U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
Caroline County FSA Office
9194 Legion Road, Suite 2
Denton MD 21629
(410) 479-1202

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR FARM LOAN PROGRAM PROJECT

Class II Assessment for Maryland based producer with operations in Dorchester, Maryland at Tax Map 0002, Grid 0013, Parcel 0019

FINDING OF NO SIGNFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

December 11, 2015

COVER SHEET

Proposed Action

The Farm Service Agency of the United States Department of Agriculture proposes to issue a direct and guaranteed loan to fund the construction of three poultry houses and the associated manure shed in Dorchester County, Maryland on a farm tract identified as Tax Map 0002, Grid 0013, Parcel 0019.

Type of Statement

This is a Class II site-specific Environmental Assessment performed in conformation with the scope and limitations of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA.)

Lead Agency

Farm Service Agency (FSA) United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Cooperating Agencies

USDA, Farm Service Agency is tasked with completing the environmental analysis concerning this project. Input and assistance is being sought out by USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); Dorchester County Soil Conservation District; the Maryland State Clearinghouse for Intergovernmental Assistance who consults with and request input from their cooperating agencies including (but not limited to) the Maryland Historical Trust /State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO,) State Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental which also encompasses those charged with Coastal Zone Management (CZM), and Maryland Department of Transportation; as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Further Information

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Abstract (Summary)

The purpose of the project is to produce integrated poultry in Dorchester County, Maryland. Construction of three (3) poultry houses, each being 60' x

600', a manure storage structure, and storm water management pond is proposed at the site. The location of the proposed facility is currently cropland. The proposed project will include the removal of approximately 0.60 acres of woods for the installation of a driveway. Upon completion of the proposed construction, the farm is projected to have the capacity to house a maximum of 144,000 birds based on the industry standard density of 0.75 birds per square foot of interior space.

Comments

It is recommended that comments be put in writing. Comments from interested parties concerning the environmental impact of this proposal should be directed thru:

UDSA, Farm Service Agency
Farm Loan Program
Attn: Deanna Dunning
9194 Legion Road, Suite 2
Denton MD 21629

The comment period will conclude fifteen (15) days from the final publication of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) of the findings of this evaluation. No further action will be taken on this proposal until after the conclusion of the comment period. Said comments will be considered and incorporated.

Table of Contents

Introduction — Page 5
- Background
- Purpose and Need
- Regulatory Compliance
- Organization of EA

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives — Page 6
- Proposed Action
- Alternatives
  - No Action Alternative
  - Alternative A
  - Alternative B
  - Alternative C
  - Alternative D

Resources Eliminated From Analysis — Page 7

Affected Environment — Page 13

Environmental Consequences — Page 16

Cumulative Impacts — Page 19

Mitigation Measures — Page 20

List of Preparers — Page 20

List of Persons and Agencies Contacted — Page 20

References — Page 20

Attachments — Page 21

Consistency with FSA Environmental Policies — Page 21

Environmental Determinations — Page 21

Introduction

The applicant is wishing to enter into a contract to be an integrated poultry producer with the operation located at 7240 Hynson Road, Hurlock, Dorchester County, Maryland. The applicant will produce poultry per a contractual agreement with Allen Harim. The operation will have the capacity to house approximately 144,000 birds at the industry standard of .75 birds per square foot.

1.1 Background

The project is designed to construct three (3) broiler houses, the associated manure structure and a storm water management pond on a 39.33 acre parcel the applicant owns near Hurlock, Maryland. The site will have a capacity of 144,000 birds at the industry standard of .75 birds per square foot. The proposal is to build three (3) poultry houses, each being 60' x 600', with all houses on the property running north to south. The houses will be built to industry standards and must be compliant with all county and state building laws. A storm water management, site and sediment/erosion control plan has been approved by Dorchester County and a General Permit for Storm Water Associated with Construction activity has been issued.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the FSA Farm Loan Program is to establish, improve, expand transition, and strengthen farms.

