



SKAGIT COUNTY FARMLAND LEGACY PROGRAM
 1800 Continental Place | Mount Vernon, WA 98273 | (360) 416-1400
skagitcounty.net/farmland

Site Selection Scoring Criteria

Note: The characteristics listed under each factor are intended to serve as benchmarks for the rating; point scores in between the levels may be applied.

Score Received

I. Characteristics of Farmland (Total points available = 25)

A. Soil Quality

As defined by the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service).

- 75%+ of site is classified “prime soil” 5 points
- 50-75% of site is classified “prime soil” 3 points
- Under 50% of site is classified “prime soil” 0 points

B. Size of Farm

The size of a contiguous parcel submitted for consideration. Parcels that are physically separated shall be considered under separate applications to the program.

- 100+ acres 10 points
- 70-100 acres 7 points
- 40-70 acres 4 points
- 25-40 acres 1 point

C. Economic Productivity

Is the site being actively farmed for economic purposes?

- Farm yields \$30,000/year or more in gross receipts 5 points
- Farm yields less than \$30,000/year in gross receipts 0 points

D. Proximity to Protected Land

Includes properties subject to an existing conservation easement or variance restriction, lands publicly owned as open space, and farms under application for the PDR/FLP program.

- Site is adjacent to restricted property 5 points
- Site is within 1,500 feet of restricted property 3 points
- Site is within 2,500 feet of restricted property 1 point

II. Threat of Conversion (Total points available = 40)

A. Proximity to Urban Development

Farm is located within 600 feet of intensive commercial (non-agricultural) development, commercial zoning, or urban growth boundary 10 points

Farm is located 600 to 1,500 feet from intensive commercial (non-agricultural) development, commercial zoning, or urban growth boundary 7 points

Farm is located 1,500 to 2,500 feet from intensive commercial (non-agricultural) development, commercial zoning, or urban growth boundary 4 points

B. Proximity to Major Highway Intersections

For purposes of this evaluation, "major highways" means roads with a daily traffic volume of 3,000 or more trips. Refer to the list on page 4 of roads currently meeting this definition.

Property is within 1,500 feet of an intersection of I-5 or State Route 20 or State Route 536 10 points

Property is within 1,500 feet of the intersection of two other major highways 8 points

Property fronts on a major highway 6 points

Property is within 2,500 feet of a major highway 4 points

C. Availability of Sewer Service

Sewer service is available to the property 10 points

Sewer lines are located within 1,500 feet of the property 7 points

Sewer lines are located within 2,500 feet of the property 4 points

Sewer lines are located within 4,000 feet of the property 1 point

D. Urgency of Sale/Ease of Conversion

Imminent sale, personal circumstances of owner, ease of conversion due to suitability of site for septic fields, presence of substandard lots, etc. which create immediate threat of conversion to non-farm use: Potential points: 0-10

III. Scenic and Environmental Values (Total points available = 10)

A. Critical Areas

A wetland or Fish and Wildlife Protection Area* of significant environmental value is located on the property. Native Growth Protection Areas* including such features shall also be considered.

**as defined in the County's Critical Areas Ordinance and/or Comprehensive Plan*

Large critical area feature with exceptional value	5 points
Moderate size critical area feature with some value	3 points
No critical areas on site	0 points

B. Scenic Value

Property offers exceptional scenic views from a major highway or other public viewpoint	5 points
---	----------

Property offers some scenic views from a major highway or other public viewpoint	3 points
--	----------

Property does not offer scenic views from a major highway or other public viewpoint	0 points
---	----------

IV. Financial Considerations (Total points available = 10)

A. Bargain Sale/Opportunities for Leveraging

Due to bargain sale and/or opportunities for leveraging other fund sources, the purchase price for development rights is:

50% or less of full value	10 points
50-70% of full value	6-9 points
70-90% of full value	2-5 points
90-99% of full value	0-1 point

V. Site Selection Committee Discretion (Total points available = 20)

In addition to the criteria listed above, the Site Selection Advisory Committee shall assign 0-20 points to reflect the strategic value of the property and/or other site-specific conditions not adequately reflected in the criteria listed above.

