



**NATURAL RESOURCES  
CONSERVATION SERVICE**

**DEPUTY CHIEF FOR PROGRAMS**

# **FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING**

**National State Soils Scientist's Meeting**

**October 28<sup>th</sup>-November 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Cheryl Simmons**

**Doug Lawrence - Staff Leader**

**Denise Coleman – FPP**

**Ginger Murphy – Community Planning**

**Avery Patillo – Community Assistance**

**Cheryl Simmons –FPPA/LESA**

**Nakia Scott – Administrative Assistant**

# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING



## AUTHORITIES:

### Conservation Technical Assistance to Developed and Developing Areas

- **Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1935**

### Farmland Protection

- **Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981**
- **Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996**
  - **Farmland Protection Program**
  - **National Natural Resources Conservation Foundation**

### Community Planning

- **The Soil Information Assistance for Community Planning and Resource Development Act of 1966**

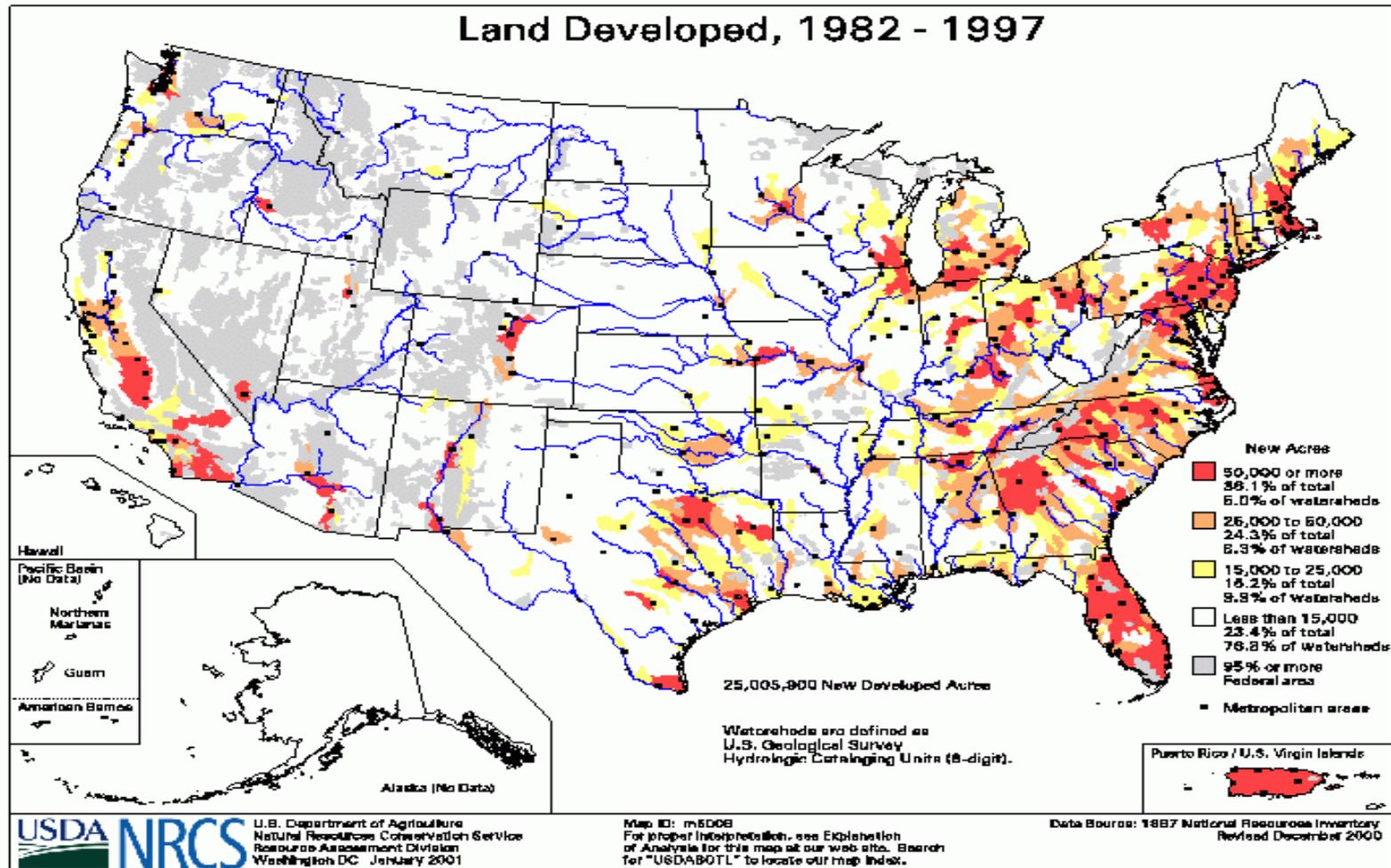
# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

