



Public Works Department
Project Management Division
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Bradenton, FL 34208-3926
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May 22, 2024

Transmitted via Email
Isabelle Giuliani – State Soil Scientist
USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
2614 NW 43rd Street
P.O. Box 141510
Gainesville, FL 32614-1510

SUBJECT: Request for Farmland Conversation Impact Rating Concurrence
Project Name: Fort Hamer Road
ETDM #: 14536
Financial Project #: 452775-3-22-01
County: Manatee

Dear Ms. Giuliani:

The Manatee County Department of Public Works in conjunction with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for the widening of Fort Hamer Bridge from Upper Manatee River Road to US 301 in Manatee County (see attached **Figure 1 – Project Location Map**). This project aims to improve the operational capacity of Fort Hamer Road from Upper Manatee River Road to US 301 to accommodate future travel demand projected because of area-wide population and employment growth. The secondary objectives are to provide transportation infrastructure to support economic growth, provide consistency with local plans and policies, enhance safety, and accommodate multimodal activities.

The project was reviewed through FDOT’s Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process where members of the Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) provided input/comments. An Advance Notification (AN) package was sent on November 20, 2023, and the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) commented during the ETDM and the AN process that the project had Farmlands of Unique Importance within the 500-foot project buffer. It was determined that at the 100-foot buffer width, there are 20.78 acres of Farmland of Unique Importance, with 39.15 acres of Farmland of Unique Importance at the 200-foot buffer width, and 90.51 acres of Farmland of Unique Importance at the 500-foot buffer width.

The proposed project alignment runs along Fort Hamer Road for approximately 3.84 miles. There are some areas of non-urban use both adjacent to the corridor and within a one (1) mile radius. Generally, there are 20% or less of non-urban areas within the corridor and within one (1) mile. NRCS has mapped approximately 368.85 acres of Farmland of Unique Importance within the 500-foot buffer (see **Figure 2 – Farmlands of Unique Importance Map**). However, most of these farmlands have already been converted to either the existing Fort Hamer Road and grassed

JAMES SATCHER
District 1

AMANDA BALLARD
District 2

KEVIN VAN OSTENBRIDGE
District 3

MIKE RAHN
District 4

RAY TURNER
District 5

JASON BEARDEN
At Large

GEORGE W. KRUSE
At Large

shoulder or the adjacent residential developments. The proposed project consists of the widening of an existing roadway, therefore, impacts to surrounding land uses, including farmlands, have been minimized to the greatest extent practicable. Please see the attached form NRCS-CPA-106 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for Corridor Type Projects.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

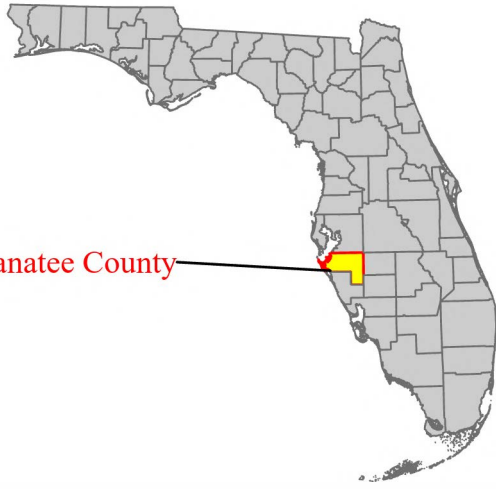
Sincerely,

Anthony "Tony" Russo, P.E.
1022 26th Ave East
Bradenton, FL 34208
Anthony.russo@mymanatee.org

Cc: Jerry Varghese, Manatee County Public Works
Shari Barnwell, Consultant Project Manager
Cris Schooley, Consultant PD&E Manager
Emily Barnett, FDOT Environmental Project Manager & ETDM Coordinator
Adam Rose, FDOT District One Project Liaison

Attachments:

