regardless of whether the project is a Type 2 CE, EA, or EIS:

1. Quantification of farmland involvement
2. Coordination with NRCS
3. Viable alternative corridors
4. Project impacts and mitigation

The Environmental Document must document the assessment and coordination processes and provide the rationale for decisions made during the farmland evaluation. In addition, the Environmental Document should address any farmland issues that may have been raised by the ETAT during the project's ETDM Screening and address any comments received through project development, the public involvement process, or public hearing, as applicable.

Coordination documents with NRCS or **Form NRCS-CPA-106** or **Form AD-1006**, should be referenced in the Farmlands section and included in the Appendix. The completed NRCS form and supporting documentation should be included in the project file within SWEPT. It is recommended that these documents be placed in the Farmland folder.

When a FEIS is prepared separately from a Record of Decision (ROD), the FEIS Executive Summary should summarize the extent of farmland involvement, reference consultation documentation and coordination efforts with the NRCS, and discuss whether or not mitigation is proposed. Appropriate text references should be provided.

6.3 REFERENCES

FDOT, Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Manual, Topic No. 650-000-002. <https://www.fdot.gov/environment/oem-divisions/qa-qc/etdm-manual>

NRCS, Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (AD-1006).
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/AD1006.pdf>

NRCS, Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form for Corridor Type Projects (NRCS-CPA-106).
<https://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eForms/NRCS-CPA-106NRCS-CPA-106.PDF>

NRCS, Farmland Protection Policy Act Manual.
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/FPPA_Manual_Final_2013_0.pdf

U.S. Census Bureau Mapper, <http://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb/>