## Farmland Protection Program Status and Trends

- From 1992 and 1997, the annual rate of conversion increased 60 percent, from an average of 1.4 million acres during the period from 1982 to 1992, to more than 2.2 million acres per year.
- Over the next ten years at current rates, an area the size of Indiana, will be converted to urban and built-up uses.

# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

## Status and Trends



# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

- While agricultural land continues to be converted to residential, commercial, and other land uses, and once-thriving city centers have experienced losses in business, industry, and populace, individual landowners and communities alike are faced with the challenge of balancing economic viability with ecologic, social, and cultural values.
- These changes create a range of natural resource-related problems, including increased water runoff, excessive soil erosion, sedimentation, and degradation of water quality and wildlife habitat. NRCS and conservation districts can provide individuals and communities with a range of services and tools that can mitigate the effects of changes in land use.
- These services and tools include conservation easements to protect farmland and technical assistance to individuals and communities for comprehensive planning, resource assessment, site assessment, soil erosion, and sediment control, as well as other conservation practices.

# American Farmland Trust – Farming on the Edge Update

<http://www.farmland.org>

American Farmland Trust: Farming on the Edge state maps - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

*American Farmland Trust*

**FARMING ON THE EDGE**  
SPRAWLING DEVELOPMENT THREATENS AMERICA'S BEST FARMLAND

AFT Home Join

Major findings  
About the project  
State maps  
All the downloads  
Site map

**Farming on the Edge**  
High Quality Farmland in the Path of Development

Legend:

- High Quality Farmland & High Development
- High Quality Farmland & Low Development
- Federal & Indian Lands
- Urban Areas
- Other