The proposed facility, upon completion, will allow the applicant to produce integrated poultry in an Allen Harim compliant facility in Dorchester County, Maryland. The applicant will be providing an agriculture service that is in great demand and this enterprise will allow the producer to generate adequate income from the farming operation to retire debt and provide a standard of living acceptable to the area. This facility will allow the applicant to produce integrated poultry for Allen Harim efficiently and in up to date structures.

The integrator, will in turn, provide additional employment for local people in jobs such as field representatives, feed mill operators, processing plant workers, truck drivers, and construction workers. In addition, the increased volume of poultry production will help contribute toward providing a readily available low cost food supply for the American public.

1.3 Regulatory Compliance

Based on a review of the material provided and FSA Handbook 1 EQ, 2 EQ, and FMHA 1940-G this proposal is in compliance with NEPA, CEQ, Potential Relevant Environmental Laws, and Executive Orders.

1.4 Organization of EA

The Environmental Assessment (EA) is organized in format established in FSA Handbook 1 EQ Exhibit 21 and is addressed in the Contents Section of this document.

2 Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

Alternative designs and alternative projects were considered and here are our findings in regards to this proposal: Alternative designs are not feasible in that every integrator has a specific set of plans and specs that producers must use to ensure placement of birds. Alternative projects were considered but are not feasible for the applicant because this proposal is located in close proximity to Allen Harim hatcheries, feed mills, and processing facilities and is in an area occupied by numerous other Allen Harim producers. This makes it economically feasible for Allen Harim to provide birds, and more likely that the applicant will retain his contract with the integrator. In analyzing the proposal "No Action" was considered but not a selected option.

2.1 Proposed Action

The project is designed to construct three (3) poultry houses compliant with Allen Harim standards on a 39.33 acre tract near Hurlock, Maryland. Upon completion, the site will have a total capacity of 144,000 birds. The site work will be completed and the houses built by local reputable contractors in accordance with plans and specs required by Allen Harim, Dorchester County Soil Conservation District and the Dorchester County Planning and Zoning office. The proposal includes the construction of a manure storage structure that will provide adequate storage for the litter generated by the houses to be built. A storm water management pond will be installed on the property as well as swales located between the poultry houses to control runoff. The site plan was designed in accordance with the Model Plan for Poultry House Site Development on Maryland's Eastern Shore, developed by MDE, MDA, NRCS and the Conservation Districts.

2.2 Alternatives

Alternative designs and alternative projects were considered and here are our findings in regards to this proposal:

There were five alternatives considered for this project. These alternatives were developed after careful consideration of the proposed project and determining the best possible location for the proposed project that would produce the least possible environmental impact and minimize impact on the operation itself. These alternatives represent a range of alternatives, with three alternatives being eliminated from further analysis.

2.2.1 No Action Alternative The no action alternative would consist of FSA not approving the loan and thus, not allowing the construction of the proposed project. This alternative would not allow the applicant to generate the farm income required to support family living expenses and debt service.

2.2.2 Alternative A is a proposed action alternative. Under the proposed action alternative, FSA would approve the loan as proposed, allowing the proposed construction to provide related farm income for the applicant.

2.2.3 Alternative B is to relocate on current property: This alternative is not applicable as any other location on the farm would require removal of forested areas, filling of ditches and the potential to negatively impact any wetlands that may be located in those areas. The area that has been selected for the proposal is currently an open area that will require minimal tree or stump removal for the installation of a driveway and will not affect a wetland area.

2.2.4 Alternative C is to relocate on a different property. The applicant currently owns the 39.33 acre tract. The feasibility of this project has been based on the current debt and the construction and site work cost associated with the proposed project area and without having another specific property in mind, FSA cannot determine the feasibility for another farm.

2.2.5 Alternative D is to engage in a different form of agricultural production. The applicant could consider utilization of the site for crop or other livestock production as an alternative means of generating annual farm income. However, the rate of return the applicant would receive from another form of livestock production or crop production would be nominal and would not justify the related costs: therefore it would not achieve the intended purpose of the project.

