



N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
N.C. ADFP Trust Fund
Environmental Audit (EA) Requirements and Checklist



An Environmental Audit (EA) or Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) identifies potential or existing environmental contamination liabilities. The analysis addresses both the underlying land as well as physical improvements to the property.

An EA is a stand alone document, and some required documents included in the EA will match other submitted materials in the survey, baseline documentation report, and title work.

An EA can be conducted by USDA NRCS staff using the latest version of the NRCS Hazardous Materials Checklist and Landowner Interview, local soil and water conservation district staff using the latest version of the NRCS Hazardous Materials Checklist and Landowner Interview or equivalent, or with an environmental firm qualified to conduct Phase I Environmental Site Assessments.

For USDA NRCS Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) projects, only an EA conducted by USDA NRCS staff using the latest version of the NRCS Hazardous Materials Checklist and Landowner Interview will be accepted.

Below are the requirements for an EA for a conservation easement project with the N.C. ADFP Trust Fund (ADFPTF):

1. Map of the Conservation Area associated with the EA that includes any land improvements or special land use features.
 - a. Must match the map found in the baseline documentation report.
2. Documentation of land ownership associated with the EA, such as a property tax card, land deed, etc.
 - a. Must match the preliminary title policy and preliminary attorney's signed title opinion.
3. Description of current land uses.
 - a. Must match the uses found in the baseline documentation report.
4. Pictures of land area defined in the EA with the location of pictures identified on a map or survey. Please submit at least one picture for each different land use or land improvement placed on the land parcel.
 - a. Must match the pictures found in the baseline documentation report.
5. Any implied and prevalent easement or ingress/egress use must be defined by picture and mapped.
 - a. Must match the preliminary conservation easement survey.
6. Any trash, chemical or non-natural land use must be defined by picture and mapped.
7. An environmental opinion review of the land by the agency performing the EA.

8. Date of land parcel visit and site evaluation.
9. Name, signature, and date of the land investigator/reviewer.
10. A completed, dated, and signed Hazardous Materials Checklist and Landowner Interview or equivalent. Approved formats include the latest USDA NRCS versions. Attached is an example.

If on-site or off-site reviews find recognized environmental conditions that negatively impact the property, such as the presence petroleum products or hazardous substances in the subsurface of the site, and these findings necessitate further investigation of environmental conditions with a Phase II ESA or equivalent, the Grantee is required to conduct these assessments.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FIELD INSPECTION CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Clear Form

NRCS PROGRAM	LANDOWNER NAME		
PROPERTY ADDRESS			NUMBER OF ACRES
NEST APPLICATION NUMBER	COUNTY	STATE	
FIELD INSPECTOR'S NAME & TITLE			DATE INSPECTED

B. INSTRUCTIONS:

- For each question, indicate if you find any evidence of past or present hazardous materials.
- For any suspected evidence found, display the location on the parcel map and attach photographic evidence as an addendum to this document.
- If you need more room to explain your findings attach additional sheets.
- When complete, attest that a field inspection has been completed and that to the best of your knowledge the information included is accurate.

C. Field Conditions:

Onsite Nearby None

1. Dumps or landfills (especially with drums/containers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Other debris: household or farm waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Fills (possible cover for dumps)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Unusual chemical odors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Above/below ground storage tanks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Buildings: chemical storage, equipment repair solvents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Structures: evidence of asbestos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Vegetation different from surrounding area for no apparent reason (e.g., stressed or dead, bare ground)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. "Sterile" or modified water bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Oil seeps, stained ground, discolored stream banks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Unnatural characteristics of water: oil slicks, unusual color, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Spray operation base: air strip, equipment parking area chemical staging, storage, and mixing areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Machinery repair areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Pipelines, power lines, gas lines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Oiled or formerly oiled roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Mounted transformers - evidence of leakage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Any mining activity or mining residue: past, present, or future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Wastewater treatment equipment, septic system, sewage lagoons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. Treatment for vegetation or invasive species

20. Spills or releases of pollution

D. EVIDENCE OF PAST USE (check all that are applicable)

Manufacturing

Scrap metal, auto, or battery recycling

Service station

Military

Dry cleaning

Laboratories

Air Strip

Wood preserving

Pipeline

Tanning

Railroad line

Monitoring wells

Facilities with large electrical transformers

Wells no longer providing water

Petroleum production

Piles of soil, rock, debris

Landfills

Any unnatural topographic features

Other (describe) _____

E. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF EASEMENTS OR RIGHTS-OF-WAY (power lines, pipelines, railroads, roads)

