

## PACE Program Ranking Criteria

1. Eligibility Criteria:  
*Section C-7. Eligibility Criteria (PACE Ordinance as adopted on May 19, 2005)* In order for a parcel to be eligible for an agricultural conservation easement, it must meet the following criteria: (i) the use of the parcel subject to the agricultural conservation easement must be consistent with the comprehensive plan; (ii) the proposed terms of the agricultural conservation easement must be consistent with the minimum agricultural conservation easement terms and conditions set forth in section C-9 of the *PACE Ordinance*, unless modified by the Board; and (iii) the parcel must be located in the County of Isle of Wight.
2. Percentage of tract in cropland/farmland/pasture:
  - a. 75% or more = 10 points
  - b. 50 – 74% = 8 points
  - c. 20 – 49% = 6 points
  - d. Less than 20% = 4 points
3. Acreage in Working Forestland (calculation of acreage excludes Nawney soils/Type 10) Working Forestland is defined as accessible for harvesting, no access issues, past harvesting has complied with VDOF Best Management Practices, can be remediated if not, and has a minimum of a Forest Management Plan in place.
  - a. 0 – 20 acres = 0 points
  - b. 21 – 50 acres = 4 points
  - c. 51 – 75 acres = 6 points
  - d. 76 – 100 acres = 8 points
  - e. Over 100 acres = 10 points
4. Tract Size *Areages will be verified by staff using FSA records*
  - a. Less than 50 acres = 4 points
  - b. 51 – 100 acres = 6 points
  - c. 101 – 250 acres = 8 points
  - d. Greater than 250 acres = 10 points
4. Has the parcel been actively farmed or in pasture for the last three (3) out of five (5) years? Staff will verify using FSA records.
  - a. Yes = 10 points
  - b. No = 0 points

5. Percentage of tract in high-value/specialty crops or have diversified farming operation. High-value/specialty crops are defined as crops which require intensive management and greater than normal inputs. Examples include, but are not limited to: horticultural and nursery crops, greenhouse plants, fruits and vegetables, strawberries, blackberries, specialty soybeans (NATTO), cut flowers, and agritourism activities/pick-your-own, etc. *Staff will verify acreages.*
  - a. 80% or more = 5 points
  - b. 60 to 79% = 4 points
  - c. 40 to 59% = 3 points
  - d. 20 to 39% = 2 points
  - e. 1 to 20% = 1 point
  
6. Amount of animal units produced on the farm. An animal unit is defined as a unit of measurement equal to 1,000 pounds of live body weight.
  - a. 150 animal units or more = 5 points
  - b. 100 to 149 animal units = 4 points
  - c. 50 to 99 animal units = 3 points
  - d. 25 to 49 animal units = 2 points
  - e. 1 to 25 animal units = 1 point
  
7. Owner has implemented or agrees to implement any of the following Soil and Water Quality Conservation Plan Categories approved by the Peanut Soil and Water Conservation District or the Virginia Department of Forestry, when applicable. *Select all that apply.*
  - a. Nutrient Management Plan = 2 points  
*A Nutrient Management Plan is defined by VA Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Soil and Water Conservation as identifying how the major plant nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) are to be annually managed for expected crop production and for the protection of water quality. A nutrient management plan is a written site specific plan which addresses these issues. The goal of farm nutrient management planning is to minimize adverse environmental effects, primarily upon water quality, and avoid unnecessary nutrient applications above the point where long-run net farm financial returns are optimized.*
  - b. Conservation Tillage = 1 point  
*Conservation Tillage is defined by the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Soil and Water Conservation as any tillage system which will aid in the conservation of soil and water and be economically feasible for crop production. This suggests the use of what is often called reduced or minimum tillage.*

- c. Grazing Land Protection = 1 point  
*Defined by the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Soil and Water Conservation as a structural and/or management practice that will enhance or protect vegetative cover to reduce runoff of sediment and nutrients from existing pastureland and reduce NPS pollution associated with grazing livestock.*
  - d. Cover Crops = 1 point  
*DCR Soil and Water Conservation defines cover crops as grasses, legumes, forbs, or other herbaceous plants established for seasonal cover and conservation purposes. Practice is applied to all lands requiring seasonal vegetative cover for natural resource protection.*
  - e. Structural Practices = 1 point  
*Practices which are designed by the Conservation Technician or Conservation Engineer and have a given life span. These practices reduce soil erosion or manage animal waste. Examples of practices include: grassed waterways, animal waste facility, solid waterway, stream crossing, erosion control structures, filter strips, or a composter.*
  - f. Stream Protection = 2 points  
*Streambank protection as defined by DCR Soil and Water Conservation is protection by fencing along streams to reduce erosion, sedimentation, and the pollution of water from agricultural nonpoint sources.*
  - g. Forest Stewardship Plan = 2 points  
*A long term forest resource plan developed for multiple benefits which is prepared by a professional forester with assistance from other resource professionals as needed to meet the goals of the landowner.*
8. Parcel is contiguous with an existing permanent conservation easement, a national, state or local park, or other permanently protected open space.  
5 points
  9. Parcel is contiguous to the Blackwater River, or a tidal stream, or a tidal marsh, or a property containing a public reservoir, or is within the watershed of a public reservoir. 2 points
    - a. Parcel is within \_ mile. 1 point
  10. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey for Isle of Wight County, the parcel contains:
    - a. Class I (5A)
      - i. 80% or more = 5 points
      - ii. 60 to 79% = 4 points
      - iii. 40 to 59% = 3 points
      - iv. 20 to 39% = 2 points
      - v. 1 to 19% = 1 point

- b. Class II (5B, 6, 12A, 12B, 14B, 16, 18A, 18B, 19A, 19B, 20B, 23) or is designated as prime farmland (5A, 5B, 9where drained, 18A, 18B, and 23where drained).
  - i. 80% or more = 5 points
  - ii. 60 to 79% = 4 points
  - iii. 40 to 59% = 3 points
  - iv. 20 to 39% = 2 points
  - v. 1 to 19% = 1 point
  
- 11. Proximity to historic or cultural feature. Exceptional Feature is defined as being one listed on the National Register of Historic Places or on the Virginia Historic Register.
  - a. On-farm exceptional features favorable to preservation = 2 points
  - b. Exceptional features favorable to preservation within \_ mile = 1 point
  
- 12. Working family farm
  - a. At least one family member's principal occupation and income (more than half) is farming or foresting. = 5 points  
*An affidavit must be signed by landowner in order to receive points.*
  
- 13. The farm is registered as a Century Farm through the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services = 3 points
  
- 14. Road Frontage - Parcel is contiguous with a public road.
  - a. 1000 feet or more = 8 points
  - b. 601 to 999 = 6 points
  - c. 301 to 600 = 4 points
  - d. 150 to 300 = 2 points
  - e. Less than 150 = 0 points
  
- 15. The parcel is located within an Agricultural and Forestal District. = 3 points
  
- 16. County fund leveraging.  
State, federal, or private funding identified to leverage the purchase of the conservation easement: one (1) point for each ten (10) percent of the purchase price for which those funds can be applied.

**TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 111**