



**EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY
AND RANKING SYSTEM**

Purpose:

To establish the eligibility criteria for the Easement Purchase Program and the procedures for ranking easement purchase applications.

Policy:

1. To be eligible for the Easement Purchase Program, an application shall meet the following criteria:
 - a. The land must be at least 10 acres.
 - b. The land must be receiving farmland tax assessment.
 - c. The land must be at least 50% tillable, or have at least 25 tillable acres.
 - d. The application receives a minimum score of 25 based on the Morris CADB Ranking System, per Attachment Policy: P-8.
 - e. The land must exhibit development potential based on the following standards:
 - (1) The municipal zoning ordinance for the land as it is being appraised must allow additional development, and in the case of residential zoning, at least one additional residential site beyond that which will potentially exist on the premises.
 - (2) Where the purported development value of the land depends on the potential to provide access for additional development, the municipal zoning ordinances allowing further subdivision of the land must be verified. If access is only available pursuant to an easement, the easement must specify that further subdivision of the land is possible. To the extent that this potential access is subject to ordinances such as those governing allowable subdivisions, common driveways and shared access, these facts must be confirmed in writing by the municipal zoning officer or planner.
 - (3) If the land is 25 acres or less, the land shall not contain more than 80 percent soils classified as freshwater or modified agricultural wetlands according to the NJDEP wetlands maps. If the DEP wetlands maps are in dispute, further investigation and onsite analysis may be conducted by a certified licensed engineer or qualified wetlands consultant and/or a letter of interpretation issued by the NJDEP may be secured.
 - (4) If the land is 25 acres or less, the land shall not contain more than 80% soils with slopes in excess of 15% as identified on a USDA NRCS SSURGO version 2.2 or newer soils map.
2. Attached is the Morris CADB Ranking System, which is utilized to rank easement purchase

applications.

3. The CADB has the discretion to approve or deny any eligible application.
4. If an application fails to meet the criteria listed in Paragraph 1, the Morris CADB reserves the right to waive the minimum criteria and to accept and consider the application on a case-by-case basis.

Adopted:	Effective:	Revision #:	Last Revised:
08-10-00	08-10-00	6	03-14-13

MORRIS COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD RANKING SYSTEM

I. FARMLAND QUALITY (Maximum 80 Points):

Acreage (5 Points):

50 acres or more	= 5 points
25 - 49 acres	= 3 points
10 - 24 acres	= 1 point

Sub Total = _____

Soils (25 Points):

Percent of Prime	_____ % x .25 = _____ points
Percent of Statewide Importance	_____ % x .20 = _____ points
Percent of Other	_____ % x .00 = 0 points

Sub Total = _____

Percentage of Tillable Cropland (25 Points):

Cropland Harvested	_____ % x .25 = _____ points
Cropland Pastured	_____ % x .10 = _____ points
Permanent Pasture	_____ % x .02 = _____ points
Other	_____ % x .00 = 0 points

Sub Total = _____

Boundaries and Buffers (15 Points):

Deed Restricted Farmland	_____ % x .15 = _____ points
Deed Restricted Wildlife Areas	_____ % x .13 = _____ points
8 Year Programs & EP Applications	_____ % x .07 = _____ points
Farmland (Unrestricted)	_____ % x .05 = _____ points
Streams & Wetlands	_____ % x .13 = _____ points
Parks (limited public access)	_____ % x .13 = _____ points
Parks (high use)	_____ % x .10 = _____ points
Military Installations	_____ % x .10 = _____ points
Highways (limited access) & RR's	_____ % x .10 = _____ points
Golf Courses (public)	_____ % x .10 = _____ points
Residential Development	_____ % x .00 = 0 points
Other	_____ % x .00 = 0 points
Cemeteries	_____ % x .13 = _____ points

Sub Total = _____

Density (10 Points):

Preserved Farms Within 0.5 Miles and Application Itself	= 2 points (Each)
Applications and 8 Year Programs Within 0.5 Miles	= 1 point (Each)

Sub Total = _____

II. STEWARDSHIP (Maximum 10 Points):

Soil and Water Conservation Practices = 0-5 points

Landowner is a Full-Time Farmer = 10 points

On-Site Investment Indicating a Serious Commitment to Continue Farming (Permanent Structures; Nursery Stock and Irrigation Systems; Condition of Buildings) = 0-5 points

Sub Total = _____

III. LOCAL COMMITMENT (Maximum 10 Points):

- Financial Contribution for Application = 0.5 points per % of county share
- Right to Farm Ordinance Containing a Notification Clause = 3 points
- Municipality has a Farmland Preservation Plan and An Agriculture Retention/Advisory Board = 5 points
- Active Municipal Liaison to the Morris CADB = 1 point

Sub Total = _____

IV. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS/ BONUS (Maximum 15 Points):

- Historic Structures = 0-2 points
- Viewed as Very Important by the Local Community (Such as Local Farm Market or One that Serves the Community As a Community Education Resource, Pick-Your-Own Operation, Last Farm in Town) = 0-3 points
- Imminence of Change (Policy: P-4) = 0-10 points
- Easement Affordability - Percentage of County's Annual Easement Purchase Budget (up to -5 points):
 - > 50% = -5 points
 - > 40% = -4 points
 - > 30% = -3 points
 - > 20% = -2 points
 - > 10% = -1 point
 - 0 - 10% = 0 points

Participation in the 8 Year Program (0-10 Points)

- Number of Years Completed:*
- 1 Year = 3 point
 - 2 Years = 4 points
 - 3 Years = 5 points
 - 4 Years = 6 points
 - 5 Years = 7 points
 - 6 Years = 8 points
 - 7 Years = 9 points
 - 8 Years+ = 10 points

Sub Total = _____

V. EXCEPTIONS:

- One Non-Severable Exception = -0 points
- More Than One Non-Severable Exception = -5 points (Each)
- Each Severable Exception = -10 points

Sub Total = _____

TOTAL = _____