

**Fiscal Year 2027
ACEP-ALE
Michigan Ranking
Form**

Landowner Name: _____

Address: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____ **County:** _____

Date: _____ **Easement Acres:** _____

Completed by: _____

Reviewed by (NRCS Easement/Program Staff Only): _____

Staff from entities submitting applications for ACEP-ALE funding consideration will determine an overall score for the parcel based on the following ranking criteria. After the parcels have been ranked, NRCS Easement/Program Staff will review the ranking for each parcel. Parcels will be placed in ranked order and the State Conservationist will make funding selections by highest ranking.

Eligibility Criteria.

Criteria met by parcel being submitted for application: (Select One)

- a. Contains at least 50% prime, unique, statewide, or locally important soil
- b. Contains historical or archaeological resources
- c. Protects grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring or conserving eligible land
- d. Further a State or Local policy consistent with the purposes of ACEP

National Ranking Factors

1) Agricultural Capacity. Priority is placed on productive farmland that has unique growing characteristics as demonstrated by the presence of Prime, Unique or Statewide Importance soils (Please round to whole numbers).

Formula:
$$\frac{\text{Total Acre of Prime, Unique or Statewide Important Soils}}{\text{Total Parcel Acres}} \times 50$$

(Score must be greater than 25 points for Eligibility Criteria A)

(Max 50 points)

Points _____

2) Ratio of cropland, pastureland and grassland of the parcels(s) to be protected to non-agricultural land. (Max 15 points)		Points _____
100% - 85%	15 pts	
84% - 70%	10pts	
69% - 50%	5 pts	
49% - 33%	0 pts	
3) Ratio of total acres of land in the parcel to average farm size in the county according to the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture. Formula: Ratio = (Parcel Size/Average Farm Size per County) (www.agcensus.usda.gov). (See Appendix A) (Max 10 points)		Points _____
Ratio greater than 2	10 pts	
Ratio of 2 – 1.1	5 pts	
Ratio of 1 or lower	0 pts	
4) Percent decrease of farm and ranch land acreage in the county that the parcel is located using the last two USDA Census of Agriculture. (See Appendix A) (Max 10 points)		Points _____
Decrease more than 10%	10 pts	
Decrease from 10% - 5.1%	7 pts	
Decrease from 5% - 2.1%	5 pts	
Decrease from 2% - 0.1%	2 pts	
Decrease of 0%	0 pts	
5) Percent population growth in the county that the parcel is in as documented by the U.S. Census (www.census.gov). (See Appendix B) (Max 10 points)		Points _____
Growth rate less than 1.0%	1 pts	
Growth rate of 1.0% - 5.0%	5 pts	
Growth rate of 5.1% - 10%	10 pts	
Growth rate more than 10%	3 pts	
6) Population density (per square mile) of the county that the parcel is in as documented by the most recent U.S. Census. (See Appendix B) (Max 10 points)		Points _____
Density less 200	1 pts	
Density of 201-400	10 pts	
Density of 401-600	5 pts	
Density more than 601	3 pts	
7) Decrease in the percentage of acreage of permanent grassland, and pasture, other than cropland and woodland pasture, in the county in which the parcel is located between the last two USDA Censuses of Agriculture. (See Appendix A). (Max 5 points)		Points _____
Less than 0.0%	0 pts	
Greater than 0.0%	5 pts	

