

Important Farmlands

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) seeks to minimize the extent that Federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses and to assure that Federal programs will be compatible with State and local programs and policies. The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) regulations which discuss farmland conversion are found in 7 CFR Part 658.

If the applicant proposes to convert farmland to nonagricultural use, then the Agency must identify and take into account the adverse effects of the proposal. Sites rating higher than 160 from the NRCS Form AD-1006 require the applicant consider other sites with less farmland impact.

NRCS of the United States Department of Agriculture is the best source for obtaining soil information. The NRCS can provide the Form AD-1006 which rates the impact to the site's farmland. This form can be found here:

<https://formsadmin.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eFormsAdmin/Farmland%20Conversion%20Impact%20Rating%20AD-1006.pdf> .

After clicking the link, you will be required to login with an eAuthentication name and password to view the form.

For producing the soils map of a project site, the NRCS has an excellent web site located here: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx> . The page will open with a USA map on the right and user options located on the left side of the page. There are several methods to locate specific project sites. You can click the left mouse button with the crosshairs over the map of the desired project site, getting closer with each additional click. You can enter an address if you click on the address option on the left of the page. You can just use only a zip code if this is all you know.

One of the simplest methods to locate a project site is to enter the State and County under that selection on the left of the page and then click the view button. A map of the county will appear. You can click the left mouse button with the crosshairs over the map of the desired project site, getting closer with each additional click. If needed, you can pan (grab and move) the map from the command buttons located above the map. There are zoom in and zoom out buttons located there as well.

What you are trying to establish is a view of the project site which includes portions of the surrounding land to help people who view the finished map quickly understand the project and soil conditions in the area. If you zoom too close, a disclaimer may appear referencing the accuracy of the soil map at that scale. You can either zoom out or generally disregard the warning for the purposes of the environmental review. Pick a scale that makes the best map for the public viewing which are unfamiliar with the project.

Click on the Area of Interest -“AOI” button above the map which has the red rectangle above the AOI. This will allow you to highlight an area on the map. Move the crosshairs over the map to the upper left and beyond of the project site, left click and hold the mouse button, then drag the mouse right and down until the crosshairs are to the lower right of the project, then release the left mouse button.

This should establish a rectangle shaped AOI which will be highlighted with a blue diagonal crosshatch. It may take some practice to get this as you prefer. If you do not like the AOI created, just follow the same instructions and create another AOI over the existing. The map will regenerate to only include the new area.

There are other ways to obtain the AOI. You can use the AOI with the polygon (odd shape) above it for an odd sized property or area, but this is more difficult to control. You can also import an AOI from the options on the left of the page. This requires preplanning. The AOI is the area calculated for the % of each soil type and the area where the different soil types will be displayed.

It is not critical to include only the exact project site, but this could be done if desired. There is no real advantage for this in the environmental report unless you are comparing two different site locations and are trying to evaluate which has the less impact to important farmland.

Now that you have established the AOI, click on the “Soil Map” **tab** near the top of the page. This will change the AOI into a soil map on the right of the page and the soil types legend on the left of the page.

To print out the information, click the, “Printable Version” button above the map. An options box will appear. The default setting should be good for the environmental report. You can add a map name in the box below the words, “Custom Subtitle:”. Suggest using the project name. Then click the view button. It will take a few moments to generate the soil map. When completed, it will ask you if you want to open, save, or cancel the map. Recommend that you save the map as a PDF to your computer for future reference, printing, or editing.

You can also print out a color coded soil map. From the original, “Area Of Interest (AOI)” **tab** or the “Soil Map” **tab**, click on the, “Soil Data Explorer” **tab**. The screen will open up five new sub-tabs choices. Select the, “Ecological Site Assessment” **tab**. The instructions are the same as in the previous paragraph for the Soil Map to obtain a printed report.

A new smartphone application is available as a free download for both [iPhone](#) and [Android](#) users to access soil survey information. The app, [SoilWeb](#), combines online soil survey information with the GPS capabilities of smartphones.

