

Easement No.	Parcel No.
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Landowner Name(s): _____

Farm Name (if applicable): _____

Signature from Authorized Entity Representative:	Date:
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FY2026 NRCS ALE Ranking Form

Part 1. National Ranking Factors (Maximum points = 200)	Score (Make Selection)
<p>1. Percent of prime, unique, and important soils in the proposed easement area to be protected? (Maximum Points = 25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 points for less than or equal to 50% 5 points for greater than 50% <u>and</u> less than or equal to 60% 10 points for greater than 60% <u>and</u> less than or equal to 70% 15 points for greater than 70% <u>and</u> less than or equal to 80% 20 points for greater than 80% <u>and</u> less than or equal to 90% 25 points for greater than 90% 	
<p>2. Percent of cropland, pastureland, grassland, and rangeland in the proposed easement area to be protected? (Maximum points = 25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 points for less than or equal to 50% 5 points for greater than 50% <u>and</u> less than or equal to 60% 10 points for greater than 60% <u>and</u> less than or equal to 70% 15 points for greater than 70% <u>and</u> less than or equal to 80% 20 points for greater than 80% <u>and</u> less than or equal to 90% 25 points for greater than 90% 	
<p>3. Ratio of the total acres of land in the proposed easement area to be protected to average farm size in the county according to the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture (USDA - NASS - Census of Agriculture) (Maximum points = 15)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ratio = Total acres of land in the parcel / Average farm size in county (see table 2 ranking guidance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 points for a ratio of less than or equal to 1.0 7 points for a ratio of greater than 1.0 <u>and</u> less than or equal to 2.0 15 points for a ratio greater than 2.0 	
<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) (Maximum points = 16)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 points for decrease of less than or equal to 0% 3 points for decrease of greater than 0% and less than or equal to 5% 5 points for decrease of greater than 5% and less than or equal to 10% 8 points for decrease of greater than 10% and less than or equal to 15% 16 points for decrease greater than 15% 	

Part 1. National Ranking Factors (Maximum points = 200)	Score (Make Selection)
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<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) (Maximum points = 20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points for decrease of less than or equal to 0% • 5 points for decrease of greater than 0% and less than or equal to 5% • 10 points for decrease of greater than 5% and less than or equal to 10% • 15 points for decrease of greater than 10% and less than or equal to 15% • 20 points for decrease greater than 15% 	
<p>6. Percent of population growth in the county as documented by the most recent United States Census (Census Bureau Home Page) (Maximum Points = 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points growth rate of less than 1 times the State growth rate • 4 points growth rates of greater than or equal to 1 and less than 2 times the State growth rate • 7 points growth rates of greater than or equal to 2 and less than 3 times the State growth rate • 15 points growth rates of greater than or equal to 3 times the State growth rate 	
<p>7. Population density (population per square mile) as documents by the most recent United States Census (Census Bureau Home Page) (Maximum Points = 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points population density less than 1 times the State population density • 5 points population density greater than or equal to 1 and less than 2 times the State population density • 10 points population density greater than or equal to 2 and less than 3 times the State population density • 15 points population density of greater than 3 times State population density 	
<p>8. Existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations. Documentation must be provided- must be a legal document developed by an attorney, accountant, extension associated, etc. (Maximum Points = 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points no official plan/documentation • 10 points for plan documented and prepared by industry professional 	
<p>9. Proximity of the proposed easement area to other protected land. Lands 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; or lands adjacent to easements held by United States. Documentation must be provided. (Maximum points = 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points proposed easement area is greater than a 3-mile radius of a protected land boundary • 4 points Proposed easement area is greater than a 1-mile radius and less than a 3-mile radius of a protected land boundary • 7 points Proposed easement area is within a 1-mile radius of a protected land boundary • 15 points Proposed easement area is directly adjacent (touching along a shared boundary) to a protected land boundary 	

Part 1. National Ranking Factors (Maximum points = 200)

Score
(Make Selection)