F. NEARBY LAND USES: (describe all surrounding land uses – especially those upstream or upgradient)

G. CONTAMINATED SITES RECORD SEARCH:

List all known contaminant sites within a 1-mile radius of the site. Check with Federal or State environmental protection agencies and local authorities. Are there any known hazardous material problems on or near the site (National Priority List, State sites, etc.)? (*Attach additional sheets as necessary*)

H. INTERVIEWS:

(Interviewee Name)

(Title)

(Interview Date)

Present Owner(s) _____

Past Owner(s) _____

County Agent _____

Other Authorities _____

I. AGRICULTURAL HISTORY:

Type, Duration and Extent of Agricultural Activity:

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Surface Drains Present PRESENT NOT PRESENT

Subsurface Drains Present PRESENT NOT PRESENT

J. RECOMMENDATION:

In my professional opinion and based on my inspection of the site this project should move forward:

YES NO FURTHER INVESTIGATION NEEDED

K. CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that on _____, 20____ I made a personal examination and inspection of the tract or parcel of land identified above, and that I am fully informed as to the boundaries, lines and corners of said tract. Based upon a careful and thorough investigation and inquiry I hereby certify that the *Hazardous Materials Field Inspection Checklist* and the attachments are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

EXAMINER (Name and Signature)	OFFICIAL TITLE
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HAZARDOUS MATERIALS LANDOWNER INTERVIEW

A. Property Information

NRCS PROGRAM	LANDOWNER NAME		
PROPERTY ADDRESS		NUMBER OF ACRES	
NEST APPLICATION NUMBER	COUNTY	STATE	

Interview Information

INTERVIEWER NAME	INTERVIEW DATE
INTERVIEWEE NAME	INTERVIEWEE PHONE NO.
AFFILIATION WITH PROPERTY (e.g., Owner, Operator, Caretaker, Previous Owner, Tenant, Neighbor)	TIME FRAME OF AFFILITION (YRs & MOs)

“To the Best of Your Knowledge...”

A. Property Uses

1. Do you have or know of the existence of any of the following records related to the property? <i>(If yes, please provide copies or make them available.)</i>	Yes	No	Copy Attached	No Copy Available
a. Radon, asbestos, or lead-based paint surveys				
b. Environmental compliance audit reports				
c. Environmental permits related to current or previous site activities (e.g., waste disposal permits, wastewater permits, NPDES permits)				
d. Registrations for underground and above-ground storage tanks.				
e. Hazardous materials management plans (Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA))				
f. Facility safety plans				
g. Preparedness and prevention plans				
h. Spill prevention, control, and countermeasure (SPCC) plans				
i. Hydrogeologic and geotechnical reports on the property or surrounding area				
j. Notices or other correspondence from any government agency relating to past or current violations of environmental laws with respect to the property				
k. Notices or other correspondence from any government agency relating to environmental liens encumbering the property				
l. Hazardous waste generator notices or reports				
m. Risk assessments				
n. Recorded deed or environmental land use restrictions				
o. Other environmental studies or investigations				

- 2. Has the property ever been used for an industrial or commercial use (e.g., official and unofficial shooting ranges; processing, handling, management, disposal, storage, manufacture, or transportation of hazardous substances or petroleum products, such as a gasoline station, motor repair facility, commercial printing facility, dry cleaners, photographic developing laboratory, methamphetamine laboratory, junkyard, bone yard, or landfill, or as a waste treatment, storage, disposal, processing, or recycling facility). If yes, describe the activities and provide the time frames, types, locations, and quantities of hazardous substance use and storage.

Yes No Unknown

- 3. Has there ever been permitted or planned mining activity or oil and gas exploration or development on the property? If yes, describe the activities and provide the time frames, locations, and scope of operations.

Yes No Unknown

- 4. Has the property ever been used for agricultural purposes, such as livestock or crops? If yes, describe the operations and indicate the locations and time frames involved.

Yes No Unknown

- a. If yes, did the operation involve the use or storage of chemicals such as pesticides, fertilizers, and or solvents? If yes, describe and provide locations and the type, quantity, duration of use, and management practices.