Farming on the Edge: State maps

Alabama Nebraska The map of the U.S. above identifies our best—most fertile and

Internet

# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

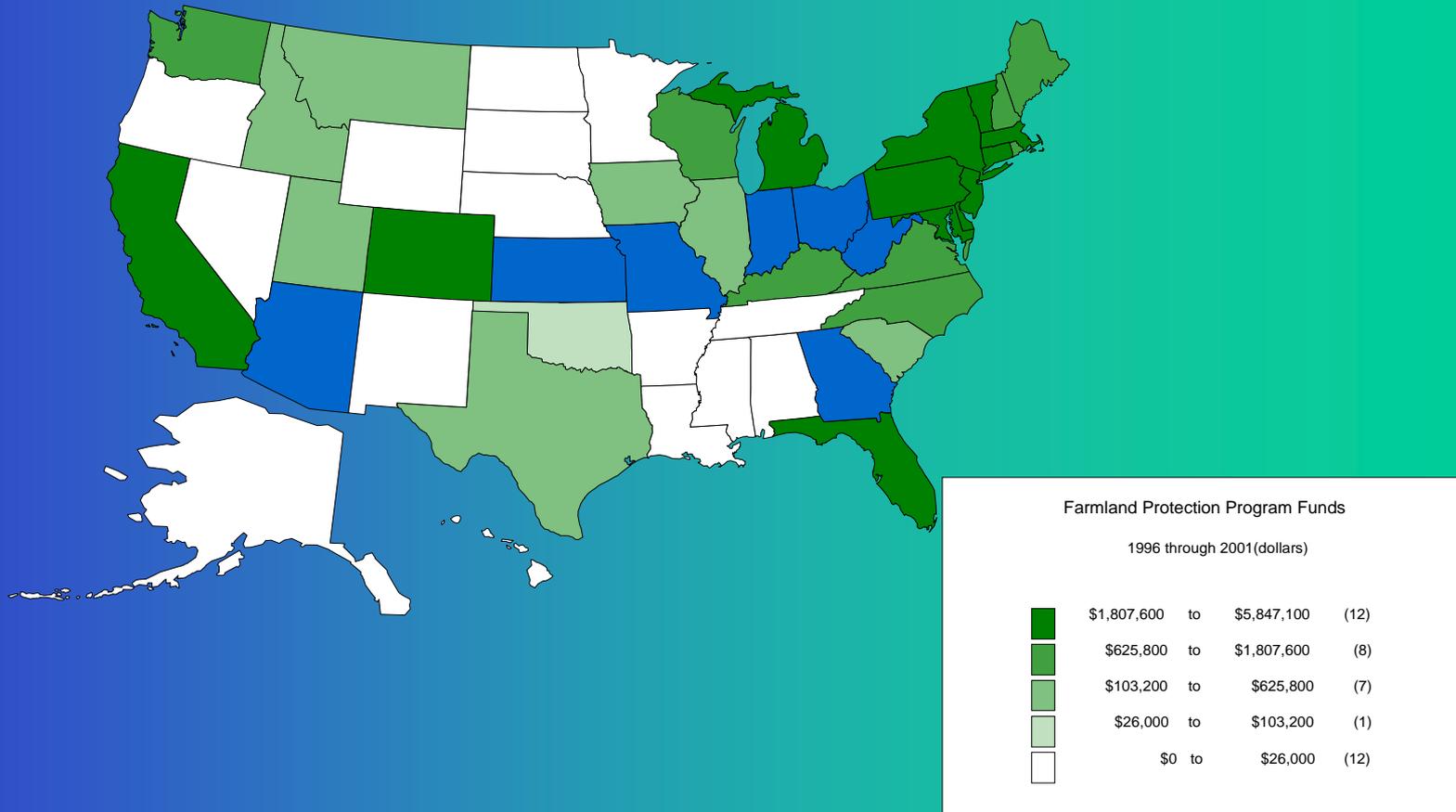
## Farmland Protection Program Status and Trends

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Financial Assistance</b>
<b>1996</b>	<b>17 States - \$14.3 million</b>
<b>1997</b>	<b>10 States - \$1.9 million</b>
<b>1998</b>	<b>19 States - \$17.3 million</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>NH earmark - \$0.2 million</b>
<b>2001</b>	<b>28 States - \$16.8 million</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>36 States - \$50 million</b>

# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

## Farmland Protection Program Status and Trends

*Blue States are new in 2002*



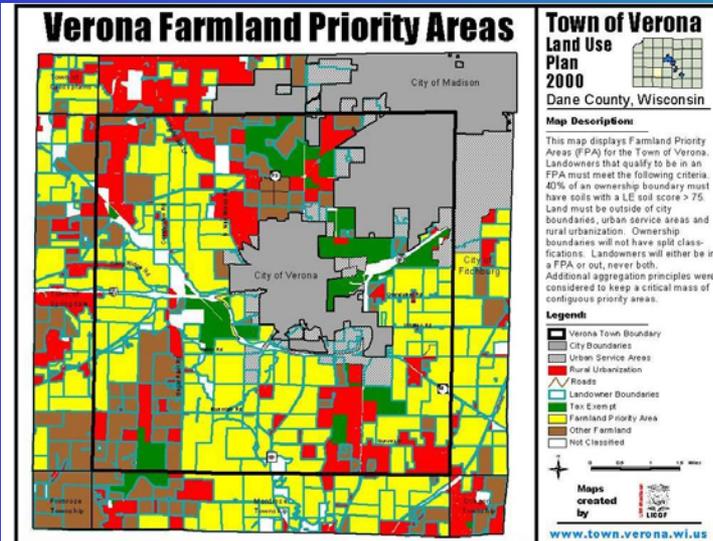
# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

