

Farmland Protection Ranking Criteria

Imminence of Residential, Commercial or Industrial Development

Points

1. Sales potential
 - (a) Property is offered by buyer who holds a current sales contract on the property 25
 - (b) Property is listed for sale 20
 - (c) Property has been listed for sale at any time during the last two years 15
 - (d) Property is in the estate process or has been inherited within the last two years 10

2. Area development
 - (a) Intensive development (10 lots or more) in the adjacent properties 15

 - (b) Extensive scattered development (20 lots or more) within 2,500 feet 10

 - (c) Scattered non-agriculture development (20 lots or more) within 5,000 feet 5

3. Availability of public water and sewer characteristics
 - (a) Public water and/or sewer available at the property 15

 - (b) Public water and/or sewer within 2,500 feet of the property 10

 - (c) Public water and/or sewer within 5,000 feet of the property 9

4. Septic constraints
 - (a) Severe septic constraints, no public sewer available 25

 - (b) Moderate septic constraints, no public sewer available 20

Total Acreage Offered for Conservation or Preservation Easement

	Points
1. Size of parcel(s) offered for easement	
(a) 200 acres or more	50
(b) 100 to 199.99 acres	45
(c) 75 to 99.99 acres	40
(d) 40 to 74.99 acres	35
(e) 25 to 39.99 acres	30
(f) 10 to 24.99 acres	15
(g) Less than 10 acres	0
2. Entire fee simple property to be placed under easement	15

Presence of Prime or Unique Farmland; Farmland of State-Wide Importance; or Locally-Significant Farmland; Productive Capacity

	Points
1. Farmland categorized as one of the following:	
(a) Prime or unique soils	50
(b) State-wide or locally significant farmland	40
(c) Other farmland	10
2. Property currently has a farm-use valuation for ad valorem tax purposes	20
3. Property currently has a conservation plan	10

Property is Contiguous or Appurtenant to Working Farms

	Points
1. Proximity of working farms	
(a) Contiguous with properties under easement with the Berkeley County Farmland Protection Board	25
(b) Contiguous with properties that have a farm-use valuation for ad valorem tax purposes	20
(c) Within 2,500 feet of properties under easement with the Berkeley County Farmland Protection Board	20
(d) Within 2,500 feet of properties that have a farm-use valuation for ad valorem tax purposes	10
2. Proximity of protected property	
(a) Contiguous with other property with a perpetual conservation easement, or public property (unimproved parkland, wildlife management area)	25
(b) Within 2,500 feet of other property with a perpetual conservation easement, or public property (unimproved parkland, wildlife management area)	20

Ratio of the Asking Price of the Easement to the Fair Market Value of the Easement

1. Relationship of asking price to the fair market value

For each 1 percent ratio is below 100%, _ point
(Asking price of easement divided by fair market value of easement)

2. Asking price is leveraged with grants, donations, or funding*

For each 1 percent ratio is matched, _ point
(Grant/donation/funding divided by asking price)

* Funding sources can include Federal, state, foundation, or private grants, donations, or other funding sources.

Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, Cultural, Recreational, Natural, Scenic, Source Water Protection, or Unique Value of the Easement

	Points
1. Property is associated with an important historic place, event, person, or activity	
(a) Property is on the National Register of Historic Places	15
(b) Property is of national, state or local significance	10
(c) Property is adjacent to such an area	5
2. Property is a familiar visual feature that is part of an historic landscape	
(a) Symbol of West Virginia's identity or reflects the state's settlement or development patterns	15
(b) Symbol of the Eastern Panhandle	10
3. Property contains a structure with unique architectural/historical value	
(a) The structure is on the National Register of Historic Places	20
(b) The structure has value on a national or state level	10
(c) The structure has value to the Eastern Panhandle	5
4. Property contains an archaeological site	
(a) Property has documented archaeological significance	20
(b) Property has potential archaeological significance based on its history or past uses	10
5. Property contains important natural features (cumulative to maximum 75 points)	
(a) Includes frontage on a major stream	50
(b) Contains mountainous terrain or scenic ridgelines	45
(c) Contains mature forests	40
(d) Property is within 2,500 feet of properties listed above	30
6. Property contains unique natural features or habitat (cumulative to maximum 75 points)	
(a) Contains a cave	50
(b) Contains limestone cliffs	40
(c) Contains a shale barren	40
(d) Is an area of biological significance	40
(e) Contains or is contiguous to endangered or threatened species habitat	40
7. Source water protection (cumulative to maximum 75 points)	
(a) Fronts on a major stream	50
(b) Fronts on a minor stream	45
(c) Contains a year-round spring	35
(d) Contains a seasonal or wet-weather spring	30
(e) Contains wetlands	50
(f) Contains a sink or a sink hole	40
(g) Property has significant ground water recharge potential	45

Existence and Amount of Secured Debt on the Property

	Points
1. Property has no secured debt or the mortgage loan has been subordinated	50
2. Property has non-subordinated, secured debt in relationship to agricultural value (as defined in \S 8-24-78(c), 2000)	
(a) From 1% to 10% of agricultural value	20
(b) From 11% to 20% of agricultural value	15
(c) From 21% to 30% of agricultural value	10
(d) From 31% to 40% of agricultural value	9
(e) From 41% to 50% of agricultural value	8
(f) From 51% to 60% of agricultural value	7
(g) From 61% to 70% of agricultural value	6
(h) From 71% to 80% of agricultural value	5
(i) From 81% to 100% of agricultural value	

NOTE: Secured debt on the property in excess of the agricultural value shall disqualify the property from consideration under this program unless the loan amount in excess of the agricultural value has been subordinated by the lending institution.

Length of Protective Easement

The program shall only consider offers of perpetual conservation easements.

Applicants that request the five-year opt out provision (as described in \S 8-24-75(f), 2000) under which the easement selling price is placed in an escrow account for a period of five years, must fund all easement preparation costs (including survey, appraisal, legal costs, etc). These easement closing costs may be reimbursed to the applicant upon the closing of the Deed of Conservation Easement, but shall be forfeited if the applicant exercises the opt-out right.