

Farmland Preservation Category



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VLCF Grants Workshop

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Farmland Preservation Criteria

Criteria	Possible Points
Category I: Land Evaluation (35 points)	
A. Soil Productivity	20
B. Parcel Size	15
Category II: Land Use (45 points)	
A. Current Use and Status of the Land	7
B. Proximity to Conserved Lands	8
C. Development Vulnerability	15
D. Conservation Plan/Best Management Practices	7
E. Local Farmland Policy	8
Category III: ConserveVirginia (20 points)	
Ag and Forestry Category	20
Total	100

Example Application

- ▶ 255-acre property
 - ▶ 30% prime, 20% unique soils
 - ▶ Larger than average size of farm in county by 40%
- ▶ Actively managed
- ▶ Adjoins another open space easement
- ▶ 10% of property in Class II, 20% in Class III Development Vulnerability
- ▶ Applicant has a conservation plan developed by NRCS and implements BMPs
- ▶ The property is zoned A1, participates in use value taxation, and is in an agricultural and forestal district

Category I: Land Evaluation

A. Soil Productivity

- ▶ Calculate percentage of land in each soil class supporting agricultural uses (Prime, Unique, Important)
- ▶ Points awarded based on combined percentages

Example property score:

- ▶ $30\% \text{ prime} + 20\% \text{ unique} = 0.3 + 0.2 = 0.5$
- ▶ $0.5 \times 20 = 10 \text{ points}$



Web Soil Survey AOI

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Area of Interest (AOI) | Soil Map | **Soil Data Explorer** | Download Soils Data | Shopping Cart (Free)

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Map Legend

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☐ Soil Map Unit Points

☒ Soil Rating Polygons

☐ Not prime farmland

☐ All areas are prime farmland

☐ Prime farmland if drained

☐ Prime farmland if protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season

☐ Prime farmland if irrigated

☐ Prime farmland if drained and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season

☐ Prime farmland if irrigated and drained

☐ Prime farmland if irrigated and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season

☐ Prime farmland if subsoiled, completely removing the root inhibiting soil layer

☐ Prime farmland if irrigated

Map — Farmland Classification

Scale: (not to scale)

0 1,000 ft

Identify

Layer	Attribute Name	Attribute Value
Location	Latitude, Longitude	37.74211°, -78.38180°
Area of Interest (AOI)	Area (acres in this part)	185,798
	AoiID	2372065
Soil Rating Polygons	Soil Ratings Value	All areas are prime farmland

Category I: Land Evaluation

B. Parcel Size

- Use Latest US Census of Agriculture (2022)

Calculation:

- Larger by 25% or more = 15 points
- Larger by 0%-24% = 10 points
- Smaller by 1% - 24% = 7 points
- Smaller by 25% or more = 5 points

Example property score:

- Parcel is 255 acres, average size of farm in Fauquier is 181 acres, property is larger by more than 25% = 15 points

Table 8. Farms, Land in Farms, Value of Land and Buildings, and Land Use: 2022 and 2017

[For meaning of abbreviations and symbols, see introductory text.]

Item	Virginia	Accomack	Albemarle
FARMS AND LAND IN FARMS			
Farms number, 2022	38,995	254	866
2017	43,225	239	913
Land in farms acres, 2022	7,309,687	81,233	167,583
2017	7,797,979	76,761	182,781
Average size of farm acres, 2022	187	320	194
2017	180	321	200

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/index.php>

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/Virginia/st51_2_008_008.pdf

Category II: Land Use

A. Current Use and Status

- What is the current use and status of the land?

Calculation:

- Is the land currently being farmed? If yes, 5 points
- Is this a Century Farm? If yes, 2 points

Example property score:


- Property is currently being farmed, but is not a Century Farm = 5 points

CENTURY FARMS

As established in the Code of Virginia, the Virginia Century Farm Program recognizes and honors those farms that have been in operation for at least 100 consecutive years and the generations of Virginia farm families whose diligent and dedicated efforts have maintained these farms, provided nourishment to their fellow citizens and contributed so greatly to the economy of the Commonwealth.

In recognition of their designation as a Virginia Century Farm, families receive a certificate signed by the Governor and the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and a sign appropriate for outdoor display. In addition, the name of the farm and its owners is listed on this site.