## Farmland Protection Program Side-by-Side Analysis

Topic	1996 Legislation	2002 Legislation
Eligible Entities	State and Local Governments	Expanded the definition of eligible entities to include Tribes and non-governmental organizations
Eligible Land	Land Containing Prime, Unique or Other Productive Soil	Expanded the definition of eligible land to include farm and ranches containing historical or archaeological resources
Matching Funds	Entity must contribute 50% of the appraised fair market value of the easement (cash match)	Entity may include a charitable landowner donation of up to 25% of the fair market value of the easement
Conservation Plan	Requires a plan on highly erodible land (non-Title XII)	Requires a conservation plan on highly erodible land, land is also subject to FSA provisions (Title XII)

# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

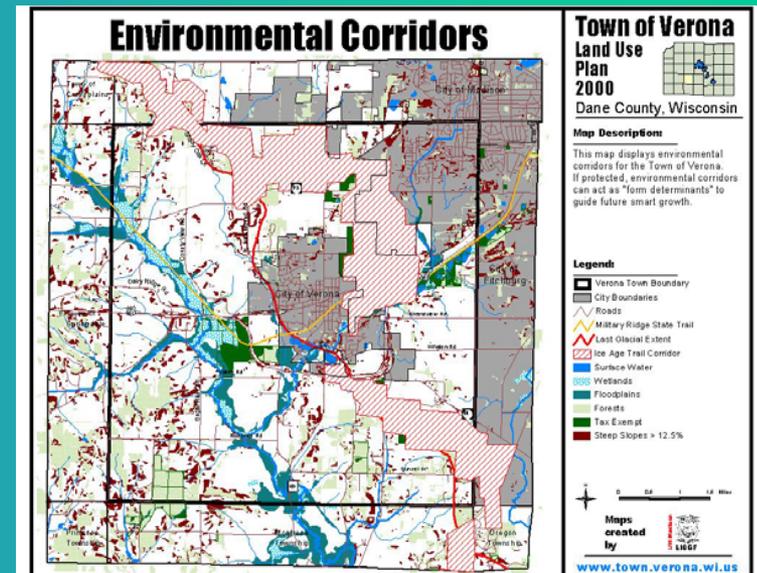
## Community Planning



NRCS provides assistance to communities engaged in planning using the agency's area-wide planning process.

NRCS integrates:

- Natural resource data and analysis
- Socioeconomic data and analysis
- Tools for community attitude assessment



# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

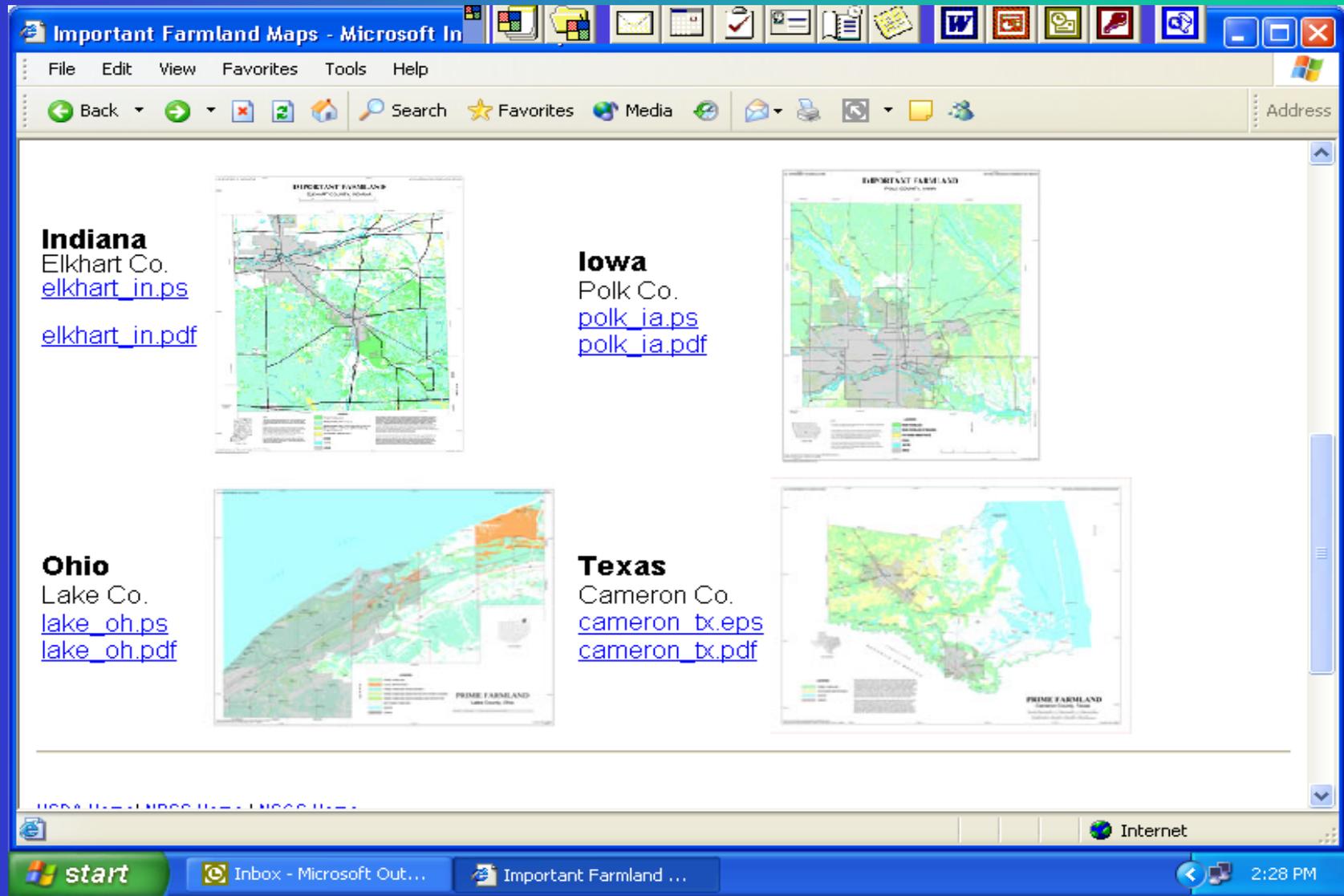
## Community Planning

➤ NRCS, working in partnership with local conservation districts, can provide assistance to communities for developing a planning process for comprehensive or smart growth and for conducting natural resource and socioeconomic assessments. NRCS follows a nine-step, area-wide planning process that includes an inventory of available data and an analysis of the data to yield useful information. Data typically used include:

- Topographic,
- Soils,
- Hydrologic,
- Watershed boundary,
- Floodplain boundary,
- Land cover,
- Land use,
- Parcel boundary, and
- Census.

# Important Farmland Maps

Working with the National Cartographic and Geospatial Center in Fort Worth, Texas, local jurisdictions are obtaining maps identifying Prime and Unique soils and soils of state or local importance. (7CFR Part 657)



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window titled "Important Farmland Maps - Microsoft In...". The browser's address bar is empty. The main content area displays four maps of important farmland, each with a title and a link to a PDF file:

- Indiana**  
Elkhart Co.  
[elkhart\\_in.ps](#)  
[elkhart\\_in.pdf](#)
- Iowa**  
Polk Co.  
[polk\\_ia.ps](#)  
[polk\\_ia.pdf](#)
- Ohio**  
Lake Co.  
[lake\\_oh.ps](#)  
[lake\\_oh.pdf](#)
- Texas**  
Cameron Co.  
[cameron\\_tx.eps](#)  
[cameron\\_tx.pdf](#)

The maps show various soil types and land use patterns, with some areas highlighted in green and yellow. The maps are titled "IMPORTANT FARMLAND" and include a legend and scale bar.