Yes No Unknown

- 5. Are there, or have there been, any improvements, such as buildings, water towers, smokestacks, smelters, and old building foundations on the property? If yes, describe each improvement, including construction date for each improvement; location on the property; square footage; past and current uses; dates of major renovations, additions, modifications; number of stories; type of construction; heating and cooling sources; water sources; sewage, solid and hazardous waste disposal; and removal date (if applicable).

Yes No Unknown

B. Hazardous Materials and Substances

- 1. Do the **current** operations on the property involve the use and storage of chemicals? If yes, please describe the operations and indicate the locations, types, and quantities of materials used. Describe locations of chemical storage, mixing, and loading. Discuss any use, storage, mixing, or disposal of automotive or other batteries, pesticides (e.g., insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides), paints, solvents, or other chemicals on fence lines, rights-of-way, or other structures such as airstrips, heliports, or crop duster operations.

Yes No Unknown

- a) If yes, has there been a spill or release of hazardous substances, petroleum products, or other potential environmental problems on the property associated with **current** operations? If yes, describe the nature and locations of the release and the quantities and types of hazardous substances. This

includes staining or soils and floors in areas utilized for the use and storage of hazardous materials.

Yes No Unknown

- b) If there had been a spill or release of hazardous substances or petroleum products, did someone report the incident to the National Response Center or a local or State emergency response authority? If yes, identify the agency.

Yes No N/A Unknown

- c) If a spill or release of hazardous substances or petroleum products has occurred, has the release been mitigated? If yes, describe the mitigation, identify the lead regulatory agency that oversaw the mitigation and indicate if the lead regulatory agency issued a no-further action (NFA) determination.

Yes No N/A Unknown

- d) If remediation is completed, does the property have contamination or residual contamination? If yes, are there any institutional controls or land use restrictions in place or long-term monitoring and maintenance requirements?

Yes No N/A Unknown

- 2. Are there any **past operations** at the property that involved the use or storage of hazardous materials and substances? If yes, describe the operations and the locations, types, and quantities of materials.

Yes No Unknown

- a) If yes, has there been a spill or release of hazardous substances, petroleum products, or other potential environmental problems on the property associated with **past** operations or tenants? If yes, describe the nature and locations of the release and the quantities and types of hazardous substances.

Yes No N/A Unknown

- b) If a spill or release of hazardous substances or petroleum products had occurred, was it reported to the National Response Center or a local or State emergency response authority? If yes, identify the agency.

Yes No N/A Unknown

- c) If a release of hazardous substances or petroleum products had occurred, was the release mitigated? If yes, describe the mitigation, identify the regulatory agency that oversaw the mitigation and indicate if the lead regulatory agency issued a no-further action (NFA) determination.

Yes No N/A Unknown

- d) If remediation is completed, does the property now have contamination or residual contamination present? If yes, are there any institutional controls or land use restrictions in place or long-term monitoring and maintenance requirements? Yes No N/A Unknown

- 3. Have there ever been any easements, rights-of-way, pipelines, utility lines, railways, entry or exit ports and associated structures, either buried or overhead, crossing the property? If yes, please describe and indicate the locations, approximate construction date, and the owner’s identity. Yes No Unknown

- a) If yes, are you aware of any spills or releases associated with these features? If yes, please describe the spills and releases and indicate the date, type, and quantities of materials involved. Yes No Unknown

- b) If a spill or release has occurred, are you aware if the release has been mitigated? If yes, who did the mitigation and what regulatory agency oversaw the mitigation? If known, indicate whether the lead regulatory agency issued a no-further action (NFA) determination. Yes No N/A Unknown

- c) If remediation is completed, are you aware if there the property still has contamination or residual contamination? If yes, are there any institutional controls or land use restrictions in place or long-term monitoring and maintenance requirements? Yes No N/A Unknown

- 4. Are you aware if the property’s topography has been altered or if the property has any unnatural topographic features present? If yes, please describe the topographic alterations or unnatural features. Indicate their locations on the property and, if known, when the alterations occurred and by whom.

Yes No Unknown

- 5. Has fill material ever been brought onto the property that originated from a contaminated site or that was of an unknown origin? If yes, describe the date and quantity of material brought to the property, indicate the location where the material was placed.