Here is a link to the USDA blog which explains the application:

<http://blogs.usda.gov/2012/02/03/a-smartphone-app-provides-new-way-to-access-soil-survey-information/>

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING

PART I <i>(To be completed by Federal Agency)</i>		Date Of Land Evaluation Request			
Name of Project		Federal Agency Involved			
Proposed Land Use		County and State county and state			
PART II <i>(To be completed by NRCS)</i>		Date Request Received By NRCS		Person Completing Form:	
Does the site contain Prime, Unique, Statewide or Local Important Farmland? <i>(If no, the FPPA does not apply - do not complete additional parts of this form)</i>		YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Acres Irrigated	Average Farm Size
Major Crop(s)	Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: %	Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: %			
Name of Land Evaluation System Used	Name of State or Local Site Assessment System	Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS			
PART III <i>(To be completed by Federal Agency)</i>		Alternative Site Rating			
		Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly					
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly					
C. Total Acres In Site					
PART IV <i>(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information</i>					
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland					
B. Total Acres Statewide Important or Local Important Farmland					
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted					
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value					
PART V <i>(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Criterion</i> Relative Value of Farmland To Be Converted (Scale of 0 to 100 Points)					
PART VI <i>(To be completed by Federal Agency) Site Assessment Criteria</i> <i>(Criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5 b. For Corridor project use form NRCS-CPA-106)</i>		Maximum Points	Site A	Site B	Site C
1. Area In Non-urban Use		(15)			
2. Perimeter In Non-urban Use		(10)			
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed		(20)			
4. Protection Provided By State and Local Government		(20)			
5. Distance From Urban Built-up Area		(15)			
6. Distance To Urban Support Services		(15)			
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average		(10)			
8. Creation Of Non-farmable Farmland		(10)			
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services		(5)			
10. On-Farm Investments		(20)			
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services		(10)			
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use		(10)			
TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS		160			
PART VII <i>(To be completed by Federal Agency)</i>					
Relative Value Of Farmland <i>(From Part V)</i>		100			
Total Site Assessment <i>(From Part VI above or local site assessment)</i>		160			
TOTAL POINTS <i>(Total of above 2 lines)</i>		260			
Site Selected:	Date Of Selection	Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>			
Reason For Selection:					

Should be below 160. If not, must consider alternate sites.

STEPS IN THE PROCESSING THE FARMLAND AND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

- Step 1 - Federal agencies (or Federally funded projects) involved in proposed projects that may convert farmland, as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) to nonagricultural uses, will initially complete Parts I and III of the form. For Corridor type projects, the Federal agency shall use form NRCS-CPA-106 in place of form AD-1006. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) process may also be accessed by visiting the FPPA website, <http://fppa.nrcs.usda.gov/lesa/>.
- Step 2 - Originator (Federal Agency) will send one original copy of the form together with appropriate scaled maps indicating location(s) of project site(s), to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) local Field Office or USDA Service Center and retain a copy for their files. (NRCS has offices in most counties in the U.S. The USDA Office Information Locator may be found at http://offices.usda.gov/scripts/ndiSAPL.dll/oiip_public/USA_map, or the offices can usually be found in the Phone Book under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture. A list of field offices is available from the NRCS State Conservationist and State Office in each State.)
- Step 3 - NRCS will, within 10 working days after receipt of the completed form, make a determination as to whether the site(s) of the proposed project contains prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland. (When a site visit or land evaluation system design is needed, NRCS will respond within 30 working days.
- Step 4 - For sites where farmland covered by the FPPA will be converted by the proposed project, NRCS will complete Parts II, IV and V of the form.
- Step 5 - NRCS will return the original copy of the form to the Federal agency involved in the project, and retain a file copy for NRCS records.
- Step 6 - The Federal agency involved in the proposed project will complete Parts VI and VII of the form and return the form with the final selected site to the servicing NRCS office.
- Step 7 - The Federal agency providing financial or technical assistance to the proposed project will make a determination as to whether the proposed conversion is consistent with the FPPA.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

(For Federal Agency)

Part I: When completing the "County and State" questions, list all the local governments that are responsible for local land use controls where site(s) are to be evaluated.