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8) Existence of a farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established to address farm viability for future generations. (If answering yes to this ranking factor, a copy of the farm or ranch succession plan or similar plan established must be included in the application packet when submitted.) (Max 5 points)		Points _____
Yes		5 pts
No		0 pts
9) Proximity of the parcel to other protected land, 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. (Max 20 points)		Points _____
Parcel is adjacent to protected land.		20 pts
Parcel is not adjacent to but within ½ mile of protected land.		12 pts
Parcel is more than ½ mile to within 2 miles of protected land.		7 pts
Parcel is greater than 2 miles from other protected land.		3 pts
10) Proximity of parcel to other agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure (i.e. Land that is in an area that has access to agricultural markets for its products, infrastructure appropriate for supporting agricultural production, and other support services.). (Max 20 points)		Points _____
Parcel is adjacent to other agricultural operations or infrastructure.		20 pts
Parcel is not adjacent to but within ½ mile of other agricultural operations or infrastructure.		12 pts
Parcel is more than ½ mile to within 2 miles of other agricultural operations or infrastructure.		7 pts
Parcel is greater than 2 miles from other agricultural operations or infrastructure.		3 pts
11) Contiguous Acres devoted to agricultural use (cropland, pasture, hay land). Please include the acreage included in the application and adjacent acreage of land devoted to agricultural use. (Max 20 points)		Points _____
Larger than 175 acres		20 pts
between 175 – 125 acres		15 pts
between 125 – 75 acres		10 pts
between 75 – 40 acres		5 pts
less than 40 acres		0 pts

12) Is the parcel currently enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in a contract that is set to expire within 1 year and is grassland that would benefit from protection under a long-term easement? (Max 5 points)		Points _____
Yes		5 pts
No		0 pts
13) Is the parcel grassland of special environmental significance that would benefit from protection under a long-term easement? (Max 5 points)		Points _____
Yes		5 pts
No		0 pts
14) Percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement that is the eligible entity's own cash resources for payment of easement compensation to the landowner and comes from sources other than the landowner (excludes landowner contribution). This is determined by the following formula: Entity's Funds/Estimated Fair Market Value (Max 15 Points)		Points _____
50%		15 pts
49% - 30%		7 pts
29% - 10%		5 pts
< 10%		2 pts

Total National Points (200 max) 0

State Ranking Factors

1) Zoning Is the location of the parcel in an area Zoned for Agricultural Use? (Please include a copy of the zoning map in the application packet when submitted.) (Max 25 points)		Points _____
The parcel is designated for agricultural use.		25 pts
The parcel is not designated for agricultural use.		0 pts
2) To promote the diversity of natural resources protected does the easement contain forests, lakes, rivers, or wetlands that will be further protected? Check all that apply. (Max 15 points)		Points _____
Forest greater than 10 acres.		5 pts
Wetland greater than 2 acres.		5 pts
Lake or river frontage of more than a quarter mile		5 pts

3) To provide additional economic benefits to rural communities, is any portion of the subject parcel enrolled in the Commercial Forest Act (part 512 of NREPA), Hunter Access Program, or will the conservation easement deed provide for the non-motorized recreational use by members of the public? (Max 5 points)		Points _____
Yes		5 pts
No		0 pts
4) Percent Matching Funds. This is determined by the following Formula: (Entity's Funds + Landowner Donation)/Appraised Fair Market Value (Max 40 points)		Points _____
90% - 71%		40 pts
70% - 61%		30 pts
60% - 51%		20 pts
50%		10 pts
5) Is the cropping system on the parcel currently being performed to promote soil health, reduce nutrient runoff and improve water quality? This should be clearly documented by a system that follows the principals of 1) maximizing soil cover through the use of cover crops and maintaining crop residues on the soil surface, 2) minimizing soil disturbance by using no-till or minimum till practices, 3) maximizing living roots in the soil through cover cropping, intercropping and diverse crop rotations, and 4) maximizing biodiversity in cropping systems. Additional Information on soil health can be found at: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/soil/soil-health (If answering yes to this ranking factor, a copy of the documentation that shows the cropping system being utilized must be included in the application packet when submitted.) (Max 30 points)		
		Points _____
Yes		30 pts
No		0 pts
6) Multifunctional Conservation Values, Historical and Archaeological (Max 15 points)		Points _____
Does the parcel have any known historical or archaeological significant sites located on the property?		15 pts
Has the parcel ever had an historical or archaeological investigation by an archaeologist?		7 pts
None		0 pts
7) Does the parcel have habitat for a Federal or State listed or Candidate for listing Species? (If answering Yes, include information on the species and its status.) (Max 10 points)		Points _____
Yes		10 pts
No		0 pts