Yes No Unknown

- a) If fill material came from a contaminated site, identify the fill’s origin and describe the contamination.

- b) Is there any evidence that waste materials were dumped above grade, buried, or burned, either currently or previously, on the property? Examples include hazardous materials, petroleum products, labeled or unlabeled drums or containers, pesticide containers, household and farm debris, automotive

or industrial batteries, building demolition debris, or other waste materials. Yes No Unknown

6. Are there any floor drains in the onsite structures or areas where chemicals (e.g., waste oil, antifreeze, solvents, and pesticides) were used or stored? If yes, indicate the locations of the structures and the types, quantities, and time frames related to the associated chemical use or storage. For each area or structure, also indicate the discharge location for the floor drains. Yes No Unknown

7. Do the walls, floors, or ceilings of the structures used to store hazardous materials have any chemical stains? If yes, indicate the areas in each structure that has chemical staining. Yes No Unknown

8. Are there or have there been any floors, drains, walls, or ceilings stained by substances other than water or that are emitting foul or unnatural odors (e.g., mold, mildew, algae)? If yes, describe the locations and the nature of the past and current site operations. Yes No Unknown

9. Are there electrical transmission lines, transformers, capacitors, lighting ballast, or hydraulic equipment (e.g., elevators, presses, lifts, or doors) on the property? If yes, identify the locations and approximate age of the equipment. Yes No Unknown

a) If the site has electrical transmission lines, transformers, capacitors, lighting ballast, or hydraulic equipment, has testing been done to determine the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) or has any onsite equipment contained PCBs? If yes, indicate the locations, type of equipment, and dates. Yes No Unknown

b) If the site has or had PCBs, are you aware of any release of PCBs that have occurred? If yes, describe the release and indicate the date, locations and whether the release was mitigated. Yes No N/A Unknown

10. Has there ever been any mercury-containing equipment (e.g., switches, thermostats, thermometers, manometers, or sink traps) on the property? If yes, indicate the locations and type of equipment and dates. Yes No Unknown

11. Are you aware of any radon, asbestos-containing materials, or lead-based paint on the property? If yes, indicate the type, locations and dates. Yes No Unknown

- a) If yes, has anyone done any radon, asbestos-containing materials, or lead-based paint surveys on the property? If yes, indicate whether radon, asbestos-containing materials, or lead-based paint has been identified in any onsite buildings. Identify the dates of the surveys, the structures, the results, and condition of the materials. Yes No Unknown

12. Is there current or past use of above-ground or underground storage tanks, including drums or other fuel containers, on the property? If yes, identify the tanks locations, installation dates, and the types and quantities of materials stored. If the tanks were removed, indicate the removal date and whether the lead regulatory agency issued a closure certification notice. Yes No Unknown

- a) If above-ground or underground storage tanks are or were used on the property, was there ever a spill or release of hazardous substances associated with the tank system? If yes, indicate the date and nature of the spill or release. Yes No Unknown

- b) If a spill or release has occurred related to an onsite tank system, was it mitigated to the satisfaction of the lead regulatory agency? If no, describe further actions that must be undertaken to address the spill or release. Yes No N/A Unknown

13. Are you aware of any hazardous substance or pollutant or contaminant spill or release, or other potential environmental problems on any **adjacent or nearby properties**? If yes, please describe (if known) the locations of the release, the type and quantities of materials involved, and the approximate dates. If known, also indicate the owner of the property where the release occurred. Yes No Unknown

- a) If there was a release of hazardous substances, petroleum products on any **adjacent or nearby properties** are you aware if the release was mitigated? Yes No N/A Unknown

- b) Are you aware of contamination or residual contamination on **adjacent or nearby properties** that poses a threat or may pose a future threat to the property? If yes, describe the threat or potential threat. Yes No Unknown

- c) Are you aware of any institutional controls, land use restrictions, long-term monitoring, or maintenance requirements in place on **adjacent or nearby properties** that affect the property? If yes, please describe and identify the adjacent or nearby property and the property owner. Yes No N/A Unknown

C. Water and Wastewater

- 1. Does the property currently or has it ever been supplied by an onsite drinking water supply well? If yes, provide the well locations and construction dates. Yes No Unknown

- a) Have contaminants ever been identified in the onsite drinking water well or the water system that exceeded acceptable levels? If yes, describe the contamination and indicate the dates, contaminant levels and the source of the contamination, if known. Yes No N/A Unknown