USDA, Farmland Protection Policy Act, 7 CFR Part 658

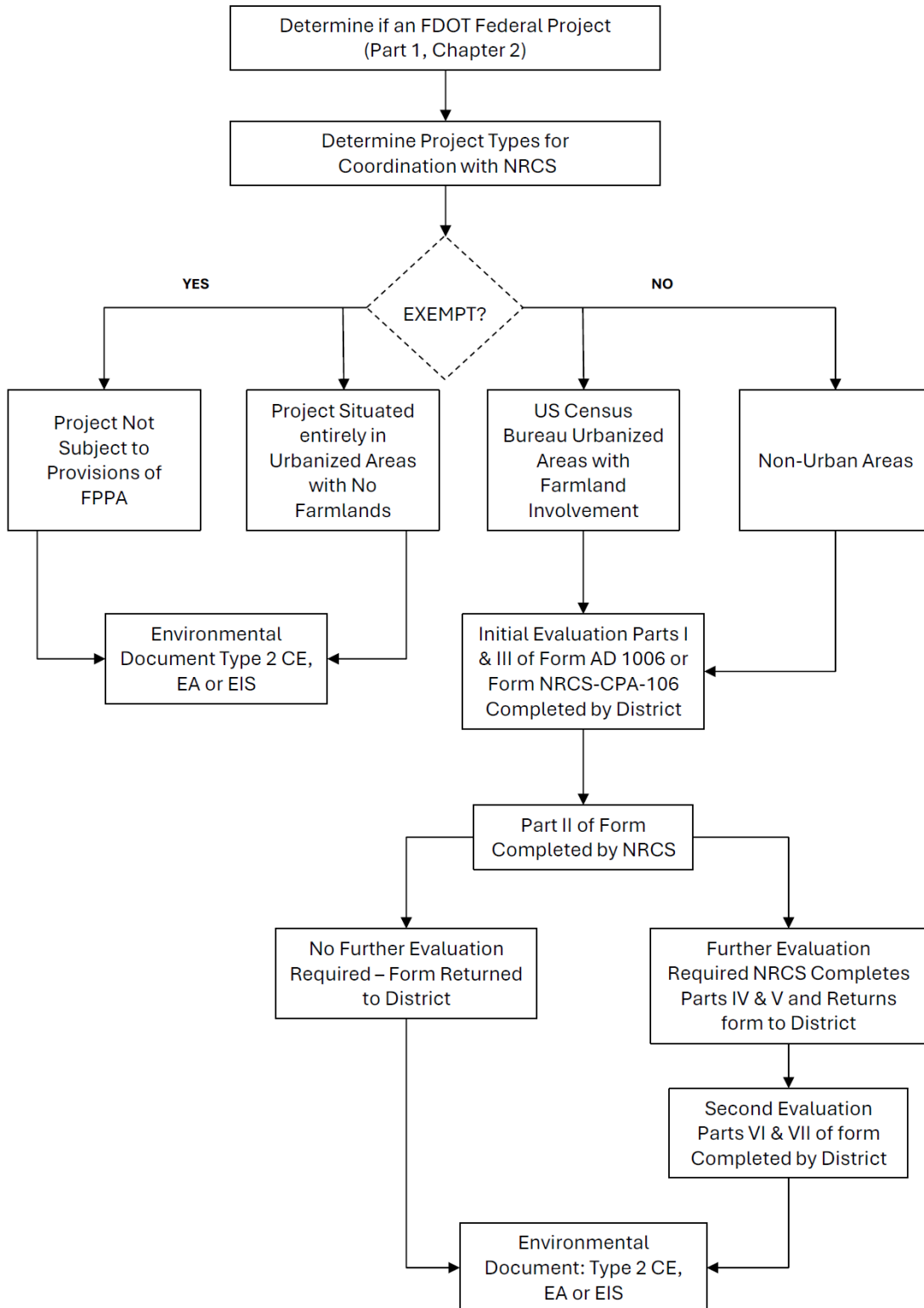


Figure 6-1 Farmland Evaluation Process

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Natural Resources Conservation Service		NRCS-CPA-106 (Rev. 1-91)	
FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS			
PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)		3. Date of Land Evaluation Request	4. Sheet 1 of _____
1. Name of Project		5. Federal Agency Involved	
2. Type of Project		6. County and State	
PART II (To be completed by NRCS)		1. Date Request Received by NRCS	2. Person Completing Form
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form). YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		4. Acres Irrigated Average Farm Size	
5. Major Crop(s)	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: _____ % _____		7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: _____ % _____
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS	
PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Alternative Corridor For Segment	
		Corridor A	Corridor B
		Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services			
C. Total Acres In Corridor			
PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information			
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland			
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland			
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted			
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value			
PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)			
PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))		Maximum Points	
1. Area in Nonurban Use		15	
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use		10	
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed		20	
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government		20	
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average		10	
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland		25	
7. Availability Of Farm Support Services		5	
8. On-Farm Investments		20	
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services		25	
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use		10	
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS		160	0
		0	0
		0	0
PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)			
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)		100	0
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)		160	0
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)		260	0
		0	0
		0	0
1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Reason For Selection:			
Signature of Person Completing this Part:			DATE
NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor			

Clear Form

Figure 6-2 Form NRCS-CPA-106

NRCS-CPA-106 (Reverse)

CORRIDOR - TYPE SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following criteria are to be used for projects that have a linear or corridor - type site configuration connecting two distant points, and crossing several different tracts of land. These include utility lines, highways, railroads, stream improvements, and flood control systems. Federal agencies are to assess the suitability of each corridor - type site or design alternative for protection as farmland along with the land evaluation information.

