

ACEP- ALE General and Grass Lands of Special Significance Ranking Criteria

Section: Program Questions		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Percent of prime, unique, and important farmland in the parcel to be protected?	50% or less	0
	51-60%	4
	61-70%	8
	71-80%	12
	Greater than 80%	16
Are landowners a historically underserved group, small scale farmer, limited resource landowner, new or beginning farmer or rancher or veteran landowner?	YES	3
	NO	0
Percent of cropland, pastureland, grassland, and rangeland in the parcel to be protected?	33% or less	0
	33-40%	4
	40-50%	8
	More than 50%	16
Ratio of the total acres of land in the parcel to be protected to acreage farm size in the county?	1.0 or less	0
	1.1- 2.0	5
	more than 2.0	10
Decrease in the percent of Ag Land, excluding Cropland, Pastureland and Woodland?	No decrease or less than 1%	0
	Decrease of 1-5%	1
	Decrease of 5-10%	5
	Decrease of 11-15%	9
	Decrease of more than 15%	10
Percent population growth in the county?	Growth rate of less than 1 times the State growth rate	0
	Growth rate of 1.1-2 times the State growth rate	4
	Growth rate of 2.1 - 3 times the State growth rate	7
	Growth rate of more than 3 times the State growth rate	10

Section: Program Questions

Question	Answer Choices	Points
County population density (population per square mile) as documented by the most recent United States Census?	County population density less than 1 times the Sate population	0
	County population density of greater than 1 and less than or equal to 2 times the Sate population density	4
	County population density of greater than 2 and less than or equal to 3 times the State population density	7
	County population density of greater than 3 times the state population density	15
Existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations?	No Plan	0
	Existing plan	7
	Existing plan documented and performed by an industry professional	15
Proximity of the parcel to other protected land, including military installations?	Parcel greater than 3 miles from the protected land boundary	0
	Parcel is greater than 1 mile but less than 3 miles from protected land boundary	4
	Parcel is within 1 mile of protected land boundary	7
	Parcel boundary adjoins protected land boundary	15
Proximity of the parcel to other agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure?	Parcel greater than 3 miles from other ag. Operations and infrastructure	0
	Parcel is 1 mile or greater, but less than 3 miles from other ag. Operations and infrastructure	4
	Parcel is with in 1 mile from other ag. Operations and infrastructure	7
	Parcel adjoins other ag. Operations and infrastructure	15
Parcel ability to maximize the protection of contiguous acres devoted to agricultural use?	Parcel links two noncontinuous corridors of protected agricultural use	15
	Parcel expands agricultural use protected area	6
	Parcel does not increase a protected agricultural use area	0
Parcel contains historical or archaeological resources that will be protected by easement area?	YES	15
	NO	0
The grassland in the parcel will benefit from the protection under the long-term easement for example, Grassland of Special Environmental Significance?	YES	15
	NO	0
Will the eligible cooperating entity pay over 50% of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement with its own cash resources for payment of easement compensation to the landowner and comes from sources other than the landowner?	YES	15
	NO	0
Currently enrolled in a CRP contract set to expire within a year and is grassland that would benefit from protection?	YES	15
	NO	0

Survey: Resource Questions

Section: Resource Questions		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Proximity to protected habitats such as WRE, WRP, EWP, EWPR, GRP, state owned Game Production Areas, USFWS Waterfowl Production Areas, Forest Service Grasslands, and military installations.	Adjacent to Offered area	35
	Within 0.5 miles of offered area	20
	0.6 - 1.0 miles from offered area	10
	Greater than 1 mile from offered area	5
Habitat Biodiversity ?	Offered are is 1,000 acres or more	35
	Offered are is 999-500 acres	20
	Offered are is 499-250 acres	10
	Offered are is less than 250 acres	5
Species Composition?	Offered area is primarily rangeland with 75% native species	35
	Offered area is primarily rangeland with 25-74% native species	20
	Offered area is compromised of 4 or more species on pasture/ hayland or is rangeland with less than 24% native species	10
	None of the above	5
Percent of prime, unique, and important farmland in the parcel to be protected?	50% or less	0
	51-60%	4
	61-70%	8
	71-80%	12
	Greater than 80%	15
Existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations?	No Plan	0
	Existing plan	7
	Existing plan documented and performed by industry professional	15
Will the offered area contribute to geographic regions where the enrollment of particular land use may help achieve National, State, and regional agricultural or conservation goals and objectives, or enhance existing government or private conservation projects?	YES	15
	NO	0
Is the offered area located in an area zoned for agricultural use?	YES	15
	NO	0
Does the eligible entity have past experience managing, monitoring and enforcing easements annually?	YES	15
	NO	0
Land has current Resource Management System (RMS) conservation plan that meets or exceeds all NRCS standards and specifications OR the applicant agrees to develop a RMS plan above the minimum ACEP- ALE requirements?	YES	25
	NO	0