2.3 Resources Eliminated from Analysis

Based on consultation with other agencies, and or a review of the available information, the following resources are either not located in the project area, or not impacted by the project:

- Biological Resources
- Water Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Socioeconomics
- Environmental Justice

- Important Land Resources
- Wilderness Areas
- Coastal Barrier Resources

These resources are, therefore, eliminated from further consideration in the analysis as discussed below:

Biological Resources

Definition of Resource

Vegetation, wildlife, and protected species including threatened and endangered species and their designated critical habitat. Endangered species known to occur in Dorchester County: Delmarva Peninsula Fox Squirrel (DFS).

Affected Environment

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS) was formally consulted for a project review to assess for the possible presence of a federally proposed or listed endangered or threatened species within the project area. A copy of their response dated May 18, 2015 can be found in Appendix D. An updated resource list was generated on December 11, 2015 and no endangered or threatened species were listed for this project area.

The US FWS project review certifies that with the exception of the occasional transient individual, no federally proposed or listed endangered or threatened species are known to exist within the projection area. Therefore, no Biological Assessment or further section 7, (of the Endangered Species Act), consultation with the US FWS is required.

A site visit was made by FSA personnel to the proposed construction site area on April 21, 2015 and no listed threatened or endangered species were identified as present at that time, nor were any nesting Bald Eagles found.

Water Resources

Definition of Resource

Floodplains, wetlands, surface water quality, sole source aquifers, and wild and scenic rivers. As discussed below, none of these water resources with the exception of surface water quality are applicable to the project area.

Affected Environment

Floodplains were assessed by reviewing information available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). According to FEMA Form 81-93 "Standard Flood Hazard Determination", there are no flood plains within the project area. Wetlands were assessed during the consultancy review with other

agencies. The Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) completed a wetland determination on the project area. No hydric soils or color infrared aerial photo signatures indicating wetland hydrology areas were identified on this tract. A copy of the NRCS correspondence is included in Appendix E. The wooded area that will be removed for the installation of a driveway was evaluated and not wetlands or state waterways will be affected by this undertaking; a consultation report can be found in Appendix D.

Maryland Department of Environment, Source Protection and Appropriation Division was consulted regarding water appropriation; no permit will not be required for this operation in regard to water appropriation.

This project is not located within a Sole Source Aquifer Recharge Area, nor are there any Wild and Scenic Rivers located in the State of Maryland per reviewing the following website (http://www.mps.gov/rivers/).

Cultural Resources

Definition of Resource

Properties created by man and generally more than 50 years of age. They include, but are not limited to, archaeological sites, structures, buildings, shipwrecks, cemeteries, mines, battlefields rural landscapes, and places that a community associates with their values, traditions, or beliefs. Some cultural resources are significant, others are not. Cultural resources that are significant are called historic properties under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended (16 U.S.C 470 et. Seq.). NHPA, Section 106, requires all Federal Agencies to take into account the effect of their undertakings; that is actives that are federally permitted, federally funded, or carried out on Federal lands, or historic properties.

Historic properties are cultural resources listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Registry of Historic Places (NRHP). A historic property should possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. In other words, a building with numerous modern additions and little of its original materials would be determined, in most cases, to no longer possess integrity. In addition to integrity, National Park Services (NPS) requires that a historic property meet 1 of the following 4 criteria:

> Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
>
> Association with the lives of persons significant in our past

Have distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, represent the work of a master, possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction

Have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

In accordance with Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) was contacted to comply with cultural resource requirements. Based on a project review that was coordinated by the Maryland State Clearing House, the Maryland Historical Trust has determined that the project will have "no effect" on historical properties and the federal and/or State historic preservation requirements have been met. A copy of the State Clearinghouse letter dated April 7, 2015 is included in Appendix D.

Affected Environment

Based on the result of the project review, Cultural Resources are screened out from further consideration in this EA.