- (1) How much land is in nonurban use within a radius of 1.0 mile from where the project is intended?
More than 90 percent - 15 points
90 to 20 percent - 14 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points
- (2) How much of the perimeter of the site borders on land in nonurban use?
More than 90 percent - 10 points
90 to 20 percent - 9 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points
- (3) How much of the site has been farmed (managed for a scheduled harvest or timber activity) more than five of the last 10 years?
More than 90 percent - 20 points
90 to 20 percent - 19 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points
- (4) Is the site subject to state or unit of local government policies or programs to protect farmland or covered by private programs to protect farmland?
Site is protected - 20 points
Site is not protected - 0 points
- (5) Is the farm unit(s) containing the site (before the project) as large as the average - size farming unit in the County ?
(Average farm sizes in each county are available from the NRCS field offices in each state. Data are from the latest available Census of Agriculture, Acreage or Farm Units in Operation with \$1,000 or more in sales.)
As large or larger - 10 points
Below average - deduct 1 point for each 5 percent below the average, down to 0 points if 50 percent or more below average - 9 to 0 points
- (6) If the site is chosen for the project, how much of the remaining land on the farm will become non-farmable because of interference with land patterns?
Acreage equal to more than 25 percent of acres directly converted by the project - 25 points
Acreage equal to between 25 and 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project - 1 to 24 point(s)
Acreage equal to less than 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project - 0 points
- (7) Does the site have available adequate supply of farm support services and markets, i.e., farm suppliers, equipment dealers, processing and storage facilities and farmer's markets?
All required services are available - 5 points
Some required services are available - 4 to 1 point(s)
No required services are available - 0 points
- (8) Does the site have substantial and well-maintained on-farm investments such as barns, other storage building, fruit trees and vines, field terraces, drainage, irrigation, waterways, or other soil and water conservation measures?
High amount of on-farm investment - 20 points
Moderate amount of on-farm investment - 19 to 1 point(s)
No on-farm investment - 0 points
- (9) Would the project at this site, by converting farmland to nonagricultural use, reduce the demand for farm support services so as to jeopardize the continued existence of these support services and thus, the viability of the farms remaining in the area?
Substantial reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 25 points
Some reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 1 to 24 point(s)
No significant reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 0 points
- (10) Is the kind and intensity of the proposed use of the site sufficiently incompatible with agriculture that it is likely to contribute to the eventual conversion of surrounding farmland to nonagricultural use?
Proposed project is incompatible to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 10 points
Proposed project is tolerable to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 9 to 1 point(s)
Proposed project is fully compatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 0 points

Figure 6-2 Form NRCS-CPA-106 (Page 2 of 2)

U.S. Department of Agriculture					
FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING					
PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)			Date Of Land Evaluation Request		
Name of Project			Federal Agency Involved		
Proposed Land Use			County and State county and state		
PART II (To be completed by NRCS)			Date Request Received By NRCS		Person Completing Form:
Does the site contain Prime, Unique, Statewide or Local Important Farmland? <i>(If no, the FPPA does not apply - do not complete additional parts of this form)</i>			YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Average Farm Size
Major Crop(s)		Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: %		Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: %	
Name of Land Evaluation System Used		Name of State or Local Site Assessment System		Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS	
PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)			Alternative Site Rating		
			Site A	Site B	Site C
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly					
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly					
C. Total Acres In Site					
PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information					
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland					
B. Total Acres Statewide Important or Local Important Farmland					
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted					
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value					
PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Criterion Relative Value of Farmland To Be Converted (Scale of 0 to 100 Points)					
PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Site Assessment Criteria <i>(Criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5 b. For Corridor project use form NRCS-CPA-106)</i>			Maximum Points	Site A	Site B
1. Area In Non-urban Use			(15)		
2. Perimeter In Non-urban Use			(10)		
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed			(20)		
4. Protection Provided By State and Local Government			(20)		
5. Distance From Urban Built-up Area			(15)		
6. Distance To Urban Support Services			(15)		
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average			(10)		
8. Creation Of Non-farmable Farmland			(10)		
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services			(5)		
10. On-Farm Investments			(20)		
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services			(10)		
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use			(10)		
TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS			160	0	0
PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)			100	0	0
Total Site Assessment (From Part VI above or local site assessment)			160	0	0
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)			260	0	0
Site Selected:		Date Of Selection		Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Reason For Selection:					
Name of Federal agency representative completing this form:					Date:

(See Instructions on reverse side)

Form AD-1006 (03-02)

Figure 6-3 Form AD-1006

STEPS IN THE PROCESSING THE FARMLAND AND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

