

**Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation Service
Fiscal Year 2023**

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE)

Parcel Eligibility and Prioritization Tool

Fiscal Year - 2023	
Landowner Name and Address	
Eligible cooperating entities names and addresses	
Parcel Location:	Locality (Town/Township):
County:	State:
Are all landowners of record AGI eligible? (Y/N)	
Are all landowners of record HEL eligible? (Y/N)	
Are all landowners of record WC eligible? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming landowner eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:
Is the cooperating entity eligible? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming cooperating entity eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:
Does the eligible entity have a written pending offer for the parcel? (Y/N)	
NRCS employee confirming written pending offer:	
Name:	Signature:
Does the land (enter a response for each):	
_____ Have 50-percent prime, unique, and important farmland? (Y/N)	
_____ Have historical or archeological resources? (Y/N)	
_____ Protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring and conserving land? (Y/N)	
_____ Have land that supports the policy of a State or local farm and ranch land protection program? (Y/N)	
Is the land eligible? (Y/N)	
Which land eligibility criteria is the land being enrolled under? (<i>Identify only one eligibility category</i>)	
NRCS employee confirming land eligibility:	
Name:	Signature:

**Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation
Service Fiscal Year 2023**

National Priority Criteria (Must be 200 points Maximum)		
National Priority Factors and Scoring	Maximum Points	Points
<p>1. Percent of prime, unique, and important soils in the parcel to be protected:</p> <p>(0 points for 50 percent or less, 4 points for greater than 50 percent and less than or equal to 60 percent, 8 points for greater than 60 percent and less than or equal to 70 percent, 12 points for greater than 70 percent and less than or equal to 80 percent, 17 points for greater than 80 percent)</p>	17	
<p>2. Percent of cropland, pastureland, grassland, and rangeland in the parcel to be protected:</p> <p>(0 points for 33 percent or less, 4 points for greater than 33 percent and less than or equal to 40 percent, 8 points for greater than 40 percent and less than or equal to 50 percent, 17 points for greater than 50 percent)</p>	17	
<p>3. Ratio of the total acres of land in the parcel to be protected to average farm size in the county according to the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture (USDA - NASS - Census of Agriculture)</p> <p>(0 points for a ratio of 1 or less, 7 points for ratios of greater than 1.0 and less than or equal to 2.0, 15 points for ratios of greater than 2.0)</p>	15	
<p>4. Decrease in the percentage of acreage of farm and ranch land in the county in which the parcel is located between the last two USDA Censuses of Agriculture (USDA - NASS - Census of Agriculture)</p> <p>(0 points for decrease of 0 percent or less, 1 points for decreases of greater than 0 and less than or equal to 5 percent, 5 points for decrease of greater than 5 and less than or equal to 10 percent, 9 points for decreases of greater than 10 and less than or equal to 15 percent, 15 points for decreases of more than 15 percent)</p>	15	
<p>5. Decrease in the percentage of acreage of permanent grassland, pasture, and rangeland, other than cropland and woodland pasture, in the county in which the parcel is located between the last two USDA Censuses of Agriculture (USDA - NASS - Census of Agriculture)</p> <p>(0 points for decrease of 0 percent or less, 3 points for decreases of greater than 0 and less than or equal to 5 percent, 5 points for decrease of greater than 5 and less than or equal to 10 percent, 8 points for decreases of greater than 10 and less than or equal to 15 percent, 10 points for decreases of more than 15 percent)</p>	10	
<p>6. Percent population growth in the county as documented by the United most recent United States Census (Census Bureau Home Page)</p> <p>(0 points for growth rate of less than one times the State growth rate, 4 points for growth rate of greater than one and less than or equal to two times the</p>	15	

**Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation
Service Fiscal Year 2023**

State growth rate, 7 points for growth rate of two and less than or equal to three times the State growth rate, 15 points for growth rate of more than three times the State growth rate)		
<p>7. Population density within the county (population per square mile) as documented by the most recent United States Census (Census Bureau Home Page)</p> <p>(0 points for population density less than one times the State population density, 4 points for population density of greater than one and less than or equal to two times the State population density, 7 points for population density of greater than two and less than or equal to three times the State population density, 15 points for population density of greater than 3 times the State population density)</p>	15	
<p>8. Existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations</p> <p>(0 points for no plan, 7 points for a plan, 15 points for plan documented and performed by industry professional)</p>	15	
<p>9. Proximity of the parcel to other agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure</p> <p>(0 points if easement offer area (EOA) boundary is greater than 3 miles in proximity, 4 points if EOA is greater than or equal to 1 mile but less than 3 miles in proximity, 7 points if EOA is within 1 mile in proximity, 15 points if EOA boundary adjoins)</p>	15	
<p>10. Proximity of the parcel to other protected land, such as compatible military installations; land owned in fee title by the United States or an Indian Tribe, State or local government, or by a nongovernmental organization whose purpose is to protect agricultural use and related conservation values; or land that is already subject to an easement or deed restriction that limits the conversion of the land to nonagricultural use or protects grazing uses and related conservation values. Name of protected land_____.</p> <p>(0 points easement offer area (EOA) boundary greater than 3 miles from the protected land boundary, 4 points if EOA is greater than 1 mile but less than 3 miles from protected land, 7 points EOA is within 1 mile of protected land boundary, 15 points if EOA boundary adjoins protected land boundary)</p>	15	
<p>11. Parcel ability to maximize the protection of contiguous or proximal acres devoted to agricultural use</p> <p>(15 points if the parcel links two noncontiguous corridors of protected agricultural use, 6 points if parcel is a contiguous or proximal expansion of agricultural use protected area, 0 points if parcel does not increase a protected agricultural use area)</p>	15	
<p>12. The parcel is currently enrolled in CRP in a contract that is set to expire within a year</p> <p>(15 points if Yes, 0 points if No)</p>	15	

**Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation
Service Fiscal Year 2023**

13. The parcel is a grassland of special environmental significance that will benefit from protection under the long-term easement (20 points for Yes, 0 points for No)	20	
14. Does greater than 50% of the Fair Market Value of the Agricultural Land Easement come from the entity's own cash resources for payment of easement compensation to the land owner and comes from sources other than the landowner?	1	
Total Points for National Priority Factors	200	

Nebraska State Ranking Factors

State Priority Factors (Maximum of 125 Points)		
15. The majority (greater than 50.0%) of the parcel is located in an area zoned for agricultural use (10 points for yes, 0 points for no)	10	
16. Entity Easement Experience Eligible entity has demonstrated performance in managing and enforcing easements and completes annual monitoring on _____ (enter number) easements annually. (25 points for 25 or more easements, 15 points for 10-24 easements, 10 points for 5-9 easements, and 0 points for less than 5 easements.)	25	

17. T & E Species and Species of Concern Parcel has known populations of State or Federal T & E species or State species of concern, or parcel is located within Federal T & E designated Critical Habitat for a T& E species. (The Agricultural Land Easement Plan must address the T & E species, Critical Habitat, or State Species of Concern to at least maintain or improve habitat for the species.) (25 points for one or more State or Federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated federal Critical Habitat, 10 points for one or more State species of concern, and 0 points for no species or Federal designated Critical Habitat)	25	
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**Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation
Service Fiscal Year 2023**

<p>18. Social, cultural, economic or scenic benefits (mark up to two). Application Entity must supply documentation, for NRCS review, which supports the selection of one or more of the categories listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farm or ranch has been used for research and/or education purposes for 3 years of more out of the last 5 years. - Farm or ranch is within a quarter mile of a wild or scenic river - None of the above 	10	
<p>19. Historical or Archaeological Resources (circle the one that applies with the highest value) Entity must provide documentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm or ranch includes historical or archaeological sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places or sites formally determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the State or Tribal historic preservation officer= 20 points • Farm or ranch includes historical or archaeological sites in the process of listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the State or Tribal historic preservation officer= 10 points • Farm or ranch includes other significant historical or archaeological resources, e.g. Indian mounds are present on the property= 5 points • None of the above, or insufficient information in the application= 0 points 	20	
<p>20. Are landowners a historically underserved group, small scale farmer, limited resource landowner, new or beginning farmer or rancher or veteran landowner? USDA-NRCS Definitions are to be used. (35 points for Yes, 0 points for No)</p>	35	
Total Points for State Priority Factors	125	