In assessing the strategic value of a farm, the committee will consider the extent to which preservation of an individual site – because of its location, history, visibility, function, etc – would contribute toward protection of other highly productive farms in Skagit County.

Major Highways with 3,000 or more vehicle trips per day

Interstate 5

State Route 536 (Memorial Highway)

State Route 9

North of SR 534

Near Lake Cavanaugh Road

South of Nookachamps Road

North of Big Lake Blvd.

South of SR 538

State Route 11 (Chuckanut)

State Route 20

State Route 534 (Conway-McMurray Road)

Highway 99 (from Cook Road to Bow Hill Road)

Alger Cain Lake Road

Bennett Road

Best Road

Bow Hill Road (near Casino)

Chilberg Road south of Calhoun Road

Cook Road

Farm to Market Road (near SR 20)

Fir Island Road

Francis Road

Josh Wilson Road (flats)

La Conner-Whitney Road

Lake Samish Road (Alger)

Marine Drive

McLean Road

Old Highway 99

Peterson Road

Pioneer Highway North

Pioneer Highway north to Conway

Rosario Road

Appendix A: Proposed Scoring Criteria and Points for Parcel Review

CRITERIA	Existing	Core ²	Edge
CHARACTERISTICS OF FARMLAND	25	55	25
Soil Quality			
75%+ is prime soil	5	5	5
50-75% is prime soil	3	3	3
<50% is prime soil	0	0	0
Size of Farm			
100+ acres	10	20	5
70-100 acres	7	10	3
40-70 acres	4	4	2
25-40 acres	1	1	1
Economic Productivity			
Yield > \$30K/yr gross	5	5	0
Yield < \$30K/yr gross	0	0	0
Proximity to Protected Land			
Adjacent	5	25	15
Within 1,500 ft	3	10	8
Within 2,500 ft	1	1	3
THREAT OF CONVERSION	40	30	60
Proximity to Urban Development			
Within 600 feet of UGB or commercial zone	10	0	25
600 to 1,500 feet to UGB or commercial zone	7	0	10
1,500-2,500 feet to UGB or commercial zone	4	0	3
>2,500 feet to UGB or commercial zone		10	
Proximity to Major Highway Intersections			
Within 1,500 feet of intersection of I-5, SR 20, or SR 534	10	0	15
Within 1,500 feet of intersection of other highways	8	0	8
Fronts on a major highway	6	0	6
Within 2,500 feet of major highway	4	0	4
>2,500 feet to major highway		10	
Availability of Sewer Service			
Sewers to the property	10	0	10
Within 1,500 ft	7	0	7
Within 2,500 ft	4	0	4
Within 4,000 ft	1	0	1
> 4,000 ft away		10	
Urgency of Sale/Ease of Conversion			
Imminent sale, septic suitability, substandard lots	10	0	10
SCENIC & ENVIRONMENTAL	10	10	10
Critical Areas			
Large wetland or habitat w/exceptional value	5	5	5
Moderate critical area with some value	3	3	3
No critical area	0	0	0
Scenic Value			
Exceptional scenic view from highway or other public viewpoint	5	5	5
Some scenic view from highway or other public viewpoint	3	3	3
No scenic view from highway or other public viewpoint	0	0	0
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	10	0	0
Bargain Sales and Leveraging	0	0	0
Price <50% of full value	10	0	0
50-70% of full value	6 to 9	0	0
70-90% of full value	2 to 5	0	0
90-99% of full value	0 to 1	0	0
COMMITTEE DISCRETION	20	10	10
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	105	105	105

Core criteria were developed to emphasize the *preservation of a critical mass of farmland*; Edge criteria emphasize *threat of conversion*.

Appendix A from American Farmland Trust
FLP Review, June 2011.