Part III: When completing item B (Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly), include the following:

1. Acres not being directly converted but that would no longer be capable of being farmed after the conversion, because the conversion would restrict access to them or other major change in the ability to use the land for agriculture.
2. Acres planned to receive services from an infrastructure project as indicated in the project justification (e.g. highways, utilities planned build out capacity) that will cause a direct conversion.

Part VI: Do not complete Part VI using the standard format if a State or Local site assessment is used. With local and NRCS assistance, use the local Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA).

1. Assign the maximum points for each site assessment criterion as shown in § 658.5(b) of CFR. In cases of corridor-type project such as transportation, power line and flood control, criteria #5 and #6 will not apply and will, be weighted zero, however, criterion #8 will be weighed a maximum of 25 points and criterion #11 a maximum of 25 points.
2. Federal agencies may assign relative weights among the 12 site assessment criteria other than those shown on the FPPA rule after submitting individual agency FPPA policy for review and comment to NRCS. In all cases where other weights are assigned, relative adjustments must be made to maintain the maximum total points at 160. For project sites where the total points equal or exceed 160, consider alternative actions, as appropriate, that could reduce adverse impacts (e.g. Alternative Sites, Modifications or Mitigation).

Part VII: In computing the "Total Site Assessment Points" where a State or local site assessment is used and the total maximum number of points is other than 160, convert the site assessment points to a base of 160.

Example: if the Site Assessment maximum is 200 points, and the alternative Site "A" is rated 180 points:

$$\frac{\text{Total points assigned Site A}}{\text{Maximum points possible}} = \frac{180}{200} \times 160 = 144 \text{ points for Site A}$$

For assistance in completing this form or FPPA process, contact the local NRCS Field Office or USDA Service Center.

NRCS employees, consult the FPPA Manual and/or policy for additional instructions to complete the AD-1006 form.

Soil Map—Johnson County, Texas
(Bono Test Project)



Map Scale: 1:11,600 if printed on A size (8.5" x 11") sheet.



Soil Map—Johnson County, Texas
(Bono Test Project)

MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)

 Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils

 Soil Map Units

Special Point Features

-  Blowout
-  Borrow Pit
-  Clay Spot
-  Closed Depression
-  Gravel Pit
-  Gravelly Spot
-  Landfill
-  Lava Flow
-  Marsh or swamp
-  Mine or Quarry
-  Miscellaneous Water
-  Perennial Water
-  Rock Outcrop
-  Saline Spot
-  Sandy Spot
-  Severely Eroded Spot
-  Sinkhole
-  Slide or Slip
-  Sodic Spot
-  Spoil Area
-  Stony Spot

-  Very Stony Spot
-  Wet Spot
-  Other

Special Line Features

-  Gully
-  Short Steep Slope
-  Other

Political Features

-  Cities

Water Features

-  Streams and Canals

Transportation

-  Rails
-  Interstate Highways
-  US Routes
-  Major Roads
-  Local Roads

MAP INFORMATION

Map Scale: 1:11,600 if printed on A size (8.5" × 11") sheet.

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:20,000.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for accurate map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Web Soil Survey URL: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>
Coordinate System: UTM Zone 14N NAD83

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Johnson County, Texas
Survey Area Data: Version 7, Oct 27, 2009