<p>10. Proximity of the proposed easement area to other agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure. Documentation must be provided. (Maximum points = 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points Proposed easement area boundary greater than 0.5 miles from other agricultural lands • 5 points Proposed easement area is within 0.5 miles of other agricultural lands • 10 points Proposed easement area is directly adjacent (touching a shared boundary) to other agricultural lands 	
<p>11. Proposed easement area ability to maximize the protection of contiguous or proximal acres devoted to agricultural use. Documentation must be provided. (Maximum points = 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points Proposed easement area does not increase an agricultural use area • 7 points Proposed easement area is contiguous to other agricultural lands • 15 points Proposed easement area links two non-contiguous corridors of agricultural use 	
<p>12. Is the proposed easement area currently enrolled in CRP in a contract that is set to expire within a year. (Maximum points = 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points “NO” • 2 points “YES” 	
<p>13. The proposed easement area is a grassland of special environmental significance that will benefit from the protection under the long-term easement. (Maximum points = 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points “NO” • 1 point “YES” 	
<p>14. Eligible entity contributes at least 25% of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement from its own cash resources for payment of easement compensation to the landowner and comes from sources other than the landowner. (Maximum points = 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points “NO” • 10 points “YES” 	
<p>15. Does the applicant meet the NRCS definition of a <i>veteran farmer or rancher</i> (VFR)? (Maximum points= 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points “NO” • 6 points “YES” 	


Part 2. State Ranking Factors (Maximum points = 200)

Score
(Make Selection)

<p>17. Does the county have a Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) or Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD) Program. Documentation must be provided-copy of agreement or letter from VAD Board.(Maximum points = 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points if County has VAD or EVAD and parcel owner is not participating • 5 points if County does not have VAD or EVAD programs • 10 points if Yes, <u>and</u> the parcel owner is a member of the VAD • 15 points if Yes, <u>and</u> the parcel owner is a member of the EVAD 	
<p>18. Lead Eligible Entity has demonstrated performance in managing and enforcing easements by monitoring 100% of its NRCS easements each year <u>and</u> entity has provided information on any change in ownership to NRCS over the last (5) fiscal years. Documentation must be provided. (Maximum points = 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points “NO” • 5 points “YES” 	
<p>19. Proposed easement area contains habitat for at-risk species that the landowner is <u>currently managing or protecting.</u> Documentation must be provided. (Maximum points = 20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points for no species • 5 points for species of interest (according to State criteria) • 10 points for State species of concern • 15 points for federally listed candidate species • 20 points for federally listed threatened and endangered species 	
<p>20. Proposed easement area acres contain a site of <u>cultural or historical significance</u> that is currently listed or was formally determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Documentation must be provided. (Maximum points = 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points “NO” • 10 points “YES” 	
<p>21. Proposed easement area is located in a county with Total Cash Receipts (according to the 2022 Ag Census) that falls within the following range (values listed are in thousands of dollars): (Maximum points= 40)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 points for >\$250,000 • 30 points for \$100,001-250,000 • 20 points for \$50,001-100,000 • 10 points for \$10,000-50,000 • 0 points for <\$10,000 	

Part 2. State Ranking Factors (Maximum points = 200)

Score
(Make Selection)

<p>22. The proposed easement is in an area with a threat of conversion (NRCS ONLY) (Maximum points = 50)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •0 points if NO DATA •10 points if Low •15 points if Moderately Low •30 points if Moderately High •50 points if High 	
<p>23. Is the parcel either in whole or in part within a source water assessment area as defined by the NC Public Water Supply Section? Current source water assessment areas can be viewed using the NC SWAP Mapping Application available on the web page referenced below. Documentation (e.g. screen shot) must be provided.: (Maximum points = 10)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>https://ncdenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=26f4e2b3140f4e58825e48781cceb5e</p> <p>(Select the map layers: PWS Surface Water Assessment Area 2020 and PWS Groundwater Assessment Areas 2020) Both surface water and groundwater areas should be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 points for “NO” • 10 points for “YES”. 	

NRCS LAND EVALUATION and SITE ASSESSMENT (LESA) (NRCS ONLY)

<p>24. Use the NRCS Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) values for the soil types found on the offered property to calculate the points for this section. Each county NRCS office has a chart indicating the agricultural group and relative value of each soil type found in the county. The best land (Group 1) is given a relative value of 100. Other groups are valued less than 100. NOTE: Total acres should equal total acres being offered for enrollment. See Ranking Guidance. (Maximum points = 50)</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">LESA TOTAL</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"> </td> </tr> </table>	LESA TOTAL		
LESA TOTAL				

GROUP	ACRES	RELATIVE VALUE	ADJUSTED VALUE
1.			0
2.			0
3.			0
4.			0
5.			0
6.			0
7.			0
8.			0
9.			0
10.			0
11.			0
12.			0
13.			0
14.			0
15.			0

TOTAL ACRES	0.00	TOTAL ADJUSTED VALUE	0.00
TOTAL ADJUSTED VALUE ADJUSTED ACRES (=)		X .5 = TOTAL LESA POINTS	0

Total Points for National Ranking questions: (Maximum =200)	0
Total Points for State Ranking questions: (Maximum = 200)	0
Signature from NRCS Approving Official:	DATE