Socioeconomics

Definition of Resource

Population, housing, income and employment activity area.

Affected Environment

This proposal, during construction and at completion, will not adversely impact nearby residents. The location of the proposed project is 3.7 miles from the Town of Preston and 3.9 miles from the Town of Hurlock. The property does not currently have a home on site but there is ample room on the farm for a house to be built. The applicant will continue to reside at his current residence which is within 5 minutes of the farm until a time that he is financially able to build a home. The proposal will not change the population in the area; therefore it will not have any impact on the public, community schools, hospitals, social services, etc. Basic land use will not change; the property is currently zoned as agriculture. It is not expected that any significant long-term adverse impact will exist because of this project. There will be no adverse effect on the minority population of the community or of the residence who are low income.

Therefore, Socioeconomics is screened out from further consideration in this EA.

Environmental Justice

Definition of Resource

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The potential ho have an adverse impact to minority and low income populations need was accessed.

Affected Environment

According to 1 EQ, Par 58 C, FSA actions do not involve activities with potential to disproportionally or adversely affect or displace low income or minority groups.

Important Land Resources

Definition of Resource

Important Land Resources includes prime farmland, unique farmland, prime forestland, and prime rangeland.

Affected Environment

This proposed project will not convert any important farmland to a nonagricultural use and is therefore exempt from the provisions of this act. Important Land resources also include Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Natural Landmarks. There are no Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Natural Landmarks within the project area.

Therefore, Important Land Resources are screened out from further consideration in this EA.

Wilderness Area

Definition of Resource

The Wilderness Act established the National Wilderness Preservation System. Wilderness, as defined by The Wilderness Act, is the following:

- Lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition,
- An area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man,
- An area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvement or human habitation,

- Generally appears to have been affected primary by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticed

- Has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation

- Shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreation, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historic use.

Affected Environment

FSA conducted a review of the public wilderness information website (www.wilderness.net) which was formed in 1996 through a collaborative partnership between the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center and the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, the federal government's wilderness training and research arms, respectively, and the College of Forestry and Conservation's Wilderness Institute at the University of Montana. The website provides interactive maps showing wilderness areas of which no maps are available for Maryland indicating the proposed project area is not located in a wilderness area.

Therefore, Wilderness Resources are screened out from further consideration in this EA.

Coastal Barriers

Definition of Resources

Coastal Barriers are unique landforms that provide protection for diverse aquatic habitats and serve as the mainland's first line of defense against the impacts of coastal storms and erosion. The Coastal Barrier Resource Act of 1982 (CBRA) was amended by the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act of 1990 and restricts Federal expenditures and financial assistance that may encourage development of coastal barriers.

Affected Environment

Coastal Barriers Zones, if present, would be shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS). A copy of the FIRM for the project area is included in Appendix E. The project is not located in a Coastal Barrier Resource Zone or Other projected area and therefore will not have any adverse effect on this resource.

Therefore, Coastal Barrier Resources are screened out from further consultation in this EA.

3 Affected Environment

3.1 Surface Water Quality

3.1.1 Definition of Resource

The project area is located in the watershed of the Lower Choptank, which discharges to the Chesapeake Bay. Surface water quality in the bay is impaired by the presence of nutrients and sediments. A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) has been written and approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the Lower Choptank. Additionally, the project is located in close vicinity of Gravel Run Branch, which discharges into Hunting Creek, which discharges into the Choptank River.

3.1.2 Affected Environment

During construction, site work such as demolition, excavation, grading, and material storage has the potential to impact surface water quality particularly by stormwater runoff during heavy precipitation events. Control of runoff will be maintained during construction by developing and following procedures outlined in the Stormwater Management Plan and in accordance with the General Permit for Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. These measures can include erosion control, installation of siltation filter fences, covering stockpiles, proper material storage, and other measures to prevent runoff from impacting surface water.