- Step 1 - Federal agencies (or Federally funded projects) involved in proposed projects that may convert farmland, as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) to nonagricultural uses, will initially complete Parts I and III of the form. For Corridor type projects, the Federal agency shall use form NRCS-CPA-106 in place of form AD-1006. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) process may also be accessed by visiting the FPPA website, <http://fppa.nrcs.usda.gov/lesa/>.
- Step 2 - Originator (Federal Agency) will send one original copy of the form together with appropriate scaled maps indicating location(s) of project site(s), to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) local Field Office or USDA Service Center and retain a copy for their files. (NRCS has offices in most counties in the U.S. The USDA Office Information Locator may be found at http://offices.usda.gov/scripts/ndISAPI.dll/oip_public/USA_map, or the offices can usually be found in the Phone Book under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture. A list of field offices is available from the NRCS State Conservationist and State Office in each State.)
- Step 3 - NRCS will, within 10 working days after receipt of the completed form, make a determination as to whether the site(s) of the proposed project contains prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland. (When a site visit or land evaluation system design is needed, NRCS will respond within 30 working days.
- Step 4 - For sites where farmland covered by the FPPA will be converted by the proposed project, NRCS will complete Parts II, IV and V of the form.
- Step 5 - NRCS will return the original copy of the form to the Federal agency involved in the project, and retain a file copy for NRCS records.
- Step 6 - The Federal agency involved in the proposed project will complete Parts VI and VII of the form and return the form with the final selected site to the servicing NRCS office.
- Step 7 - The Federal agency providing financial or technical assistance to the proposed project will make a determination as to whether the proposed conversion is consistent with the FPPA.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

(For Federal Agency)

Part I: When completing the "County and State" questions, list all the local governments that are responsible for local land use controls where site(s) are to be evaluated.

Part III: When completing item B (Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly), include the following:

- 1. Acres not being directly converted but that would no longer be capable of being farmed after the conversion, because the conversion would restrict access to them or other major change in the ability to use the land for agriculture.
- 2. Acres planned to receive services from an infrastructure project as indicated in the project justification (e.g. highways, utilities planned build out capacity) that will cause a direct conversion.

Part VI: Do not complete Part VI using the standard format if a State or Local site assessment is used. With local and NRCS assistance, use the local Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA).

- 1. Assign the maximum points for each site assessment criterion as shown in § 658.5(b) of CFR. In cases of corridor-type project such as transportation, power line and flood control, criteria #5 and #6 will not apply and will, be weighted zero, however, criterion #8 will be weighed a maximum of 25 points and criterion #11 a maximum of 25 points.
- 2. Federal agencies may assign relative weights among the 12 site assessment criteria other than those shown on the FPPA rule after submitting individual agency FPPA policy for review and comment to NRCS. In all cases where other weights are assigned, relative adjustments must be made to maintain the maximum total points at 160. For project sites where the total points equal or exceed 160, consider alternative actions, as appropriate, that could reduce adverse impacts (e.g. Alternative Sites, Modifications or Mitigation).

Part VII: In computing the "Total Site Assessment Points" where a State or local site assessment is used and the total maximum number of points is other than 160, convert the site assessment points to a base of 160.

Example: if the Site Assessment maximum is 200 points, and the alternative Site "A" is rated 180 points:

$$\frac{\text{Total points assigned Site A}}{\text{Maximum points possible}} = \frac{180}{200} \times 160 = 144 \text{ points for Site A}$$

For assistance in completing this form or FPPA process, contact the local NRCS Field Office or USDA Service Center.

NRCS employees, consult the FPPA Manual and/or policy for additional instructions to complete the AD-1006 form.

Figure 6-3 Form AD-1006 (Page 2 of 2)

Federal Highway Administration, Technical Advisory T 6640.8A, Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents.

https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/legislation/nepa/guidance_preparing_env_documents.aspx

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey,
<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 2017. Agricultural Handbook 18, Soil Survey Manual,

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/resources/guides-and-instructions/soil-survey-manual>

USDA NRCS National Soil Survey Handbook,

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/resources/guides-and-instructions/national-soil-survey-handbook>

Figure 6-4 Farmland Information Sources