

West Pikeland Township, Chester County
Open Space Plan, Agricultural Prioritization Mapping
Compiled by Natural Lands Trust
March 25, 2008

The Open Space Plan, Agricultural Prioritization map is a localized compilation of agricultural conservation values West Pikeland Township uses as a tool to assist in focusing land protection. This map enables the Township to prioritize their efforts based on local data. Three inputs were used to create an overall West Pikeland Township Agricultural Prioritization Map. They include Agricultural Soils, Parcel Size Conservation Value, and Protected Land Proximity.

Agricultural Soils – a data set that assigns value to agricultural soils as developed by USDA NRCS. Values were assigned to Prime Agricultural Soils and Statewide Important Agricultural Soils to identify areas of high agricultural importance.

Soils were assigned value as follows:

<i>Prime Agricultural Soils</i>	10
<i>Statewide Important Agricultural Soils</i>	8

The agricultural soils conservation value is given a 65% weight in the overall agricultural prioritization

Parcel Size Conservation Value – a localized data set that assigns conservation value to parcel size as a prioritization for protection using a basic assumption that larger parcels are inherently better protection targets. Values were assigned to parcel acreage ranges. Conservation values range from 0-10 with 10 being the highest value.

Parcel assigned value by size as follows:

<i>0 – 4 acres</i>	0
<i>4.01 – 10 acres</i>	5
<i>10.01 – 20 acres</i>	6
<i>20.01 – 30 acres</i>	7
<i>30.01 – 40 acres</i>	8
<i>40.01 – 50 acres</i>	9
<i>50.01 acres and greater</i>	10

The parcel size conservation value is given a 20% weight in the overall agricultural prioritization.

Protected Land Proximity – a localized data set that assigns conservation value to buffers around existing protected land (including adjacent municipalities) in order to determine potential paths for connecting the protected lands. The protected lands are assigned value based on their type of public and protected land. This type value is used as a weight to assist in assigning value to the proximity buffers. Conservation values range from 0-10 with 10 being the highest value.

Protected lands were assigned value by type as follows:

<i>Conservation Organization Ownership</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Conservation Easement</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>County Agricultural Easement</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Municipal Open Space</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Homeowner Association Open Space</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Deed Restriction</i>	<i>2</i>

These values were used to create the proximity data set. The protected land proximity is given a 15% weight in the overall agricultural prioritization.