8) Eligible Entity's Performance – Rate of Closing Typical length of time between Parcel Contract Obligation to Closing for previous Conservation Easements through the ACEP-ALE program. (Max 20 points)	
Points _____	
Easements closed within 2 years or less of contract obligation	20 pts
Easements closed over 2 years after contract obligation	5 pts
9) Eligible Entity's Performance – Annual Monitoring Percentage of easements closed with NRCS that have been monitored annually with reports submitted to NRCS. (Max 20 points)	
Points _____	
100%	20 pts
75% - 99%	10 pts
50% - 74%	5 pts
Less than 50%	0 pts

Total State Points (180 max) 0

Grand Total 0

Completed By Signature

Date

NRCS Easement/Program Staff Signature

Date

Appendix A. Average Farm Size, Percent Change in Land in Farms (acres) & Percent Change in the of acreage of permanent grassland, and pasture, other than cropland and woodland pasture. (USDA Census of Agriculture 2017 and 2022)

County	Average Farm Size (Acres)	Change in Land in Farms (acres) (%)	Change in acreage of permanent grassland, and pasture (%)
Alcona	175	-4%	-53.52%
Alger	199	-10%	-18.68%
Allegan	187	-9%	-8.50%
Alpena	193	-10%	+3.44%
Antrim	170	+7%	+6.04%
Arenac	259	-8%	+15.53%
Baraga	215	-5%	+65.27%
Barry	160	-7%	-21.46%
Bay	288	-9%	-25.58%
Benzie	81	-15%	-43.20%
Berrien	182	0%	-16.17%
Branch	294	-7%	-21.97%
Calhoun	227	-5%	-8.36%
Cass	297	-3%	+78.50%
Charlevoix	115	-20%	-46.73%
Cheboygan	153	-7%	-19.98%
Chippewa	251	-5%	-20.81%
Clare	139	-14%	-42.33%
Clinton	210	+1%	-41.21%
Crawford	42	-58%	-66.95%
Delta	263	+26%	+12.92%
Dickinson	146	-12%	+5.04%
Eaton	209	-5%	-14.94%
Emmet	93	-11%	-13.38%
Genesee	152	-3%	-35.44%
Gladwin	126	-10%	-30.99%
Gogebic	90	-6%	-32.02%
Grand Traverse	81	-12%	-0.92%
Gratiot	374	+3%	+20.85%
Hillsdale	230	+16%	+11.17%
Houghton	138	-1%	+15.43%
Huron	374	-8%	-79.67%
Ingham	220	+6%	-10.54%
Ionia	244	-2%	-25.43%
Iosco	127	-17%	-18.42%
Iron	173	-16%	-35.36%
Isabella	283	0%	-35.06%
Jackson	198	+10%	-6.50%

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Kalamazoo	239	+5%	-28.48%
Kalkaska	138	-8%	-25.21%
Kent	137	-9%	-20.71%
Keweenaw	64	+298%	-100%
Lake	122	-18%	-34.75%
Lapeer	155	-2%	-22.19%
Leelanau	114	+14%	-12.23%
Lenawee	272	-15%	-12.05%
Livingston	130	-4%	-23.92%
Luce	171	-19%	-50.84%
Mackinac	216	-24%	+65.35%
Macomb	174	+8%	-2.64%
Manistee	121	-19%	-58.87%
Marquette	165	+15%	+116.91%
Mason	181	-11%	-33.56%
Mecosta	167	-1%	-8.05%
Menominee	276	-4%	-14.53%
Midland	158	-1%	-9.05%
Missaukee	343	+4%	-5.18%
Monroe	184	-2%	-17.12%
Montcalm	284	+1%	-12.03%
Montmorency	198	-22%	-58.49%
Muskegon	166	+4%	+19.66%
Newaygo	146	-15%	-3.49%
Oakland	48	-10%	-43.04%
Oceana	225	-13%	+24.78%
Ogemaw	261	+1%	-37.40%
Ontonagon	255	-9%	+71.32%
Osceola	182	-2%	+20.53%
Oscoda	94	-18%	-36.11%
Otsego	206	+38%	+45.56%
Ottawa	139	-16%	-28.60%
Presque Isle	251	+9%	-42.85%
Roscommon	121	-29%	-25.65%
Saginaw	233	-9%	-1.01%
St. Clair	161	-7%	-15.31%
St. Joseph	313	-3%	-6.14%
Sanilac	353	+8%	+13.82%
Schoolcraft	201	-13%	-28.25%
Shiawassee	201	-2%	-23.94%
Tuscola	271	+3%	-13.00%
Van Buren	157	-13%	-21.72%
Washtenaw	141	-1%	-1.61%
Wayne	34	+4%	-13.94%
Wexford	150	+6%	+4.05%