During operation, generation and handling of poultry litter has the potential to impact surface water by runoff or by infiltration to groundwater and groundwater discharge to surface water. Potential surface water impacts will be controlled by the implementation of design features of the facility such as manure handling and composting in covered structures, concrete pads in handling areas, and the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) as will be outlined in the CNMP. Surface water quality control measures will be implemented in accordance with a General Permit for an animal feeding operation, requirements of the TMDL, and guidelines listed in a Nutrient Management Plan and Conservation Plan.

3.2 Soil Resources

3.2.1 Definition of Resource

Based on a review of the Soil Map for the project area, (NRCS), soils at the project area consist primarily of Hammonton sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes and Downer sandy loan, 0 to 2 percent slopes. Highly erodible land (HEL), considered as cropland with erodibility index values greater than 8, required additional protection to prevent loss of soil. According to NRCS-CPA-026E, HEL units do not exist on this 39.33 acre tract of the project and therefore, will not be impacted by the project.

3.2.2 Affected Environment

As stated by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Environment (MDE) in the consultancy letter from the State Clearinghouse, existing soil that could be contaminated may be encountered during construction work. Based on the current use of the property, that is unlikely. In the event that impacted soils are encountered, they will be property managed in accordance with a permit for soil remediation that would be required from MDE's Air and Radiation Management Administration.

During site preparation and construction, soil could potentially be impacted by debris or other solid waste. In accordance with regulatory requirements, any solid waste including construction, demolition, and land clearing debris will be properly disposed of at a permitted solid waste acceptance facility or recycled if possible.

As discussed above under potential surface water quality impacts, during operation, the generation and handling of poultry litter could impact soils. The control measures that will protect surface water quality will also be effective in preventing impact to soil.

3.3 Air Quality

3.3.1 Definition of Resource

Sources of air pollution which include stationary, mobile, and agriculture sources must be controlled to reduce impacts to air quality. Environmental noise levels also must be controlled to prevent nuisance conditions.

3.3.2 Affected Environment

The Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) monitors and regulates air quality in the State per the mandates of the Federal Clean Air Act, the Maryland Healthy Air Act and the Code of Maryland Regulations for Air and Radiation (COMAR)

During construction activities, (including soil excavation, grading, site work, renovation, and/or demolition of buildings and roadways), particulate matter such as fugitive dust has the potential to be generated, temporarily impacting local air quality. Motor vehicle traffic will increase slightly during the construction phase; however, this will only be for a short period of time.

Air quality control will be maintained during construction by developing and following fugitive dust control measures that will includes use of covers, water sprays, dust suppressants, and/or other techniques to prevent nuisance dust conditions.

Ambient noise levels will increase temporarily during construction. Noise levels will be controlled primarily by managing the hours of work on the site.

During operation, there is potential for emissions (dust and odor) from the generation and handling of poultry litter, and the management of mortalities. Odor and dust will be controlled by developing and following best management practices that will be outlined in the Nutrient Management Plan and Conservation Plan.

A standby emergency generator that will utilize only low sulfur fuel is planned for electric power generation when grid power is unavailable. Testing, operation, and maintenance of the emergency generator will produce emissions including particulate, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen. These emissions will be controlled by limiting the duration of operation of the generator to only emergencies or testing/maintenance.

Ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the facility will increase during operations due primarily to ventilation fans needed for heating and cooling of the buildings. Sound levels will be controlled as warranted by use of sound barriers, plantings, or other measures to reduce noise levels to within acceptable levels in accordance with Environmental Noise Standards.

The farm is located in a Non-Attainment area as can be verified by review of the following website http://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbk/ancl.html

3.4 Coastal Zone Management Areas

3.4.1 Definition of Resources

Lands, waters, or natural resources located in the coastal zone.