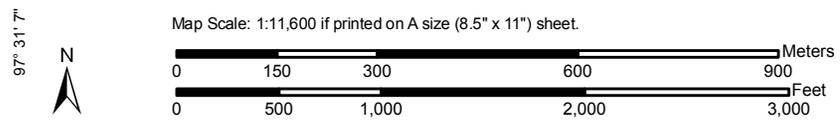
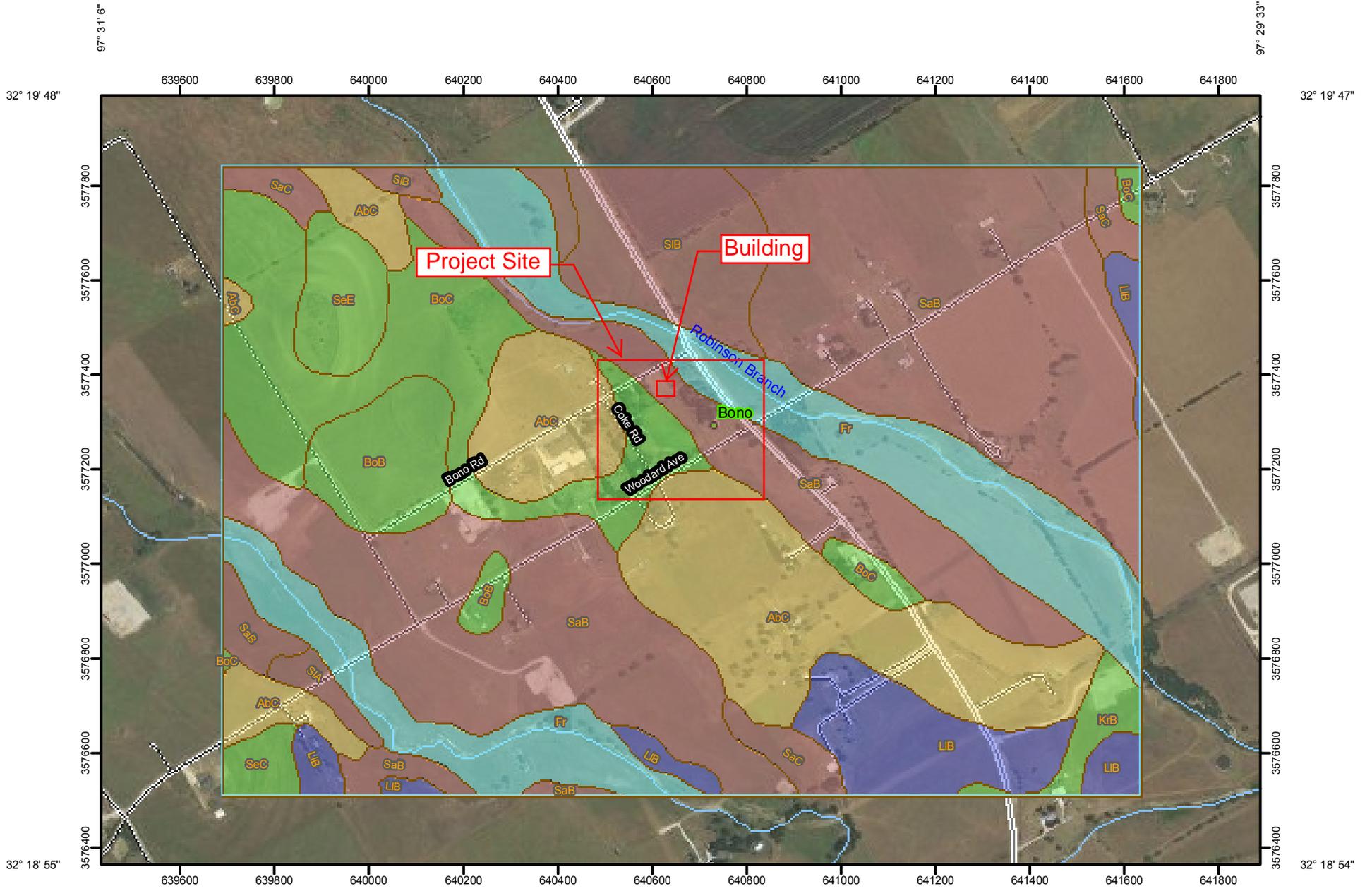
Date(s) aerial images were photographed: Data not available.

