

## FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING VERSION DECEMBER 14, 2009

The Farmland Conversion Impact Rating form must be filled out for every federally funded project where dirt will be turned, regardless of whether or not obvious farmland will be affected. So even a project proposing installation of a new sewer down Main Street in a developed urban area is not exempt. However, projects proposing only sliplining, CIPP, equipment purchases or planning & design are exempt. There is form NRCS-CPA-06 for corridor projects (i.e., lines) and form AD-1006 for sites (tanks, treatment plants, booster stations, well fields).

The good news is: it's easy.

**Step 1: Fill out parts I and III on the form;** don't worry that it says a federal agency should complete those parts—we're delegating you or your engineering consultant to be the Federal agency.

In the box in the upper right of Part I, where it says Federal Agency involved, write "EPA through IN State Revolving Fund"; if you're also seeking an Office of Rural Affairs grant, also write "HUD through the IN Office of Community and Rural Affairs"; if you're also using a Rural Development loan or grant, also write "USDA through Rural Development".

In Part III: Direct conversion takes active or fallow farmland out of production; **a sewer or water line in a farm field will have 0 acres direct impact**, but a structure, such as a water tower, booster station, well field or treatment plant, **will take some farmland out of production; use that acreage in the direct conversion box.**

For indirect conversion, if a line is going in farmland or down a road bordered by farmland or other undeveloped land, figure the acreage of a corridor 150 feet on either side of the line times the length of the line. Only use the 150 foot rule when a line is in farmland or borders farmland or other land which could be developed. Also include in indirect conversion (1) acres not being converted but that would no longer be capable of being farmed after the conversion, because the conversion would restrict access, and (2) acres planned to receive services from an infrastructure project as indicated in the project justification (e.g. highways, utilities) that will cause a direct conversion.

**Step II: Send the form and a soils map showing the project routes and sites to: Lisa Bolton, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 6013 Lakeside Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46278;** please don't give the form to your local NRCS agent. The soils map must show where your project's proposed lines, tanks, booster stations, lift stations, well fields and treatment plants will be sited. Don't forget the soils map and don't forget to draw the proposed project on it, even if the project is in the middle of a city. In your transmittal to NRCS, briefly describe the project.

**Step III:** NRCS will reply with their portions of the form filled out, including a determination about the effects of the project on prime/unique farmland. That is probably the last step in the process for most projects.

Sometimes the NRCS will reply saying your project will affect prime farmland and that parts VI and VII on the form must be completed. They will include instructions if that is necessary.

Return the form to NRCS after you've scored it and copy your SRF project manager with the scored form and the NRCS letter requesting it. NRCS will probably not reply in any way; if it does, please send SRF three copies of the response.

If you have questions about this process, or any other environmental questions, please contact: Max Henschen, Senior Environmental Manager, 317-232-8623; [mhensche at ifa.in.gov](mailto:mhensche@ifa.in.gov).