3.4.2 Affected Environment

The project is located in the Maryland Coastal Zone. The project has the potential to impact Coastal Zone Management (CZM) areas if uncontrolled discharges to surface waters occurred during construction or operation of the facility. As stated above, potential stormwater impacts during construction and operation of the facility will be controlled by implementation of stormwater BMP's that will be outlined in the county approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. Potential discharges to surface water during operation will be controlled through facility features, BMP's, and proper handling of wastes and poultry litter, which will be outlined in the approved nutrient management plan and conservation plan; the applicant will file a Notice of Intent with Maryland Department of Environment prior to flock placement.

Ambient noise levels will increase temporarily during construction. Noise levels will be controlled primarily by managing the hours of work on the site.

During operation, there is potential for emissions (dust and odor) from the generation and handling of poultry litter, and the management of mortalities. Odor and dust will be controlled by developing and following best management practices that will be outlined in the Nutrient Management Plan and Conservation Plan.

A standby emergency generator that will utilize only low sulfur fuel is planned for electric power generation when grid power is unavailable. Testing, operation, and maintenance of the emergency generator will produce emissions including particulate, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen. These emissions will be controlled by limiting the duration of operation of the generator to only emergencies or testing/maintenance.

Ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the facility will increase during operations due primarily to ventilation fans needed for heating and cooling of the buildings. Sound levels will be controlled as warranted by use existing sound barriers (vegetation), plantings, or other measures to reduce noise levels to within acceptable levels in accordance with Environmental Noise Standards.

The farm is located in a Non-Attainment area as can be verified by review of the following website http://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbk/ancl.html

3.4 Coastal Zone Management Areas

3.4.1 Definition of Resources

Lands, waters, or natural resources located in the coastal zone.

3.4.2 Affected Environment

The project is located in the Maryland Coastal Zone. The project has the potential to impact Coastal Zone Management (CZM) areas if uncontrolled discharges to surface waters occurred during construction or operation of the facility. As stated above, potential stormwater impacts during construction and operation of the facility will be controlled by implementation of stormwater BMP's that will be outlined in the county approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. Potential discharges to surface water during operation will be controlled through facility features, BMP's, and proper handling of wastes and poultry litter, which will be outlined in the approved nutrient management plan and conservation plan; the applicant will file a Notice of Intent with Maryland Department of Environment prior to flock placement.

- Preventing direct contact of confined animals with waters of the United States.

- Ensuring that chemicals and other contaminants handled on-site are not disposed of in any manure, litter, process wastewater, or stormwater storage or treatment system unless specifically designed to treat such chemicals and other contaminants.

- Identifying appropriate site-specific conservation practices to control runoff of pollutants to waters of the United States.

- Identifying protocols for appropriate testing of manure, litter, process wastewater, and soil.

- Establishing protocols to land apply manure, litter, or process wastewater in accordance with site-specific nutrient management practices that ensure appropriate agricultural utilization of the nutrients in the manure, litter, or process wastewater.

- Identifying specific records that will be maintained to document the implementation and management of the minimum elements described above.

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) practice standards will be used in the development of the facility plans. Relevant practice standards include 102 associated with the completion of a comprehensive nutrient plan written addressing manure handling, nutrient management, feed management and other conservation measures; 561 heavy use are protection associated with heavy use areas; and 316 associated with mortality management. These plans are outlined in the conservation plan and the applicant will be required to file a Notice of Intent for Animal Feeding Operations with MDE prior to flock placement.

The facility design and operational plans will consider the necessary measures to ensure no significant impact to surface water quality.

4.2 Soil

4.2.1 No Action Alternative

There would be no impact to soil under the No Action Alternative

4.2.2 Alternative A

As discussed above, during site preparation and construction, soil could potentially be impacted by debris or other solid waste. In accordance with regulatory

requirements, any solid waste including construction, demolition, and land clearing debris will be properly disposed of at permitted solid waste acceptance facility or recycled if possible.

Similar to potential stormwater quality impacts, soil could be effected by the generation and handling of poultry litter. The design features of the proposed facility and management practices that will be outlined in the nutrient management plan and conservation plan will control potential impacts to soil.