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

Map Unit Legend

Johnson County, Texas (TX251)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
AbC	Aledo-Bolar complex, 2 to 8 percent slopes	99.2	15.5%
BoB	Bolar clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	22.3	3.5%
BoC	Bolar clay loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	66.0	10.3%
Fr	Frio silty clay, occasionally flooded	89.9	14.0%
KrB	Krum silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	7.1	1.1%
LIB	Lindale clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	39.1	6.1%
SaB	Sanger clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	246.9	38.6%
SaC	Sanger clay, 3 to 5 percent slopes	13.4	2.1%
SeC	Seawillow clay loam, 1 to 5 percent slopes	5.0	0.8%
SeE	Seawillow clay loam, 5 to 12 percent slopes	13.0	2.0%
SIA	Slidell clay, 0 to 1 percent slopes	3.8	0.6%
SIB	Slidell clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	34.1	5.3%
Totals for Area of Interest		639.8	100.0%

All Ecological Sites — Rangeland—Johnson County, Texas
(Bono Test Project)



MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)

 Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils

 Soil Map Units

Soil Ratings

-  R085XY177TX —
Blackland 30-38" PZ
-  R085XY179TX — Clay
Loam 30-38" PZ
-  R085XY180TX — Deep
Redland 30-38" PZ
-  R085XY181TX — Loamy
Bottomland 30-38" PZ
-  R085XY185TX — Shallow
30-38" PZ
-  Not rated or not available

Political Features

 Cities

Water Features

 Streams and Canals

Transportation

-  Rails
-  Interstate Highways
-  US Routes
-  Major Roads
-  Local Roads

MAP INFORMATION

Map Scale: 1:11,600 if printed on A size (8.5" × 11") sheet.

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:20,000.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for accurate map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Web Soil Survey URL: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>
Coordinate System: UTM Zone 14N NAD83

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Johnson County, Texas
Survey Area Data: Version 7, Oct 27, 2009

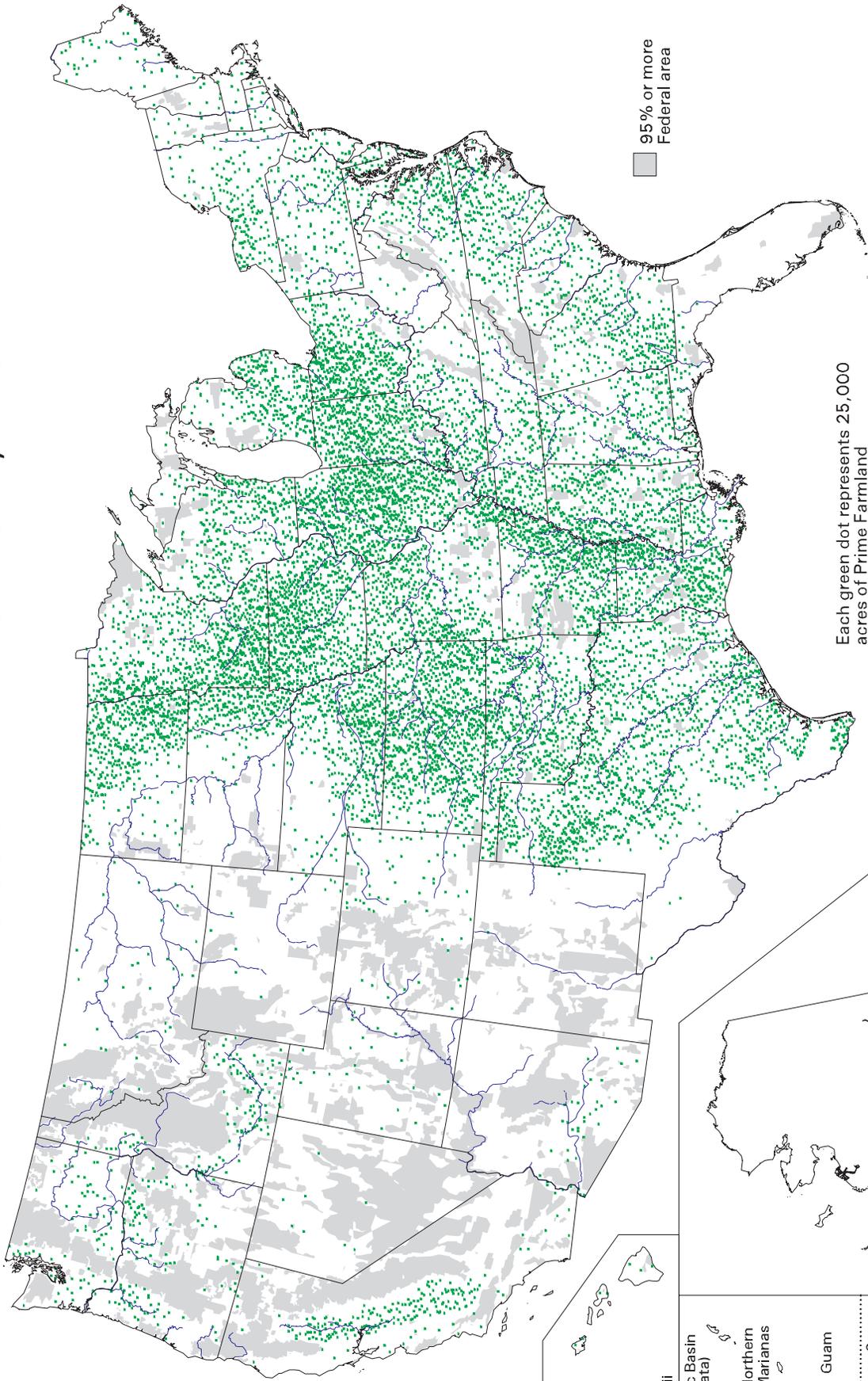
Date(s) aerial images were photographed: Data not available.

