



United States Department of Agriculture

**FARMLAND PROTECTION
POLICY ACT
ANNUAL REPORT
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This report consists of two components:

- I. Progress of federal agencies in implementing Farmland Protection Policy Act;*
 - II. Review and revision of Federal policies and procedures affecting farmland conversion*
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I. Progress of Federal Agencies in Implementing Farmland Protection Policy Act

Under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA), Federal agencies are required to evaluate the impacts of federally funded projects that may involve permanently converting prime and important farmlands to nonagricultural uses and to consider alternative actions that would lessen the adverse effects of the land's conversion. In complying with the FPPA, Federal agencies request assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) by submitting a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (Form AD-1006). The requesting agency then conducts a Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) of the project area. NRCS provides the land evaluation information necessary for the responsible Federal agency to complete the site assessment portion of the analysis. To implement FPPA, Federal agencies address the potential conversion of agricultural land when reviewing internal projects or providing assistance to local communities.

Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is available for these uses (the land could be cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forestland, or other land, but not urban built-up land or water). Land used for a specific high-value food or fiber crop is classified as "unique farmland." Generally, additional "farmlands of statewide importance" include those that are nearly prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. In some local areas, there is concern for certain additional farmlands, even though these lands are not identified as having national or statewide importance. These farmlands are identified as being of "local importance" through ordinances adopted by local government. The NRCS State Conservationist reviews and certifies lists of farmland of State and local importance. These lists, along with State and locally established LESA systems where applicable, are used by Federal agencies to review and evaluate activities that may impact farmland.

As defined in 7 CFR part 657, important farmland encompasses prime and unique farmland, as well as farmland of statewide and local importance. Table 1 summarizes the proportion and amount of important farmland considered for conversion as a part of Federal projects under FPPA in fiscal years 2008 through 2017.

Table 1.—Important Farmland Evaluated under FPPA 2008–2017

Fiscal Year	Important Farmland (within land evaluated)	Percent Important Farmland (of total land evaluated)	Agencies Submitting Requests
	<i>Acres</i>	<i>% Total Acres</i>	<i>No. of Agencies</i>
2008	87,902	71%	25
2009	58,106	67%	23
2010	54,103	38%	30
2011	99,386	49%	29
2012	36,146	33%	33
2013	245,972	60%	33
2014	106,136	67%	32
2015	44,886	48%	34
2016	32,370	77%	22
2017	42,561	63%	35

In fiscal year 2017, NRCS received 2,812 AD-1006 forms from 35 Federal agencies requesting assistance to evaluate the impact of proposed conversions of lands that would result from their projects. A total of 67,090 acres of land from 49 States were proposed for conversion to nonagricultural uses. Of the acres reviewed, 63% (42,561 acres) were identified as important farmland (as defined in 7 CFR part 657). Of these important farmlands, 34,223 acres were prime farmland or unique farmland and 8,337 acres were State or locally important farmland.

California and Texas had the highest number of farmland acres proposed for conversion, with 13,956 acres and 7,101 acres, respectively. 4 states reported no acres, and 15 States reported less than 100 acres (Tables 2 and 3).

In FY 2017, the Federal Railroad Administration reported the largest amount of important farmland proposed for conversion at 14,712 acres. This accounts for about 35 percent of all proposed important farmland conversion (Table 4).

Table 2.—Top 10 States with Acres of Farmland Proposed for Conversion by Federal Projects

State	Acres
California	13,956
Texas	7,101
North Carolina	6,002
Virginia	4,894
Kentucky	4,550
Arkansas	4,125
Oklahoma	3,603
Florida	2,525
North Dakota	2,396
South Carolina	2,066

Table 3.—Acres of Farmland Proposed by State for Conversion Due to Federal Projects

<i>State</i>	<i>Total acres proposed by State</i>	<i>Total acres proposed by State as a percentage of total acres proposed nationwide</i>	<i>Acres of important farmland proposed by State</i>	<i>Acres of important farmland proposed by State as a percentage of acres of important farmland proposed nationwide</i>
AK	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
AL	68	0.10%	41	0.10%
AR	4,125	6.15%	1,366	3.21%
AZ	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
CA	13,956	20.80%	13,877	32.61%
CO	32	0.05%	12	0.03%
CT	46	0.07%	18	0.04%
DE	14	0.02%	14	0.03%
FL	2,525	3.76%	751	1.76%
GA	739	1.10%	345	0.81%
HI	88	0.13%	78	0.18%
IA	1,912	2.85%	929	2.18%
ID	51	0.08%	51	0.12%
IL	39	0.06%	35	0.08%
IN	1,628	2.43%	1,263	2.97%
KS	437	0.65%	314	0.74%
KY	4,550	6.78%	541	1.27%
LA	457	0.68%	405	0.95%
MA	12	0.02%	7	0.02%
MD	120	0.18%	57	0.13%
ME	5	0.01%	5	0.01%
MI	140	0.21%	120	0.28%
MN	592	0.88%	305	0.72%
MO	1,177	1.75%	392	0.92%
MS	1,921	2.86%	847	1.99%
MT	80	0.12%	70	0.17%