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Appendix B. Population Growth Rate & Population Density (US Census, 2020)

County	Growth Rate	Population Density
Alcona	-7.1%	15.07
Alger	-7.9%	9.66
Allegan	8.2%	146.02
Alpena	-2.3%	50.55
Antrim	-0.6%	49.26
Arenac	-5.6%	41.31
Baraga	-7.9%	9.08
Barry	5.5%	112.86
Bay	-3.6%	234.81
Benzie	2.5%	56.21
Berrien	-1.6%	271.80
Branch	-0.9%	88.60
Calhoun	-1.3%	190.18
Cass	-1.3%	105.27
Charlevoix	0.4%	62.58
Cheboygan	-2.2%	35.76
Chippewa	-4.5%	23.60
Clare	-0.2%	54.68
Clinton	5.0%	139.70
Crawford	-7.7%	23.60
Delta	-0.4%	31.51
Dickinson	-0.8%	34.08
Eaton	1.3%	189.81
Emmet	4.3%	72.97
Genesee	-4.6%	637.71
Gladwin	-1.2%	49.99
Gogebic	-12.5%	13.05
Grand Traverse	9.5%	205.11
Gratiot	-1.7%	73.46
Hillsdale	-2.0%	76.48
Houghton	2.0%	37.02
Huron	-5.2%	37.58
Ingham	1.4%	512.30
Ionia	4.5%	116.93
Iosco	-2.5%	45.96
Iron	-1.6%	9.97
Isabella	-8.4%	112.44
Jackson	0.1%	228.55
Kalamazoo	4.5%	465.89
Kalkaska	4.6%	32.04

Kent	9.2%	776.87
Keweenaw	-5.1%	3.79
Lake	4.8%	21.32
Lapeer	0.3%	137.82
Leelanau	2.7%	64.24
Lenawee	-0.5%	132.64
Livingston	7.1%	342.97
Luce	-19.5%	5.94
Mackinaw	-2.5%	10.61
Macomb	4.8%	1838.86
Manistee	1.2%	46.17
Marquette	-1.6%	36.51
Mason	1.2%	58.68
Mecosta	-7.2%	71.55
Menominee	-2.2%	22.51
Midland	-0.2%	161.73
Missaukee	1.4%	26.65
Monroe	1.8%	281.78
Montcalm	5.2%	94.43
Montmorency	-6.3%	16.74
Muskegon	2.1%	352.18
Newaygo	3.1%	61.46
Oakland	6.0%	1468.77
Oceana	0.3%	52.06
Ogemaw	-4.3%	36.86
Ontonagon	-14.2%	4.44
Osceola	-2.7%	40.42
Oscoda	-4.9%	14.53
Otsego	3.8%	48.72
Ottawa	12.3%	525.67
Presque Isle	-2.9%	19.71
Roscommon	-4.0%	45.14
Saginaw	-5.0%	237.62
Sanilac	-5.8%	42.19
Schoolcraft	-5.2%	6.87
Shiawassee	-3.6%	128.32
St. Clair	-1.6%	222.39
St. Joseph	-0.6%	121.73
Tuscola	-4.3%	66.39
Van Buren	-0.9%	124.43
Washtenaw	8.0%	527.30
Wayne	-1.5%	2930.27
Wexford	2.9%	59.60

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