4.3 Air Quality

4.3.1 No Action Alternative

There would be no impact to air quality under the No Action Alternative

4.3.2 Alternative A

As discussed above, the proposed project has the potential to impact air quality during construction by the generation of fugitive dust and other emissions. However, these potential impacts can be minimized by the implementation of standard construction fugitive dust and emission control measures. There will be no burning of any construction material.

The proposed project has the potential to impact air quality during operations by the generation of odors primarily associated with poultry litter and possibly mortality management. However, these potential impacts will be addressed by the proper design and management of the facility. Design features will include the proper sizing of manure storage areas to ensure sufficient capacity for the operation, installation of roofs and covers to prevent infiltration of rainwater, stabilized surfaces to cover areas where manure will be handled, and a properly designed and operated ventilation system.

Best management practices within the facilities to keep the litter dry and the facility clean will be implemented.

Other air quality impacts associated with facility operation including emissions from a standby emergency generator will be limited by restricting the use of the generator to only periods when off-site power is unavailable or during testing and maintenance.

4.4 Coastal Zone Management Areas

4.4.1 No Action Alternative

There would be no impact to air quality under the No Action Alternative

4.4.2 Alternative A

As stated above, the project has the potential to impact Coastal Zone Management (CZM) areas if uncontrolled discharge to surface waters occurred during construction or operation of the facility. As stated above, potential storm water impacts during construction and operation of the facility will be controlled by implementation of storm water BMP's that are outlined in a Storm Water Plan. Potential discharges to surface water during operation will be controlled through facility features, BMP's and proper handling of wastes and poultry litter, which is outlined in a nutrient management plan and conservation plan.

A federal consistency determination, pursuant to section 307 of the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 was obtained for the project. That determination states, "The proposed project is consistent with the Maryland Coastal Zone Management Program, as required by Section 307 of the CZMA, subject to the condition that all other permits/approvals from MDE that may be necessary and applicable to the project are obtained and complied with for the proposed construction activity.

A copy of the nutrient management plan, conservation plan, and Coastal Consistency Determination is included in Appendix E.

5 Cumulative Impacts

5.1 Introduction

This section of the assessment is dedicated to the review of the possible cumulative impacts the applicant's proposed activity may present in the Dorchester County area. Based on the review of information provided by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, SHPO, MDE, MDT, MDNR, NRCS, Dorchester County Soil Conservation District and various websites, it does not appear this project will have an adverse impact on Dorchester County environment provided the producer follows the Best Management Practices outlined by participating agencies.

5.2 Past, Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions

To the knowledge of the preparer, there has not been any past activity associated with the subject property that would have had a negative effect on impacted resources. The proposed is a localized project of limited scope; therefore the environmental factors will be minimal and further mitigated by conformance with the provisions of a site specific and approved conservation plan and nutrient management plan.

5.3 Cumulative Analysis

Any minor localized negative impacts the creation of this poultry operation may have on the human environment will be minimized by the proper implementation and adherence with the provisions of the approved conservation plan devised for the CAFO operation and will be on file with the Maryland Department of

Agriculture and Maryland Department of Environment, as well as compliance with applicable State and County permitting processes and setback requirements.

Neither the No Action Alternative nor the proposed action would significantly adversely impact the environment due to cumulative potential impacts.

6 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures have been identified throughout this EA report in the various areas of impact. Mitigation measures will be implemented by the operator in accordance with the required environmental control plans that will be finalized as part of the permitting process for the facility. Pollution control requirements will be part of the FSA's condition for loan approval.

7 List of Preparers

This assessment was prepared by Deanna Dunning, in consultation with Joseph Scott, Maryland State Environmental Coordinator, who have worked closely with FSA's sister agency, NRCS, Dorchester County Conservation District, Maryland State Clearinghouse for Intergovernmental Assistance and the Maryland Department of Environment in gathering information for evaluation as guided by FSA Handbook 1 EQ.