Contact
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804.786.1906
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 Virginia Century Farms

These 1451 farms have been recognized as Virginia Century Farms. The information is listed by locality, and includes the farm name and the farm owners when the Century Farm recognition originally was bestowed.

Accomack 15	Culpeper 11	Lee 13	Rappahannock 4
Albemarle 11	Cumberland 19	Loudoun 20	Richmond (county) 11
Alleghany 1	Dinwiddie 28	Louisa 29	Richmond/Northumberland 1
Amelia 11	Essex 4	Lunenburg 18	Roanoke 3
Amelia/Nottaway 1	Fauquier 18	Lynchburg 1	Rockbridge 15
Amherst 14	Floyd 9	Madison 18	Rockingham 55
Appomattox 12	Fluvanna 11	Mathews 4	Russell 36
Augusta 58	Franklin 38	Mecklenburg 27	Scott 20
Bath 1	Frederick 15	Middlesex 6	Shenandoah 41
Bedford 30	Giles 8	Montgomery 6	Smyth 17
Bland 13	Gloucester 6	Nelson 12	Southampton 96
Botetourt 11	Goochland 4	New Kent 7	Spotsylvania 6
Brunswick 10	Grayson 14	Northampton 6	Stafford 8
Buchanan 2	Greene 2	Northumberland 20	Suffolk 24
Buckingham 4	Greensville 6	Nottoway 15	Surry 27

<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/conservation-and-environmental-virginia-century-farms.shtml>

Category II: Land Use

B. Proximity to Conserved Lands

- To what degree is the land adjacent to or in close proximity to other preserved lands?

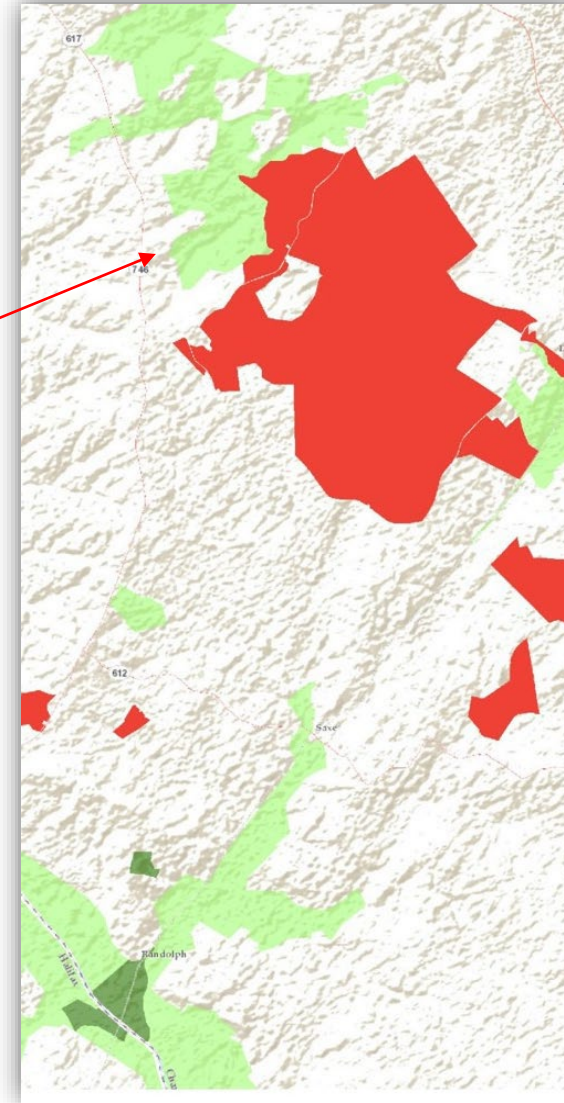
Calculation:

- Parcel adjoins other preserved lands = 8 points
- Parcel is within one-quarter mile but not adjoining preserved lands = 6 points
- Parcel is within one half mile but further than one quarter mile of other preserved lands = 3 points

Example property score:

- Parcel adjoins an open space easement= 8 points

Adjoins parcel



Category II: Land Use

C. Development Vulnerability

- ▶ What is the development vulnerability rank for this parcel?
- ▶ Calculate the percentage of project land in Classes II, III, and IV.
- ▶ Points are awarded based on the combined percentages of the three categories * 15

Example property score:

- ▶ 10% Class II, 20% Class III, and 0% in Class IV = $(0.1+0.2+0) = 0.3$
- ▶ $0.3 \times 15 = 4.5$ points

NOTE: We have adjusted the Development Vulnerability score calculation from last year. Only Classes II, III, and IV will be evaluated, and all three will be weighted the same.



