

**2025 ACEP - AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENT (ALE)
RANKING QUESTIONS**

- 1. Percent of prime, unique, and important farmland in the parcel to be protected. Attach report from Web Soil Survey. (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>).**

80 to 100%
50 to 79%
Less than 50%

- 2. Percent of cropland, rangeland, grassland, historic grassland, pastureland, or nonindustrial private forestland in the parcel to be protected. (ex. Acres of land in production vs. headquarters or building envelopes).**

99% or greater
90% and greater but less than 99%
Less than 90%

- 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 (<http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>).**

1.0 and greater
.8 and greater but less than 1
Less than .8

- 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 (<http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>).**

> 0%
< 0%

- 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.**

10% or greater
7% and greater but less than 10%
4% and greater but less than 7%
1% and greater but less than 4%
Otherwise

- 6. Percent population growth in the county as documented by the U.S. Census (<http://www.census.gov>).**

40% and greater
20% and greater but less than 40%
10% and greater but less than 20%
5% and greater but less than 10%
Less than 5%

- 7. Population density (population per square mile) as documented by the most recent U.S. Census (<http://www.census.gov>). Maximum points for county density greater than state density.**

Greater than 96.3
50 and greater but less than 96.3

Less than 50

- 8. Entity provided evidence of the existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations.**

Yes

No

- 9. Proximity of the parcel to other protected land, such as 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.**

Adjacent

Less than 1 mile

Greater than 1 mile and less than 3 miles

Greater than 3 miles

- 10. Proximity of the parcel to other agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure: percent of parcel surrounded by land dedicated to agriculture/infrastructure.**

85 to 100%

50 to 84%

Less than 50%

- 11. Is the parcel adjacent to lands permanently devoted to agricultural uses such as an existing FRPP, GRP or similar easement?**

Yes

No

- 12. Is the land currently enrolled in a CRP contract that is set to expire within 1 year and is grassland that would benefit from protection under a long-term easement or is land under a CRP contract that is in transition to a beginning farmer or rancher, a veteran farmer or rancher, or a socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher?**

Yes

No

- 13. Is the land grassland of special environmental significance that contains little to no noxious or invasive species, as designated by State or Federal law, are subject to the threat of conversion to nongrassland uses or fragmentation, and the land provides habitat to threatened, endangered or at risk species, or protects highly sensitive natural areas that would benefit from protection under a long-term easement?**

Yes

No

- 14. Eligible entity contributes at least 10% of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement from the eligible entity's own cash resources for payment of easement compensation to the landowner and comes from sources other than the landowner.**

Yes

No

15. Is the landowner a limited resource farmer/rancher, beginning farmer/rancher, veteran farmer/rancher or socially disadvantaged farmer/rancher?

Yes

No

16. In the previous 5 fiscal years, the lead eligible entity has demonstrated performance in managing and enforcing easements by monitoring 100% of its NRCS easements every year AND has provided landowner change information to NRCS.

Yes

No

17. In the previous 5 fiscal years, has the lead eligible entity has demonstrated efficiency in completing NRCS easement transactions by closing enrollments within the initial term of the parcel contract or ALE-Agreement attachment?

Yes

No

18. Number of linear feet of named waterways within the area to be protected according to a USGS topographic map.

Less than 2,500 ft

2,501 – 7,500 ft

> 7,501 ft

19. Is the property located in a TCEQ/TSSWCB designated non-point source Watershed Area of Protection?

Yes

No

20. Is the property located in an aquifer recharge zone according to Texas Water Development Board's analysis of major and minor aquifers?

Yes

No

21. Are there cultural, historic, or archaeological site on the property that are listed with state or national registries?

Yes

No

22. Land to be enrolled is considered suitable habitat for a federally listed threatened, endangered, proposed or candidate plant or animal species and proper management is likely to provide a direct benefit to that specie(s).

Documented Occurrence

Critical Habitat

Suitable Habitat

None

23. Number of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (according to the Texas Conservation Action Plan Ecoregional Handbook) documented on the property.

5+

2-4

1

None

24. Soil Productivity Index (0-100). Weighted Index from Web Soil Survey National Commodity Crop Production Index.

Greater than .6

.35 to .59

.15 to .34

Less than .15

25. Entity provided evidence of an existing conservation plan that is developed to maintain or increase the agricultural viability for the land be offered for easement.

Currently have plan

Will develop plan before closing

No plan