<i>State</i>	<i>Total acres proposed by State</i>	<i>Total acres proposed by State as a percentage of total acres proposed nationwide</i>	<i>Acres of important farmland proposed by State</i>	<i>Acres of important farmland proposed by State as a percentage of acres of important farmland proposed nationwide</i>
NC	6,002	8.95%	5,177	12.16%
ND	2,396	3.57%	604	1.42%
NE	154	0.23%	89	0.21%
NH	553	0.82%	56	0.13%
NJ	27	0.04%	27	0.06%
NM	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NV	17	0.03%	17	0.04%
NY	488	0.73%	416	0.98%
OH	441	0.66%	114	0.27%
OK	3,603	5.37%	2,603	6.11%
OR	959	1.43%	958	2.25%
PA	23	0.03%	19	0.04%
PR	172	0.26%	0	0.00%
RI	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
SC	2,066	3.08%	1,797	4.22%
SD	1,278	1.91%	1,129	2.65%
TN	592	0.88%	228	0.54%
TX	7,101	10.58%	4,918	11.56%
UT	491	0.73%	473	1.11%
VA	4,894	7.29%	1,306	3.07%
VT	76	0.11%	32	0.07%
WA	86	0.13%	79	0.18%
WI	598	0.89%	664	1.56%
WV	192	0.29%	10	0.02%
WY	170	0.25%	4	0.01%
Totals	67,090	100.0%	42,561	100.00%

Table 4.—Breakdown of Acres and AD-1006 Forms Received by Federal Agencies in FY 2017

Federal Agency	No. of AD-1006 requests to NRCS	No. of acres proposed for conversion	No. of acres identified as important farmland	Of which:	
				Prime or unique	State or locally important
Bureau of Prison	1	570	12	0	12
Department of Agriculture					
• Natural Resources Conservation Service	77	1,149	984	748	236
• Rural Development	553	10,131	6,879	4,310	2,569
• Rural Utilities Service	422	3,928	1,146	710	436
• US Forest Service	3	0	0	0	0
Department of Commerce					
• Economic Development Administration	20	759	436	361	75
• Others (unspecified agencies)	5	24	12	12	0
Department of Defense					
• National Guard Bureau	1	105	71	66	5
• U.S. Air Force	1	0	0	0	0
• U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	37	5,688	4,081	3,942	139
• Others (unspecified agencies)	1	0	0	0	0
Department of Energy					
	9	325	120	120	0
Department of Health and Human Services					
• Health Resources and Services Administration	14	20	19	18	1
• Indian Health Service	2	273	119	108	11
Department of Homeland Security					
• Federal Emergency Management Agency	56	73	67	57	10
• U.S. Coast Guard	1	0	0	0	0
• U.S. Customs and Border Protection	7	7	7	7	0
Department of Housing and Urban Development					
	504	2,565	1,582	1,000	582
Department of Interior					
• Bureau of Indian Affairs	36	809	624	526	98
• Bureau of Land Management	1	0	0	0	0
• Bureau of Reclamation	2	0	0	0	0
• National Park Service	7	17	17	17	0
• Office of Surface Mining	3	3	0	0	0
• U.S. Geological Survey	1	3	3	2	1
• Others (unspecified agencies)	1	8	0	0	0
Department of Transportation					
• Federal Aviation Administration	37	3,475	1,111	732	379
• Federal Highway Administration	477	13,928	6,551	5,130	1,421
• Federal Railroad Administration	10	17,622	14,713	13,277	1,436
• Others (unspecified agencies)	380	2,997	2,480	1,907	573
Department of Veterans Affairs					
	6	312	299	160	139
Environmental Protection Agency					
	124	401	203	137	66
Federal Communications Commission					
	3	3	0	0	0
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission					
	1	0	0	0	0
Federal Housing Authority					
	3	46	15	15	0
Tennessee Valley Authority					
	6	1,850	1,011	863	148
TOTAL	2,812	67,090	42,561	34,224	8,337

II. Review and Revision of Federal Policies and Procedures Affecting Farmland Conversion

Based on ongoing reviews, there were no revisions of Federal policies and procedures affecting farmland conversion. To simplify completion of required forms for projects that impact important farmland, NRCS developed and released PDF (portable document format) versions of two important forms: Farmland Conversion Impact Rating (Form AD-1006) and Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for Corridor Type Project (Form NRCS-CPA-106). These fillable forms are updated regularly and can be downloaded from the FPPA section of the NRCS Web site:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/landuse/fppa/>.