Development Vulnerability on the NHDE Explorer



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Conservation Planning

- ☐ Buffers for Freshwater Mussel Habitat
- ☐ Potential Freshwater Mussel Richness
- ☐ Potential Rare Species Richness
- ☐ Ecological Cores
- ☐ Natural Land Network
- ☐ Forest Conservation Values
- ☐ Watershed Impact Model
- ☐ Nature-based Recreation Access Model
- ☐ Cultural Resource Preservation Index
- ☐ Agricultural Model
- ☒ Development Vulnerability Model

Undevelopable (-1)
Class I (0 - 5: Least Vulnerable)
Class II (6 - 10)
Class III (11 - 25)
Class IV (26 - 50)
Class V (51 - 100: Most Vulnerable)
Already Developed (101)

<https://vanhde.org/content/map>

Conservation Planning Group

Calculate combined percentage of property in Classes II, III, and IV


Category II: Land Use

D. Conservation Plan/Best Management Practices

- ▶ Does the farm have a documented conservation plan for applicable best management practices, or
- ▶ A nutrient management plan for all applications to crop, hay, or pastureland?
- ▶ 4 points for having a documented plan that outlines the implementation
- ▶ 3 points for evidence of implementation

Example property score:

- ▶ Property has a conservation plan developed by NRCS, and has implemented applicable BMPs as evidenced by cost-share participation = **7 points**



NRCS
Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

TUCSON SERVICE CENTER
TUCSON, AZ 85705-9223
(520) 292-2999

KRISTEN I
DISTRICT CONSERVATION

Conservation Plan

TUCSON PLANT MATERIALS CENTER
3241 N ROMERO RD
TUCSON, AZ 85705

IP _____

No Traot

Access Road

An access road will be upgraded for dust control as part of a conservation management system to reduce dust along the main road on the west side of fields 1 and 3 and along the road between fields 1 and 3. An ABC gravel treatment will be applied. The access road will be installed according to NRCS provided specifications. With proper operation and maintenance, the expected lifespan of this practice is 10 years.

Field	Planned Amount	Month	Year	Applied Amount	Date
1	710 ft	11	2009	560 ft	12/1/2009
3	11 ft	11	2009	385 ft	12/1/2009
Total:	721 ft			945 ft	

Conservation Crop Rotation

Conservation Crop Rotation will be applied as part of this Conservation Plan to improve soil quality. The length of the cropping rotation is on average five years. The cropping sequence will be perennial warm season grasses followed by cool and warm season cover crop species. Practice lifespan is 1 year.

Field	Planned Amount	Month	Year	Applied Amount	Date
1	3.4 ac	9	2008	3.4 ac	3/1/2011
2	2 ac	9	2008	2 ac	3/1/2011
3	3 ac	9	2008	3 ac	3/1/2011
4	5 ac	9	2008	5 ac	3/1/2011
5	3.5 ac	9	2008	3.5 ac	3/1/2011
6	3 ac	9	2008	3 ac	3/1/2011
7	2 ac	9	2008	2 ac	3/1/2011
8	2 ac	9	2008	2 ac	3/1/2011
9	11 ac	9	2008	11 ac	3/1/2011
Total:	34.9 ac			34.9 ac	

Category II: Land Use

E. Local Farmland Policy

- ▶ Is the project supported by local farmland protection policies?
 - ▶ Ag zoning = 2 points
 - ▶ Agricultural and Forestal District = 2 points
 - ▶ Use Value Taxation = 2 points
 - ▶ Purchase of Development Rights Project = 2 points

Example property score:

- ▶ Property is zoned A1, participates in Use Value Taxation, and is part of an Agricultural and Forestal District = 6 points

