

APPENDIX 5

Checklist for Farm and Forest Lands Protection

Considerations for Evaluating Impacts
on Farm and Forest Lands

Checklist for Farm and Forest Lands Protection

	Yes	No	Source and Date of Information
<p>1. Does the land contain class 1, 2, 3 or 4 soils? <i>(Contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service or USDA/Farm Service Agency)</i></p>			
<p>2. Does the land have exceptional physical characteristics for the production of food, feed, fiber, forest products, forage, oilseed, vineyards and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion? <i>(Contact the Agricultural Extension Agent for the county, city or town)</i></p>			
<p>3. Is the land valuable for the production of specific high-value food, forestry, and fiber crops (vineyards, vegetable crop land, tobacco)? <i>(Contact the Agricultural Extension Agent for the county, city or town)</i></p>			
<p>4. Is the land of statewide or local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forest products, forage or oilseed crops? <i>(Contact the Agricultural Extension Agent for the county, city or town)</i></p>			
<p>5. Has the land been recognized under a state program such as Clean Water Farm Award, Tree Farm or Stewardship Program or the Century Farm Program? <i>(Contact VDACS about Century Farms, 804-786-2373, DOF about Tree Farm or Stewardship Program, 804-977-6555, and DCR about Clean Water Farm Award, 804-786-3999)</i></p>			
<p>6. Is the land part of an agricultural or forestal district or is the land part of a use value assessment and taxation program for real estate devoted to agricultural, horticultural or forest use in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 (Section 58.1-3229 et seq.) of Chapter 32 of Title 58.1? <i>(Contact the county, city or town zoning or planning departments and local commissioners of revenue)</i></p>			
<p>7. Does the land make a significant contribution to the local economy or the rural character of the area in which the local is located? <i>(Contact the county, city or town planners and Agricultural Extension Agent for the county, city or town)</i></p>			

Characteristics to be considered in evaluating impacts on farm and forest lands

(§ 3.2-205, Effective October 1, 2008)

A. In preparing environmental impact reports in accordance with § 3.2-204, state agencies shall consider the impact of the major state project on all farm and forest lands that:

1. Have soil classified as capability class I, II, III, or IV;
2. Have an exceptional combination of physical characteristics for the production of food, feed, fiber, forest products, forage, oilseed, and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion;
3. Are valuable for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as fruits, vegetables, and nursery crops and have a special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high quality or high yields of such crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods;
4. Are of statewide or local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forest products, forage, or oilseed crops;
5. Have been recognized under a state program such as the Clean Water Farm Award or the Century Farm Program;
6. Are part of an agricultural or forestal district or are participating in a use value assessment and taxation program for real estate devoted to agricultural, horticultural, or forest use in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 (§ 58.1-3229 *et seq.*) of Chapter 32 of Title 58.1; or
7. Make a significant contribution to the local economy or the rural character of the area where the land is located.

B. The governing body of each locality, with the cooperation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, may designate the important farmlands within its jurisdiction. In designating important farmlands the governing body shall demonstrate that adequate provision has been made for nonagricultural uses within its jurisdiction.

C. As used in this chapter, "farmland" includes all land defined as follows:

- "Important farmland," other than prime or unique farmland, is land that is of statewide or local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, nursery, oilseed, or other agricultural crops, as determined by the appropriate state agency or local government agency, and that the U.S. Department of Agriculture determines should be considered as farmland for the purposes of this chapter;

- "Prime farmland" is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, oilseed, nursery, and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion. Prime farmland includes land that possesses the above characteristics but is being used currently to produce livestock and timber. It does not include land already in or committed to urban development or water storage; and
- "Unique farmland" is land other than prime farmland that is used for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high quality or high yields of specific crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.