At the bottom of the browser window, the taskbar shows the "start" button, several open applications (Inbox - Microsoft Out..., Important Farmland ...), and the system clock showing 2:28 PM on 2/28/2006.

Important Farmland Maps - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address <http://www.ftw.nrcs.usda.gov/farmland/> Go Links



United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
National Cartography and Geospatial Center



Maps Information Contacts Home

# Important Farmland Maps

## Farmland Protection Program

The Farmland Protection Program provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA joins with State, tribal, or local governments to acquire conservation easements or other interests from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value. To qualify, farmland must: be part of a pending offer from a State, tribe, or local farmland protection program; be privately owned; have a conservation plan; be large enough to sustain agricultural production; be accessible to markets for what the land produces; have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services; and have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production. Depending on funding availability, proposals must be submitted by the government entities to the appropriate NRCS State Office during the application window.

For more information see the [Farmland Protection Program Fact Sheet](#) or [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#).

[USDA Home](#) | [NRCS Home](#) | [NCGC Home](#)  
Last Updated: 01/28/2002 17:05:30

NOTICE! You are entering an Official United States Government System, which may be use only for authorized purposes. Unauthorized modification of our information stored on this

start Mtgs-Presentations Microsoft PowerPoint ... Important Farmland ... Internet 9:00 AM

# FARMLAND PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

Co- Sponsor of a loose-knit network

**\*C2N Community Collaboration Network\***

Hosted by the Watershed Science Institute

<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/watershed/community-network.html>

## Purpose:

The purpose for establishing a community collaboration network is to:

Facilitate dialogue for NRCS people who are working in communities;

Facilitate sharing of ideas, strategies, ideas, tools, information resources, techniques between staff working in communities;

Strengthen NRCS ability to assist communities in their capacity to make informed natural resources decisions;

Enhance and expand existing informal networks;

Develop a list of NRCS staff who have experience in community work and for field staff who have an interest in community collaboration;

Develop a field and state interest and needs-based system for networking and mentoring; and

Build capacity for collaboration within the agency.

# Land Evaluation and Site Assessment

## LESA

A Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system can help state and local officials make sound decisions about land use. Combined with Forest measures and Rangeland parameters, LESA can provide a technical framework to numerically rank land parcels based on local resource evaluation and site considerations to support protection efforts.

# Computer Assisted Land Evaluation System (CALES):

Used by Soil Scientists to assist with the Land Evaluation component for the FPPA and local rankings for farmland protection efforts.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/fpcp/cales/>

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the LESA-CALES website. The address bar shows the URL <http://nasis.sc.egov.usda.gov/cales/>. The page content includes the following elements:

- Navigation links: [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service](#) and [Office of Farmland Protection and Community Planning](#).
- Section Header: **LESA-CALES** in large orange letters, followed by the subtitle "Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Computer-Assisted Land Evaluation System" in smaller orange text.
- Left sidebar (green background):
  - [Acknowledgments](#)
  - [Introduction](#)
  - [Begin CALES Session](#)
  - [User's Manual \(pdf\)](#)
  - [E-mail Comments](#)
- Right main content area:
  - A small image of a row of houses.
  - A large image of a field with a stream, overlaid with the text: **LESA** *Helping to make informed land use decisions*.
- Bottom section (yellow background): **CALES Steps:**
  1. Select data for a county

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button, several open applications (Inbox, LESA-CALES, Windows Explorer, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint), and the system clock showing 10:30 AM.

# Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)

The act directs federal agencies to identify and correct adverse effects of federal programs on the preservation of farmland:

- To minimize the extent to which Federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.
- To assure that Federal programs are administered in a manner that will be consistent with state, local and private programs and policies to protect farmland.