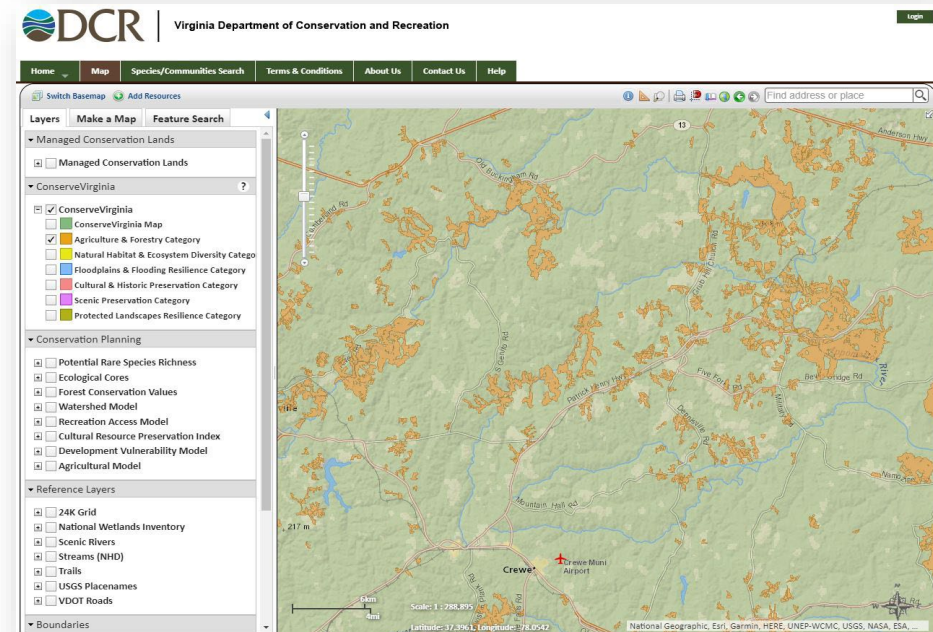
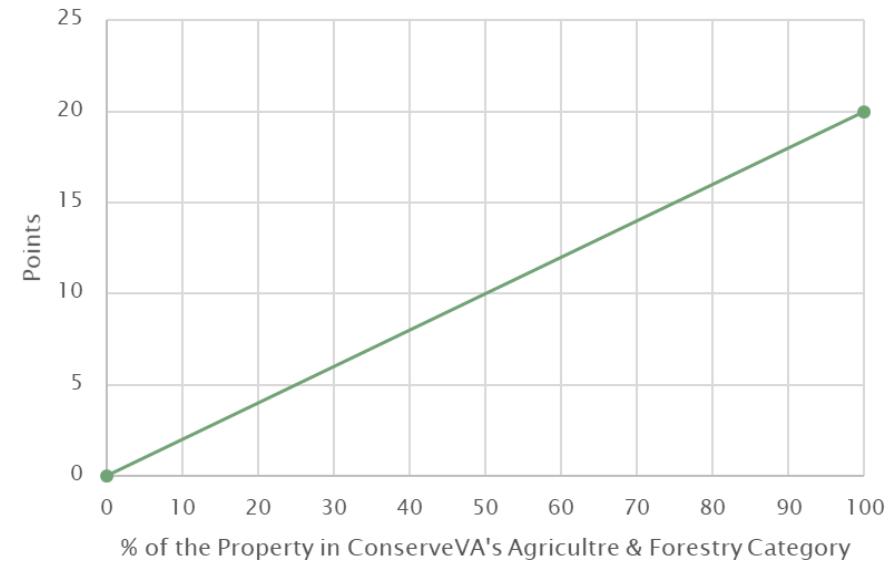


Category III: ConserveVirginia

- Proportion of the property that is in ConserveVA's Agriculture & Forestry Category * 20

Example property score:

- $0.63 * 20 = 12.6$



Example Results Summary

Criteria	Score	Possible Points
Category I: Land Evaluation (35 points)		
A. Soil Productivity	10	20
B. Parel Size	15	15
Category II: Land Use (45 points)		
A. Current Use and Status of the Land	5	7
B. Proximity to Conserved Lands	8	8
C. Development Vulnerability	4.5	15
D. Conservation Plan/Best Management Practices	7	7
E. Local Farmland Policy	6	8
Category III: ConserveVirginia (20 points)		
Ag and Forestry Category	12.6	20
Total	68.1	100

Suggestions

- ▶ Competitive category, but many opportunities to demonstrate project value
- ▶ Run the scoring sheet and provide evidence in your application for the scoring
- ▶ The more materials/documentation included, the better!
- ▶ Complete application-respond to all criteria and questions



Questions:

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