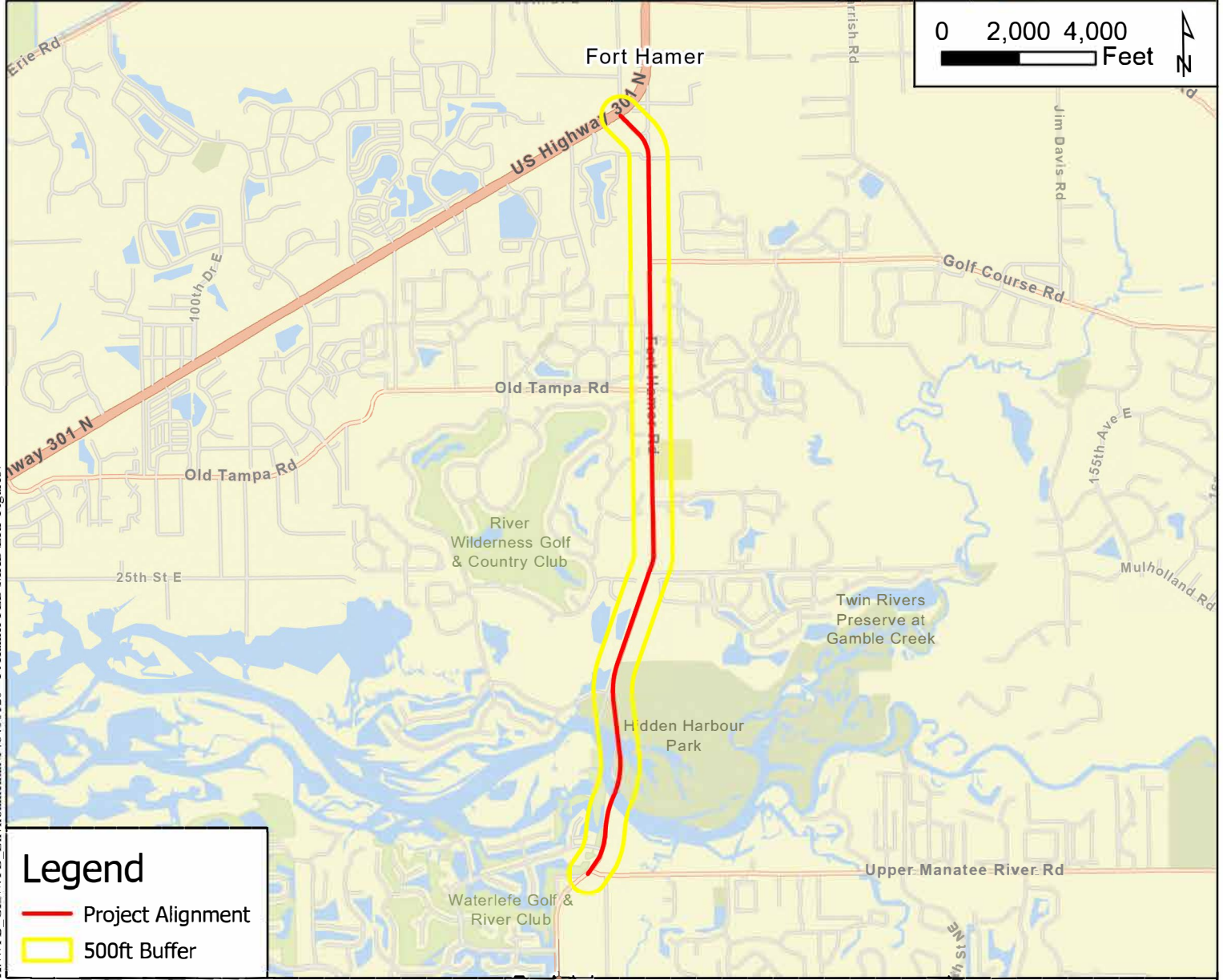
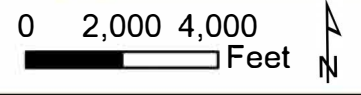
Figure 1 – Project Location Map
Figure 2 – Farmlands of Unique Importance Map
Fort Hamer Road Prime Farmlands Scoring Criteria Assumptions
Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form NRCS-CPA-106