- b) If an onsite drinking water well is no longer used, has it been properly abandoned according to applicable regulatory requirements? If yes, indicate the date the well was abandoned. Yes No N/A Unknown

- 2. Has the property ever had an onsite wastewater treatment and disposal systems (e.g., septic systems or sewage lagoons). If yes, please describe of the system, including the locations, size, date constructed, and which buildings discharge to the system. Yes No Unknown

- a) If the onsite wastewater treatment and disposal system is no longer used, has it been closed? If yes, describe method of closure and date closed. Yes No N/A Unknown

- 3. Does the property have any monitoring wells? If yes, explain the purpose of the wells and provide the locations, dates of construction, and any analytical results. Yes No Unknown

- a) If the monitoring wells are no longer used, were they properly abandoned according to applicable regulatory requirements? If yes, indicate the date the well was abandoned. Yes No N/A Unknown

- 4. Does the property have surface water (e.g., pits, ponds, lagoons, rivers, creeks, or oceans)? If yes, describe the locations and type of surface water. Yes No Unknown

- a) If the property has surface water, are you aware of any unnatural characteristics such as color, sheens, odors, or sterility? If yes, please describe and indicate whether the situation is new or pre-existing. Yes No N/A Unknown

- 5. Has the property ever discharged industrial or other wastewater (excluding storm water runoff or sanitary wastewater discharges from restrooms, kitchens, or other household-type uses) onto or adjacent to the property? If yes, describe the discharge and indicate the locations and dates. Yes No Unknown

D. Compliance/Permits

- 1. Have there been any environmental permits or licenses issued for current or past operations associated with the property (e.g., air quality, water discharge, or landfills)? If yes, describe the permitted operations, indicate the permitting agency, date the permit was issued, and whether the permit is still effective.

Yes No Unknown

- 2. Are you aware of any environmental liens against the property that were filed or recorded under Federal, Tribal, State or local law? If yes, describe the lien and indicate the date and effect on the current and future use of the property.

Yes No Unknown

- 3. Are you aware of any activity and land use limitations that are in place on the property or that were filed or recorded under Federal, Tribal, State or local environmental laws? If yes, describe the land use restrictions, identify the party that issued the restrictions and the date.

Yes No Unknown

- 4. Are you aware of any compliance or enforcement notices relating to past or current violations of environmental laws with respect to the property or any facility on the property? If yes, describe the violations and the dates involved.

Yes No Unknown

- 5. Are you aware if any environmental site assessment, or other environmental investigations, of the property, or any other property or site records ever indicated the presence of hazardous substances, petroleum products, or other potential environmental problems on the property? If yes, describe the report and findings.

Yes No Unknown

- 6. Are you aware of any environmental site assessment, or other environmental investigations, of the property, or any other property or site records that recommended further assessment of the property? If yes, identify the report and indicate if the further assessment was done.

Yes No Unknown

- 7. Are you aware of any past, threatened, or pending lawsuits or administrative proceedings concerning a release or threatened release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products on the real property? If yes, describe the action and identify the party that is initiating the action.

Yes No Unknown

E. Other

1. Are you aware any past or current occurrences of anomalous vegetation (e.g., stressed or dead) on the property? If yes, indicate the locations and approximate dates. Yes No Unknown

2. Are you aware of the presence of invasive or non-native plants on the property? If yes, please indicate the locations and names (e.g., kudzu, *Phragmites*, cheatgrass), if known, and approximate area covered by the plants. Yes No Unknown

a) If yes, has there been any attempt to remove or eradicate the invasive species? If yes, explain what was attempted and if it was successful? Yes No Unknown

b) Have any vegetative control programs (e.g., along transmission lines, fence lines, rights-of-ways, or pipelines) been done on the property? If yes, describe the program and types of activities. Yes No Unknown

3. If not mentioned above, is there anything else that could indicate the presence of hazardous substances, petroleum products or other environmental conditions that may affect the property? Yes No Unknown

INTERVIEWEE SIGNATURE:

INTERVIEWEE SIGNATURE	
INTERVIEWEE NAME	DATE

INTERVIEWER SIGNATURE:

INTERVIEWER SIGNATURE	OFFICIAL TITLE
INTERVIEWER NAME	DATE