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

All Ecological Sites — Rangeland

Johnson County, Texas					
Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Component name (percent)	Ecological site	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
AbC	Aledo-Bolar complex, 2 to 8 percent slopes	Aledo (60%)	R085XY185TX — Shallow 30-38" PZ	99.2	15.5%
		Bolar (20%)	R085XY179TX — Clay Loam 30-38" PZ		
		Unnamed, minor components (20%)			
BoB	Bolar clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	Bolar (100%)	R085XY179TX — Clay Loam 30-38" PZ	22.3	3.5%
BoC	Bolar clay loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Bolar (100%)	R085XY179TX — Clay Loam 30-38" PZ	66.0	10.3%
Fr	Frio silty clay, occasionally flooded	Frio (95%)	R085XY181TX — Loamy Bottomland 30-38" PZ	89.9	14.0%
		Unnamed, minor components (3%)			
		Unnamed, hydric minor components (2%)			
KrB	Krum silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	Krum (100%)	R085XY179TX — Clay Loam 30-38" PZ	7.1	1.1%
LIB	Lindale clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	Lindale (100%)	R085XY180TX — Deep Redland 30-38" PZ	39.1	6.1%
SaB	Sanger clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	Sanger (100%)	R085XY177TX — Blackland 30-38" PZ	246.9	38.6%
SaC	Sanger clay, 3 to 5 percent slopes	Sanger (100%)	R085XY177TX — Blackland 30-38" PZ	13.4	2.1%
SeC	Seawillow clay loam, 1 to 5 percent slopes	Seawillow (100%)	R085XY179TX — Clay Loam 30-38" PZ	5.0	0.8%
SeE	Seawillow clay loam, 5 to 12 percent slopes	Seawillow (100%)	R085XY179TX — Clay Loam 30-38" PZ	13.0	2.0%
SIA	Slidell clay, 0 to 1 percent slopes	Slidell (100%)	R085XY177TX — Blackland 30-38" PZ	3.8	0.6%
SIB	Slidell clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	Slidell (100%)	R085XY177TX — Blackland 30-38" PZ	34.1	5.3%
Totals for Area of Interest				639.8	100.0%

Acres of Prime Farmland, 1997



95% or more
Federal area

Each green dot represents 25,000
acres of Prime Farmland

Total Acres of Prime Farmland: 331,860,700

Puerto Rico / U.S. Virgin Islands



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Resource Assessment Division
Washington DC January 2001

Map ID: m4983
For proper interpretation, see Explanation
of Analysis for this map at our web site. Search
for "USDASOTL" to locate our map index.

Data Source: 1997 National Resources Inventory
Revised December 2000