Manatee County



Project Area



Legend

- Project Alignment
- 500ft Buffer

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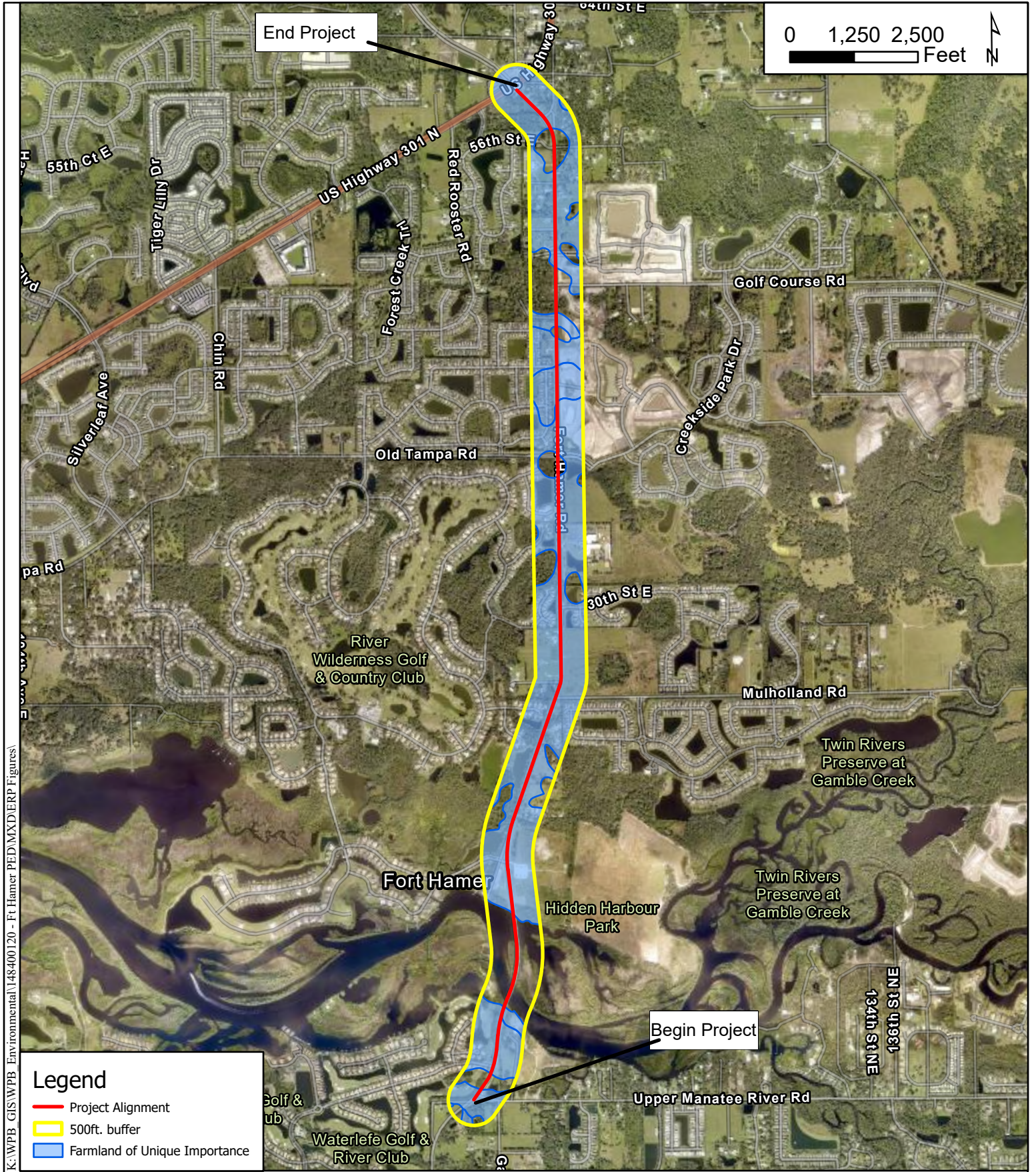
Source: ESRI, FDOT, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



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Project Location Map

**Fort Hamer Road and Bridge PD&E Study
 (ETDM #14536 and FPID 452775-3-22-01)
 Manatee County, Florida**



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Legend

- Project Alignment
- 500ft. buffer
- Farmland of Unique Importance

Source: ESRI, FDOT, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



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Farmlands of Unique Importance Map
Fort Hamer Road and Bridge PD&E Study
(ETDM #14536 and FPID 425775-3-22-01)
Manatee County, Florida

Fort Hamer Road Prime Farmlands Scoring Criteria Assumptions

For more information on Farmland Conversation Impact Rating please see the Farmlands Evaluation Form AD-1006 “Steps in the Processing the Farmlands and Conversion Impact Rating Form” and PD&E Manual, Part 2, Chapter 6 - Farmlands

Evaluation Assumptions:

- 1) This effort is being made to address Part VI of the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form.
- 2) The term “site” on Form AD-1006 is synonymous with the term “corridor” as referenced by 7 CFR Part 658.5 (12)(c).
- 3) Scoring Criteria and Kimley-Horn staff assumptions for each are as follows:

1. Area in Nonurban Use: How much land is non-urban use within a radius of 1.0 miles from where the project is intended?

Greater than 90% ----- 15 points.

90-20% ----- 14 to 1 points.

Less than 20% ----- 0 points.

Assumption: [(Area of Non-Urban Land) / (Total Area of Buffer)] x 100% = % of Non-Urban Land. The surrounding land use within 1.0 miles is mixed with residential, commercial and services, transportation, communications, wetlands, surface waters, cropland and pastureland, golf courses, open and disturbed lands, and some agricultural land. Approximately 3,520 acres of 6,916 total acres (approximately 50.8%) would be considered non-urban land, therefore 8 points were assigned.