(7CFR Part 658)

**AD-1006 Website is the first step in automating the FPPA**

# Farmland Conversion Impact Rating:

With NRCS assistance, Federal agencies rate the potential impacts of farmland conversion.

<http://fppa.nrcs.usda.gov/lesa/>



# New WebCAAF Password Process

USDA Web Services Log-In - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Address

USDA UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WebCAAF  
Authentication and Authorization

Please enter your credentials:

User ID:

Password:

Login

[Change Password](#) ● [Forgot Password](#) ● [Forgot User ID](#)

Done Internet

start 4 Micro... 3 Micro... USDA W... Meeting... 2 Micro... Microsof... 1:07 PM

# Register and Identify Project by State or #

United States Department of Agriculture  
**NRCS** Natural Resources Conservation Service

*Find an Assessment*

To open a form, enter the NRCS Identifier, then Click **Go**.

NRCS Identifier:

Or, enter the state and then select a project from the list. **State:**

	County	Project	Identifier	Type	Status
<input type="radio"/>	Howard	Heavenly Hills Retirement Community	MD-2002-0001	Site	Complete
<input type="radio"/>	Howard	Water Pipe Line	MD-2002-0002	Site	I,II,III,IV,V,VI

Done Internet

start | 4 Micro... | 3 Micro... | Find an ... | Meeting... | 2 Micro... | Microsof... | 1:05 PM

# Modernized Form AD-1006

NRCS Assessment - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites Media Print Mail News RSS

Address [http://fppa.nrcs.usda.gov/lesa/NRCS\\_Rep/SiteNRCS2.aspx](http://fppa.nrcs.usda.gov/lesa/NRCS_Rep/SiteNRCS2.aspx) Go Links

United States Department of Agriculture  
**NRCS** Natural Resources Conservation Service *NRCS Assessment*

Select a Form | Print Form | Help | Log Off

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U.S. Department of Agriculture  
**FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING**

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**PART I** (Completed by Federal Agency) NRCS\_ID: **MD-2002-0001** Land Evaluation Request Date: **8/28/2003**

Name of Project: **PL566 Conservation Service** Federal Agency Involved: **Natural Resources**

