

DRAFT: PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR “MAINTAINING AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY”

(“Towards a Mitigation Sequence for the Agricultural Resource as acres are voluntarily contributed and lost to the APD to provide for habitat and flood projects and for buffers)

Ag Viability = (Land) Acres X Productivity

	LAND/ACREAGE	Action Items	Land Type 1 Out of Floodplain	Land Type 2 “High”	Land Type 3 “Low”
1.	Minimize net imprint of all projects.		NA		
	Minimize project impacts to the resource: a. Allow soil to be placed in floodplain: (address FEMA/wetland regs) b. Insure that projects do not negatively affect adjacent acreage.	LC.4			
2.	Minimize net Imprint of all buffers*: a. Identify ecological priorities; b. Set priorities for size, location, net acres converted on ag resource where needed.	B1, B2, B5, B6, B7, D9			
	Insure that buffers do not negatively affect adjacent acreage: a. Change regulations for beaver management. b. Watch for interference with adjacent drainage or with flood flows; c. Deer, elk, beaver controls as needed.				
3.	Enable repair and maintenance of levees and Revetments: (<i>where not setting back</i>) d. Regs, permits, cost e. Alter priorities for public funds	F1A, F1b, F1c, F4	NA		
4.	Enable protections for bank erosion f. Regs, bmp’s criteria		NA		
5.	Manage loss from alluvial fans: debris or steams diverting.	D7			
6.	Strict controls on other losses of ag land (upslope development, road widening, wetland projects, restrictions on impervious surface, etc.)				
7.	Permanently regain acres lost/or potentially to be lost to drainage: g. Regulatory allowance of tile replacement and new tiles. h. Certainty in face of ESA on floodgates and pumps i. Certainty on inexpensive legal removal of beavers. j. Certainty that landowners can maintain drainage ways in future k. Sediment removal in large tributaries, main-stem river if needed.	D1,D5, D6, D10			
8.	Alter wetland regulations that encumber “grazed wet meadows”, resulting in loss of ag land to mitigation for farm infrastructure.				
9.	Add acreage to APD... expand FPP**	LC1, LC3, O7			

What are the optimum strategies for maintaining viability related to productivity?

	Productivity		Land Type 1 Out of Floodplain	Land Type 2 “High”	Land Type 3 “Low”
1.	Drainage (see above) (including addressing alluvial fans) Establish Drainage Districts	D2, D3, D3b, D4, D4b, D8,D8			
2.	Flood losses l. Allow farm pads/elevated structures. m. Reduce Scour, erosion – flood projects, reservoirs for localized n. (elevate farm houses)***	F3, F2, F5, F6,	NA		
3.	Farm-friendly regulations related to Infrastructure for Productivity				
4.	Supplementary water supply where needed.				

*Buffers are not necessarily a permanent loss as are acres given for the river, because buffers can be cut down in the future if the situation warrants it: the soils will be intact.

**People disagreements on the efficacy of this option. The fact that restoration projects, flood projects and large buffers are being proposed for the APD indicates to some that the APD designation is a meaningless protection at some level. The restrictive development regs may apply (limited impervious surface, etc), but until a limit is set through GMA or an FFF effort, the inference is that land can still be appropriated from willing landowners. Adding land that is already in farming is not effectively adding to the agricultural land base. Flood plain soils are limited. Some think the only solution would be to convert forest land or urban land to farmland, and these each pose their own challenges.

***Farm houses are related to farm productivity in terms of oversight of livestock, immediate response to threats, hours spent on the farm instead of in travel, etc. A residency can increase productivity. On the other hand, farm parcels with relatively high degrees of agricultural viability are leased – with no residence. Agricultural viability in the APD will be helped first by enabling a farm to be drained and secondarily by elevating its farm residence.

Note that an acre farmland cannot produce every year without external inputs of nutrients/fertilizers. A sustainable model of productivity might include a formula of two acres for every one acre of annual production: one acre is “rested” from production and grows a green cover crop that will be turned under as fertilizer for the next year’s crop. Many produce farms use this model, and/or have livestock on site. However, without proper management, livestock can overgraze or over use land if not properly managed. A sustainable model for livestock would be no more than 1 animal for 1/5 to 2 acres, and that would assume not keeping animals off the acres in winter months where soil compaction will occur.