8 List of Persons and Agencies Contacted

Maryland Department of Planning – Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, Dorchester County, Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland Department of Transportation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chesapeake Bay Field Office

9 References

Websites:

www.wilderness.net
www.rivers.gov/maryland.php
http://quickfacts.census.gov/gfd/states/24/24045.html
http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program/coastal-barrier-resources-system
www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/greenbk/hncs.html
www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/presentations/ssa/index/htm
http://www.mde.maryland.gov/programs/Land/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/AFO/Pages/CAFO.aspx
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/countySearch!speciesByCountyReport.action?fips=24045
www.nature.nps.gov/nnl/state.cfm?state=MD

FSA Handbook 1 EQ – Environmental Quality Programs for State and County Offices, published and maintained by United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Washington D. C. 20250

Farmer's Home Administration (FmHA) Instruction 1940-G, Environmental Program, published and maintained by United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Washington, D. C. 20205.

10 Attachments

Appendix A – Acronyms and Abbreviations
Appendix B – Definitions
Appendix C – Relevant Laws and Regulations
Appendix D – Agencies and Individuals Contacted
Appendix E – Supporting Documentation

11 Consistency with FSA Environmental Policies

There is nothing to indicate the proposed project would not be in keeping with the environmental policies in FSA Handbook 1 EQ.

12 Environmental Determinations

The following recommendations shall be completed:

(a) Based on an examination and review of the foregoing information and such supplemental information attached hereto, I recommend that the approving official determine that this project will have (☐) a significant effect on the quality of the human environment and an Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared. This project will not have (☒) a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

(b) I recommend that the approving official make the following compliance determinations for the below-listed environmental requirements.

Not in Compliance	In Compliance	
☐	☒	Clean Air Act
☐	☒	Federal Water Pollution Control Act
☐	☒	Safe Drinking Water Act - Section 1424 (e)
☐	☒	Endangered Species Act
☐	☒	Coastal Barrier Resources Act
☐	☒	Coastal Zone Management Act - Section 307(c) (1) and (2)
☐	☒	Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

☐	☒	National Historic Preservation Act
☐	☒	Archaeological and Historical Preservation Act
☐	☒	Subtitle B, Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Subtitle C, Wetland Conservation of the Food Security Act
☐	☒	Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management
☐	☒	Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands
☐	☒	Farmlands Protection Policy Act
☐	☒	Departmental Regulation 9500-3, Land Use Policy
☐	☒	E.O. 12898, Environmental Justice
☐	☒	State environmental laws

(c) I have reviewed and considered the types and degrees of adverse environmental impacts identified by this assessment. I have also analyzed the proposal for its consistency with FSA environmental policies, particularly those related to important farmland protection, and have considered the potential benefits of the proposal.

Based upon a consideration and a balancing of these factors, I recommend from an environmental standpoint that the project:

☒ Be approved

☐ Not be approved because of the reasons outlined in Appendix E.

Deanna Dunning
Signature of Preparer

12-11-2015
Date

Deanna Dunning
Name of Preparer

Farm Loan Officer
Title of Preparer

See Part 1 of this handbook for listing of officials responsible for preparing assessment.

Signature of Concurring Official

12/11/2015
Date

George M Turner Jr
Name of Concurring Official

District Director
Title of Concurring Official

State Environmental Coordinator's Review

I have reviewed this environmental assessment and supporting documentation. Following are my positions regarding its adequacy and the recommendations reached by the preparer. For any matter in which I do not concur, my reasons are attached in Appendix E.

Do Not Concur	Concur	
☐	☑	Adequate Assessment
☐	☑	Environmental Impact Determination
☐	☑	Compliance Determinations
☐	☑	Project Recommendation

Joseph J. Scott

Digitally signed by JOSEPH SCOTT
DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=Department of Agriculture, cn=JOSEPH SCOTT, 0.9.2342.19200300.100.1.1=12001000234363
Date: 2015.12.11 12:06:20 -05'00'
Adobe Acrobat version: 11.0.13

Signature of SEC

12/11/15

Date

Joseph Scott

Name of SEC