2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use: How much of the perimeter of the site borders on land in non-urban use?

Greater than 90% ----- 10 points.

90-20% ----- 9 to 1 points.

Less than 20% ----- 0 points.

Assumption: [(Perimeter Bordering Non-Urban Land) / (Perimeter of Proposed ROW)] x 100% = Perimeter in Non-Urban Use. Approximately 12,063 linear feet of the perimeter borders non-urban land. The total perimeter border is approximately 20,305 linear feet. Therefore, approximately 59.4% of the perimeter borders non-urban land. Therefore, 5 points were assigned.

3. Percent of Site Being Farmed: How much of the site has been farmed (managed for a scheduled harvest or timber activity) more than five of the last ten years?

Greater than 90% ----- 20 points.

90-20% ----- 19 to 1 points.

Less than 20% ----- 0 points.

Assumption: Non-Urban FLUCCS Codes located adjacent to the project limits, within a 500-foot buffer, are 410 (Upland Coniferous Forests), 630 (Wetland Forested Mixed), 210 (Cropland and Pastureland), 615 (Streams and Lake Swamps [Bottomland]), 220 (Tree Crops), 260 (Other Open Land), 434 (Upland Hardwood – Coniferous Mixed), 540 (Bays and Estuaries), and 642 (Saltwater Marshes). Fort Hamer Road is already an existing roadway; therefore, a majority of the site is currently an established roadway. As a result, less than 20% of the site has been farmed. Based on the above considerations, 0 points were assigned.

4. Protection Provided by State and Local Government: Is the site subject to state or unit of local government policies or programs to protect farmland or covered by private programs to protect farmland?
The site is protected ----- 20 points.
The site is not protected ----- 0 points.

Assumption: The site is not protected. Therefore, 0 points were assigned.

5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared to Average: Is the farm unit(s) containing the site (before the project) as large as the average-size farming unit in the county? (Average farm sizes in each county are available from the NRCS field offices in each State. Data are from the latest available census of agriculture, acreage of farm units in operation with \$1,000 or more in sales).
As large or larger ----- 10 points.
Below average ----- deduct 1 point for each 5% below the average, down to 0 points if 50% or more below average.

Assumption: Average farm size for Manatee County provided by NRCS in Part II of Form AD-1006 = 317 acres. According to 2022 Census data, the average farm size for Manatee County is 317 acres. The largest farm unit in the project is approximately 55.3 acres, which is approximately 82% smaller than the average farm size for the county. Therefore, 0 points were assigned.

6. Creation of Non-farmable Farmland: If this site is chosen for the project, how much of the remaining land on the farm will become non-farmable because of interference with land patterns?
Acreage equal to or more than 25% of the total ----- 25 points.
Acreage equal to between 5 to 25% of the total ----- 24 to 1 points.
Acreage equal to or less than 5% of the total ----- 0 points.

Assumption: Form AD-1006 (03-02) instructions indicate transportation projects should be weighed a maximum of 25 points. No loss of access to the remaining farmland will occur because of the taking of Fort Hamer ROW. Therefore, 0 points were assigned.

7. Availability of Farm Support Services: Does the site have available adequate supply of farm support services and markets, i.e., farm suppliers, equipment dealers, processing and storage facilities, and farmers markets?
All required services are available ----- 5 points.
Some required services are available ----- 4 to 1 points.
No required services are available ----- 0 points.

Assumption: All required services are available. Therefore, 5 points were assigned.

8. On-Farm Investments: Does the site have substantial and well-maintained on-farm investments such as barns, other storage buildings, fruit trees and vines, field terraces, drainage, irrigation, waterways, or other soil and water conservation measures?
A high amount of on-farm investment ----- 20 points.
Moderate amount of on-farm investment ----- 19 to 1 points.
No on-farm investment ----- 0 points.

Assumption: The site does not contain any on-farm investments. Therefore, 0 points were assigned.

9. Effects of Conversion on Farm Support Services: Would the project at this site, by converting farmland to non-agricultural use, reduce the demand for farm support services to jeopardize the continued existence of these support services and thus, the viability of the farm's remaining area?

Substantial reduction of demand for support services ----- 25 points.
Some reduction in demand for support services ----- 24 to 1 points.
No significant reduction of demand for support services ----- 0 points.

Assumption: Form AD-1006 (03-02) instructions indicate transportation projects should be weighed a maximum of 25 points. No reduction in demand for farm support services is anticipated because of the conversion of farmland. Therefore, 0 points were assigned.

