

**SEQRA Full Environmental Assessment Form
Part 2 Narrative**

TOWN OF ULYSSES

A Donation of Land to the Town for Park and Recreation Purposes and the creation of the proposed flag lot, a minor subdivision and considered an 'Unlisted Action' under SEQR, for which the Ulysses Town Board is acting as Lead Agency.

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Table of Contents

1. Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF) Part 1
2. FEAF Part 2
3. FEAF Part 2 – Impact Assessment
4. FEAF Part 3

Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF) Part 1

FEAF Part 2

FEAF Part 2 – Narrative Evaluation of Impact Assessments

The proposed action consists of a donation of land to the Town of Ulysses for park and recreational purposes, and the creation of a flag lot. Flag lots are a minor subdivision and considered an 'Unlisted Action' under SEQR, for which the Town of Ulysses Board is acting as Lead Agency.

This narrative provides the impact assessments for potential issues of concern identified in the Full Environmental Impact Form (FEAF) Parts 1 and 2 for this action, as reviewed by the Ulysses Town Board, Ulysses Planning Board, the Ulysses Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability. The following information supplements and supports the answers in the FEAF Parts 1 and 2 by describing how the action is anticipated to affect and/or interact with the existing local environment.

No potentially large or significant adverse impacts to the environment have been identified as resulting from the proposed action.

Following are specific responses to each of the FEAF Part 2 questions.

- 1. Impact on Land:** Proposed action may involve construction on, or physical alteration of, the land surface of the proposed site.

The proposed action does not involve construction on, or physical alteration of, the land surface of the proposed site. The acceptance of the land by the Town Board would change the future use of the land but would not increase the intensity of the use of the land. Future development plans would determine how the land would be used within a parks and recreational designation

Answer: No.

- 2. Impact on Geological Features:** The proposed action may result in the modification or destruction of, or inhibit access to, any unique or unusual land forms on the site (e.g., cliffs, dunes, minerals, fossils, caves).

The proposed action will not result in the modification or destruction of, or inhibit access to, any unique or unusual land forms on the site. No unique or unusual land forms have been identified as being present on the site.

Answer: No.

- 3. Impacts on Surface Water:** The proposed action may affect one or more wetlands or other surface water bodies (e.g., streams, rivers, ponds or lakes).

The proposed action will not affect one or more wetlands or other surface water bodies.

Answer: No.

- 4. Impacts on Ground Water:** The proposed action may result in new or additional use of ground water, or may have the potential to introduce contaminants to ground water or an aquifer.

The proposed action will not result in new or additional use of ground water, or may have the potential to introduce contaminants to ground water or an aquifer.

Answer: No.

- 5. Impact on Flooding:** The proposed action may result in development on lands subject to flooding.

The site of the proposed action is not subject to flooding, and so the proposed action will not result in the development of lands subject to flooding.

Answer: No.

- 6. Impacts on Air:** The proposed action may include a state regulated air emission source. The proposed action will not include a state regulated air emission source.

Answer: No.

- 7. Impacts on Plants and Animals:** The proposed action may result in a loss of flora or fauna.

The only vegetative change associated with the proposed action will be to cease planting corn and/or soybeans, and for the planting of native tree species to provide additional screening from adjacent properties. As such, the proposed action will not result in the loss of flora or fauna or the habitats that support any species that NYS or the Federal government has identified as threatened or endangered species.

Answer: No.

- 8. Impact on Agricultural Resources:** The proposed action may impact agricultural resources.

The proposed action will result in 15.234 acres of land being removed as an agricultural resource, and as such, may impact agricultural resources.

Answer: Yes.

- a. The proposed action may impact soil classified within soil group 1 through 4 of the NYS Land Classification System.

The site of the proposed action is recognized as having ____ acres of soils classified within soil group _____. The proposed action will impact the entirety of the site where

those soils are located. However, the proposed action will only have a small impact because there are many areas adjacent to the site having highly productive soils remaining in agriculture. In addition, the proposed action will allow the highly productive soils to be used again in the future, because they will remain in critical sizes useable for agriculture.

Answer: No, or small impact.

- b. The proposed action may sever, cross or otherwise limit access to agricultural land (includes cropland, hayfields, pasture, vineyard, orchard, etc.).