State, Local, Other Agency(s) Involved:  
**None Listed**

Proposed Land Use: **DAM** State: **MD** County: **Allegany**

Type of Project: **Site**

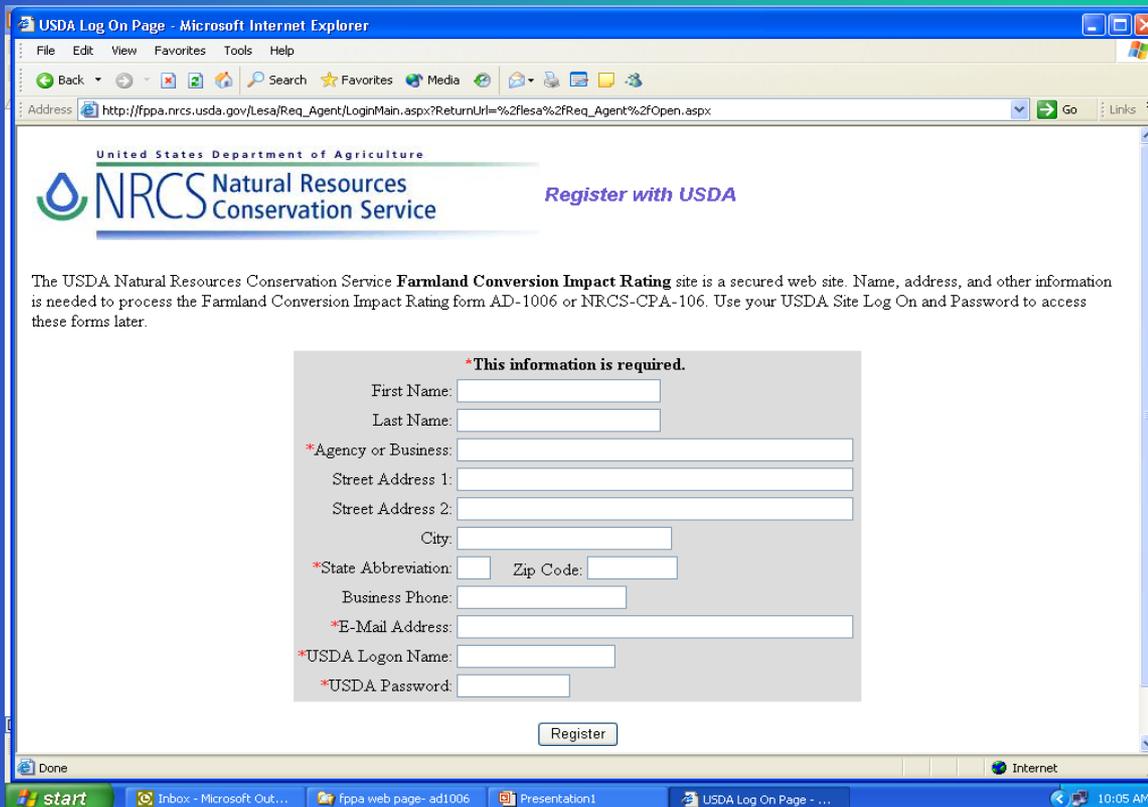
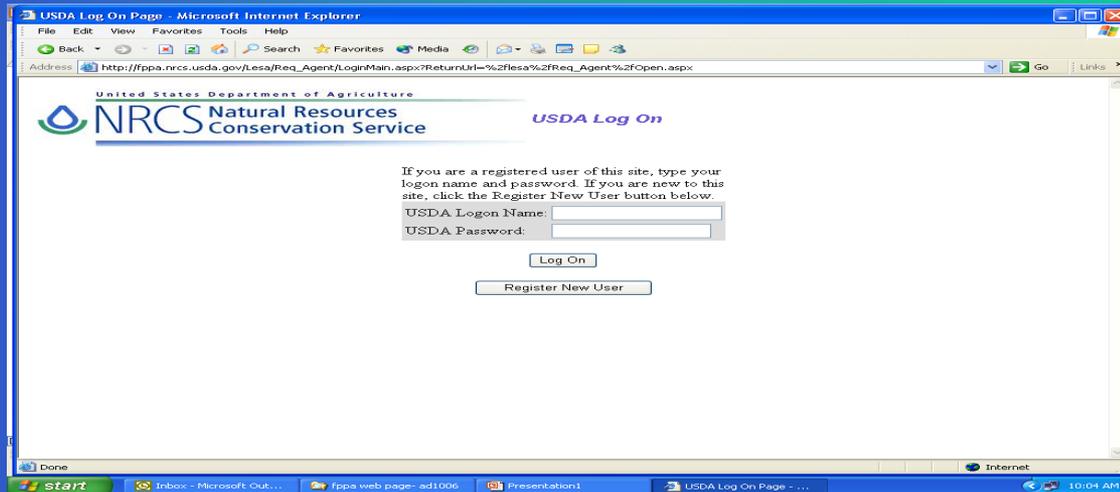
**PART II** (To be completed by NRCS) Date NRCS Received Site Map/Information:

Does the site contain prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland?  Yes  No

**PART III** (Completed by Federal Agency) Alternative Site Rating

Done Internet

start | Inboxes - Microsoft Out... | fppa web page- ad1006 | Presentation1 | NRCS Assessment - ... | 10:07 AM



# Opportunities for Input/Training

**Grassland LESA – Identifying Grasslands  
of State-wide importance**

**LESA Training – March 10-12, 2003**

<http://www.farmland.org>



**Farming on the Edge  
Finding the Balance**





**Shall we not proceed immediately to help the present generation of farmers and to conserve the heritage for posterity.....A little is being done here and there to check the loss—an infinitesimal part of what should be done.**

***Hugh Hammond Bennett, 1928***