10. Compatibility with Existing Agricultural Use: Is the kind and intensity of the proposed use of the site sufficiently incompatible with agriculture that it is likely to contribute to the eventual conversion of surrounding farmland to non-agricultural use?

The proposed project is incompatible ----- 10 points.
The proposed project is tolerable ----- 9 to 1 points.
The proposed project is fully compatible ----- 0 points.

Assumption: The proposed use of the site is the same as the existing use, therefore, the project is fully compatible and will not contribute to the eventual conversion of surrounding farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, 0 points were assigned.

**FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING
FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS**

PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request	4. Sheet 1 of _____
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1. Name of Project	5. Federal Agency Involved
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2. Type of Project	6. County and State
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PART II (To be completed by NRCS)	1. Date Request Received by NRCS	2. Person Completing Form
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3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form). YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Acres Irrigated Average Farm Size
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5. Major Crop(s)	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: _____ %	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: _____ %
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8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS
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PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)	Alternative Corridor For Segment			
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	Corridor A	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
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A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly				
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B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services				
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C. Total Acres In Corridor				
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PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information				
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A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland				
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B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland				
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C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted				
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D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value				
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PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)				
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PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))	Maximum Points			
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1. Area in Nonurban Use	15			
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2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10			
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3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20			
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4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20			
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5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10			
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6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25			
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7. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5			
--	---	--	--	--

8. On-Farm Investments	20			
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9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25			
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10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10			
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TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160			
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PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)				
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Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	47.9		
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Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	18		
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TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)	260	65.9		
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1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
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5. Reason For Selection:	
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Signature of Person Completing this Part:	DATE
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NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

CORRIDOR - TYPE SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following criteria are to be used for projects that have a linear or corridor - type site configuration connecting two distant points, and crossing several different tracts of land. These include utility lines, highways, railroads, stream improvements, and flood control systems. Federal agencies are to assess the suitability of each corridor - type site or design alternative for protection as farmland along with the land evaluation information.

(1) How much land is in nonurban use within a radius of 1.0 mile from where the project is intended?

More than 90 percent - 15 points
90 to 20 percent - 14 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points

(2) How much of the perimeter of the site borders on land in nonurban use?

More than 90 percent - 10 points
90 to 20 percent - 9 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points

(3) How much of the site has been farmed (managed for a scheduled harvest or timber activity) more than five of the last 10 years?

More than 90 percent - 20 points
90 to 20 percent - 19 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points

(4) Is the site subject to state or unit of local government policies or programs to protect farmland or covered by private programs to protect farmland?

Site is protected - 20 points
Site is not protected - 0 points

(5) Is the farm unit(s) containing the site (before the project) as large as the average - size farming unit in the County ?

(Average farm sizes in each county are available from the NRCS field offices in each state. Data are from the latest available Census of Agriculture, Acreage or Farm Units in Operation with \$1,000 or more in sales.)
As large or larger - 10 points
Below average - deduct 1 point for each 5 percent below the average, down to 0 points if 50 percent or more below average - 9 to 0 points

(6) If the site is chosen for the project, how much of the remaining land on the farm will become non-farmable because of interference with land patterns?

Acreage equal to more than 25 percent of acres directly converted by the project - 25 points
Acreage equal to between 25 and 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project - 1 to 24 point(s)
Acreage equal to less than 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project - 0 points

(7) Does the site have available adequate supply of farm support services and markets, i.e., farm suppliers, equipment dealers, processing and storage facilities and farmer's markets?

All required services are available - 5 points
Some required services are available - 4 to 1 point(s)
No required services are available - 0 points

(8) Does the site have substantial and well-maintained on-farm investments such as barns, other storage building, fruit trees and vines, field terraces, drainage, irrigation, waterways, or other soil and water conservation measures?

High amount of on-farm investment - 20 points
Moderate amount of on-farm investment - 19 to 1 point(s)
No on-farm investment - 0 points

(9) Would the project at this site, by converting farmland to nonagricultural use, reduce the demand for farm support services so as to jeopardize the continued existence of these support services and thus, the viability of the farms remaining in the area?

Substantial reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 25 points
Some reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 1 to 24 point(s)
No significant reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 0 points

(10) Is the kind and intensity of the proposed use of the site sufficiently incompatible with agriculture that it is likely to contribute to the eventual conversion of surrounding farmland to nonagricultural use?

Proposed project is incompatible to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 10 points
Proposed project is tolerable to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 9 to 1 point(s)
Proposed project is fully compatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 0 points