The site of the proposed action is surrounded by trees on three sides and housing on the fourth. Beyond the trees are adjacent agricultural fields and forest. The adjacent agricultural fields have been traditionally accessed through other locations and will continue to be so accessed in the future. The site of the proposed action will be accessed through a driveway bordering the residential properties. As such, the proposed action will not sever, cross or otherwise limit access to agricultural land.

Answer: No, or small impact.

- c. The proposed action may result in the excavation or compaction of the soil profile of active agricultural land.

The proposed action is a donation of land for future park/recreation use and related subdivision and will therefore not result in excavation or compaction of soil. Future uses of the land and their impacts will be identified and studied at the time a future action is determined.

Answer: No, or small impact.

- d. The proposed action may irreversibly convert agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, either more than 2.5 acres if located in an Agricultural District, or more than 10 acres if not within an Agricultural District.

The proposed action is a donation of land for future park/recreation use and related subdivision and will therefore result in an irreversible conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. Future uses of the land and their impacts will be identified and studied at the time a future action is determined.

Tompkins County and Cornell Cooperative Extension provided figures to the Town of Ulysses to help in a determination of impact on removing 15.234 acres from active cultivation. Ulysses is a very robust agricultural community. In 2013, the Land Use Land Cover (LULC) for Ulysses identified 8724 acres in active agriculture (including crop land, pasture tree farm, vineyards, grape, orchards, high intensity cropland/horticulture). As of 2025, there are 9,235 acres of land in Ulysses receiving an agriculture assessment, plus an additional 2,499 acres of land in active cultivation.

While there is a slight variation in these numbers of acres based on the method and approach to data collection.

The 15.234 acres of agricultural land being considered for donation for a future park and recreational use represents approximately 0.17% of active agricultural land in the Town of Ulysses. Accordingly, its removal from agricultural use will have a very negligible impact on agricultural activities in the Town. Additionally, as this property was used for crops (corn and soy), it does not require removal of perennial agricultural crops such as vineyards or tree farms.

Answer: Small impact.

- e. The proposed action may disrupt or prevent installation of an agricultural land management system.

The proposed action is a donation of land for future park/recreation use and related subdivision and will therefore not result in disruption or prevention of agricultural land management systems. Future uses of the land and their impacts will be identified and studied at the time a future action is determined.

Answer: No, or small impact.

- f. The proposed action may result, directly or indirectly, in increased development potential or pressure on farmland.

The proposed action is a donation of land for future park/recreation use and related subdivision, which is located along a road within the Town of Ulysses that has residential housing along its entire stretch, and is serviced by water infrastructure. It is likely that an indirect pressure/increased development potential along this road, however, in light of the existing residential uses and access to water, the increased pressure/development potential is expected to be small.

Answer: No, or small impact.

- g. The proposed action is not consistent with the adopted municipal Farmland Protection Plan.

The proposed action is a donation of land for future park/recreation use and related subdivision. The site of the proposed action is within the “Agricultural Core,” which is identified as an area in which future development should be limited.

Since 2013, the total acreage in the Town of Ulysses identified as agricultural has increased significantly. In light of the small amount of acreage being affected compared to the whole, the proposed action’s siting adjacent to residential housing with flag lot access route through the residential area, and that the proposed action will not impair

continuation of farm activities in the Agricultural Core, the proposed action is anticipated to have only a small impact on the Farmland Protection Plan.

Answer: Small impact.

h. Other impacts.

None identified.

- 9. Impact on Aesthetic Resources:** The land use of the proposed action are obviously different from, or are in sharp contrast to, current land use patterns between the proposed project and a scenic or aesthetic resource.

There are no scenic or aesthetic resources identified in the surrounding area. Taughannock Falls and Cayuga Lake are both located within the Town of Ulysses, but are not within visual range of the proposed action's location.

Answer: No

- 10. Impact on Historic and Archaeological Resources:** The proposed action may occur in or adjacent to a historic or archaeological resources.

No important historic, archeological, architectural or aesthetic resources have been identified within or adjacent to the proposed action's location, and the proposed action would not adversely impact these resources if they were identified in the future.

Answer: No.

- 11. Impact on Open Space and Recreation:** The proposed action may result in a loss of recreational opportunities or a reduction of an open space resource as designated in any adopted municipal open space plan.

The proposed action will not result in a loss of recreational opportunities or a reduction of an open space resource as designated in any adopted municipal open space plan. The proposed action will increase the opportunity for recreation in the Town, which currently lacks a municipal park for recreational purposes. These specific development plans will be created in the future.

Answer: No

- 12. Impact on Critical Environmental Areas:** The proposed action may be located within or adjacent to a critical environmental area (CEA).

The proposed action will not result in any impact on CEAs. There is only one Critical Environmental Area in Tompkins County, and it is located in the Town of Ithaca.

Answer: No.

- 13. Impact on Transportation:** The proposed action may result in a change to existing transportation systems.

The proposed action will not result in any changes to existing transportation systems. The acceptance of the land donation would not result in any adverse changes to existing traffic or infrastructure. Those impacts would be reviewed as development plans for the property are created, based on public feedback and engagement.

Answer: No.

- 14. Impact on Energy:** The proposed action may cause an increase in the use of any form of energy.

The proposed action will not cause an increase in use of any form of energy. Those impacts will be reviewed as development plans for the property are created, based on public feedback and engagement.

Answer: No.

- 15. Impact on Noise, Order and Light:** The proposed action may result in an increase in noise, odors, or outdoor lighting.

The proposed action will not increase noise, odors or outdoor lighting. Those impacts will be reviewed as development plans for the property are created, based on public feedback and engagement.

Answer: No.

- 16. Impact on Human Health:** The proposed action may have an impact on human health from exposure to new or existing sources of contaminants.

The proposed action will not introduce contaminants, and there are no known contaminants on the proposed action's location.

Answer: No.

- 17. Consistency with Community Plans:** The proposed action is not consistent with adopted land use plans.

In September 2009, the Town adopted the "Town of Ulysses Comprehensive Plan." In this plan, there were a number of goals and objectives identified, including the need for balanced development, the protection of agricultural resources, and the maintenance and expansion of recreational facilities.

Agriculture is recognized as a key component of the character of Ulysses. The plan's Vision Statement reads: "Ulysses is a rural community in the Finger Lakes region that takes great pride in its agricultural heritage and character, natural resources, and small-town atmosphere. Significant community features, including our farms and lakeshore, make Ulysses a desirable location for residents and visitors alike. We will continue to celebrate and protect our unique resources by promoting efforts that support agricultural sustainability, open space conservation, a balanced approach to economic development, and revitalization of village and hamlet centers. We will strive to effectively balance future growth with the conservation of key community assets through proactive planning in a manner that benefits all residents, both today and in the future" (17).

Additionally, the plan states: The ability to have access to safe and well-maintained recreational facilities and open space areas is an important aspect of the overall quality-of-life offered by a community" (18).

The first objective identified under Community Services states: "Maintain and expand unique park and recreation facilities for the continued use and enjoyment of residents and visitors to the Town" (193).

In 2013, the Town adopted its "Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan." This plan notes that there were 8,710 acres in agricultural production, out of a total of 21,000+ acres of land Townwide (1,6). As noted previously, as of 2025, there are 9,235 acres of land in Ulysses receiving an agriculture assessment, plus an additional 2,499 acres of land in active cultivation. In short, based on agricultural tax assessments and additional documentation supplied by Cornell Cooperative Extension of known land in cultivation that is not receiving an agricultural tax exemption, the Town currently has 11,734 acres in cultivation. This reflects a 34.7187% increase in acres of land in active agricultural use.

In summary, the Town has done a good job fulfilling the agricultural goals of Ulysses since 2013 and has increased the number of acres in active agricultural use. The removal of 15.234 acres reflects significantly less than 1% of all active farmland. While supporting the creation of a park and recreational facility is not a stated goal of the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan, it does fulfill the goals of the Town of Ulysses Comprehensive Plan (2009) that calls for the balancing of new development with protecting agricultural assets. The inclusion of a park and recreational property as infill development on this particular parcel will help protect the Town's significant amount of very undeveloped, agricultural land that is not bordered by existing residential land or accessible to public water from the creation of a park and recreational property.

Answer: Small impact.

18. Consistency with Community Character: The proposed project is inconsistent with the existing community character.

The Cold Spring neighborhood around the donated land has been developed as residential since the 1970s and 1980s. A portion of the donated land is zoned Residential, which allows

for community parks. The majority of the land is in the Agricultural/Rural Zone, which also allows for regional parks. Additionally, this parcel is located along an existing water line, and is eligible to connect to the existing public water district.

The addition of a park within the Cold Springs neighborhood is in keeping with its residential characteristics, and will protect Ulysses agricultural areas in more rural and remote settings without denser concentrations of residences and without public water accessibility from the potential future recreational development.

Answer: No.