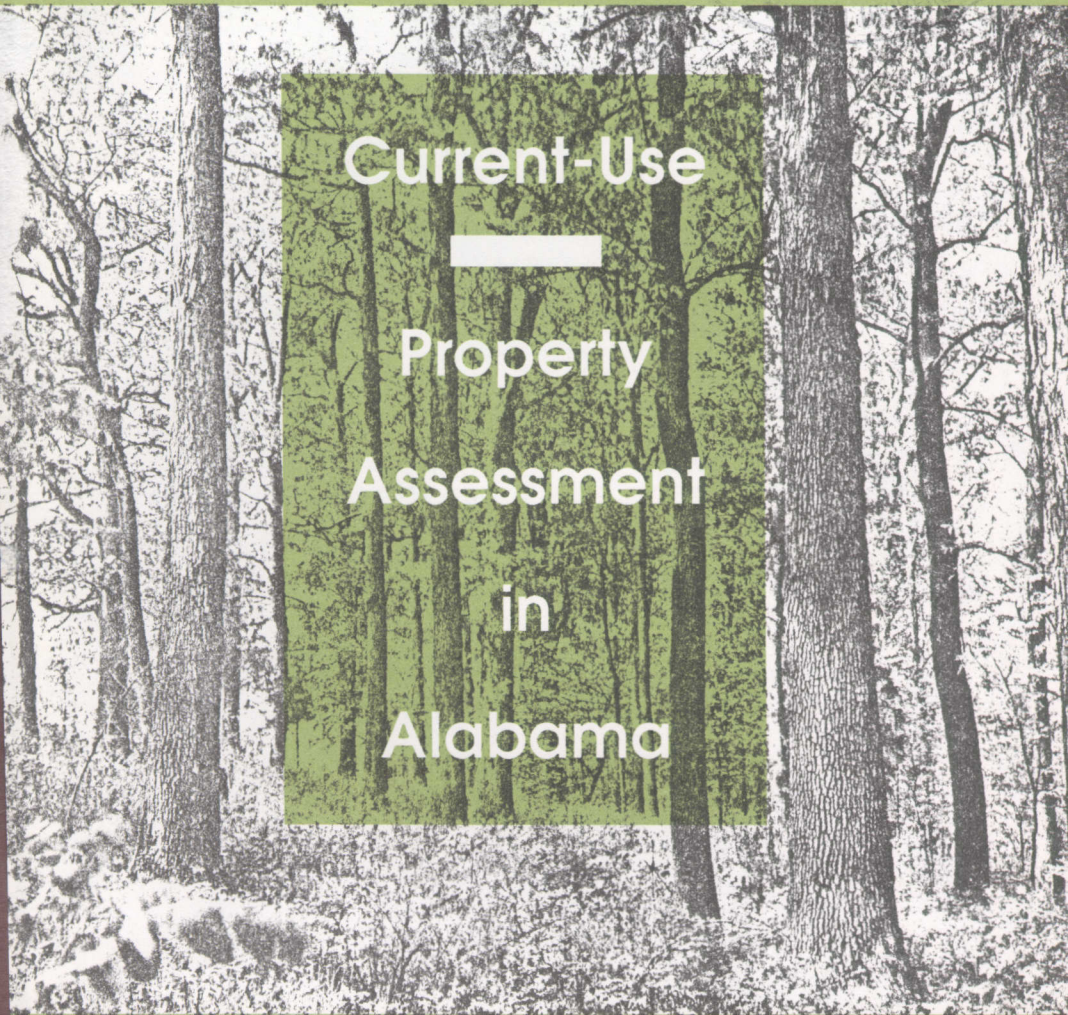
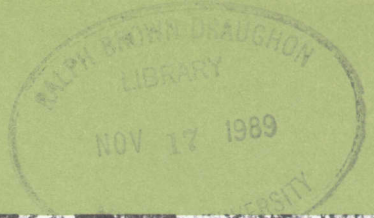


S  
31  
152

4



Current-Use  
—  
Property  
Assessment  
in  
Alabama



Bulletin 600      August 1989  
Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station      Auburn University  
Lowell T. Frobish, Director      Auburn University, Alabama

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
INTRODUCTION .....	3
THE PROPERTY TAX PROBLEM ON RURAL LAND .....	5
OBTAINING DATA ABOUT ALABAMA .....	7
RESULTS .....	9
Enrollment Levels .....	9
Impact on Property Appraisals and Taxes .....	12
Impact on Revenues .....	16
Impact on Urban Sprawl .....	16
Characteristics of the Participants .....	19
DISCUSSION .....	25
LITERATURE CITED .....	30

---

FIRST PRINTING 4M, AUGUST 1989

*Information contained herein is available to all persons  
without regard to race, color, sex, or national origin.*

# Current-Use Assessment in Alabama<sup>1</sup>

Warren A. Flick, Steve W. Krietemeyer, and  
Clifford A. Hickman<sup>2</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

**A**LABAMA has had a colorful and noteworthy experience in recent years with its property tax. For many years Alabama had a reputation for the lowest property taxes in the Nation, and a South-wide study by Hargreaves (9) suggested that observation applied also to timberland. But in the last 10 years, property taxes on timberland, even with the implementation of current use, have risen by a multiple of about six. The first big increase resulted from a law suit challenging the constitutionality of Alabama's ad valorem property tax assessments. Alabama's Constitution required uniform assessments throughout the State, but a Federal court found large discrepancies. It further found that the differences in assessments resulted in part from the failure of the county and State governments to equalize assessments in accord with Alabama statutes, and that failure violated the due process guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. To remedy the violations, the court ordered reappraisal of all property in the State (*Weisinger vs. Boswell*, 330 F. Supp. 615 (MD Ala. 1971)).

In coordination with the State Department of Revenue, the counties started reappraising property in the early 1970's and finished by the late 1970's. As the reappraisals progressed, many landowners realized their property taxes were going up, in many cases by multiples of three or more. Needless to say,

---

<sup>1</sup>This study was conducted under the terms of USDA Cooperative Agreement No. 19-83-048 between the Southern Forest Experiment Station, Auburn University, and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station.

<sup>2</sup>Respectively, Associate Professor of Forestry; former Graduate Research Assistant in School of Forestry and now Forester at Resource Management Service in Birmingham, Alabama; and Principal Economist, Forest Resources Law and Economics, Southern Forest Experiment Station, USDA Forest Service, New Orleans, Louisiana.

that prospect scared farmers and timberland owners, and associations representing them pressed for legislation to limit property tax increases. In a special session of the 1978 Alabama Legislature, Governor George C. Wallace submitted, and the legislature passed, a tax reform package which limited future property tax increases and authorized a constitutional amendment (later ratified by the people) providing for current-use assessment of agricultural and forest land.

Current-use assessment usually provides its greatest tax relief to farm and timberland owners near cities. It is based on the idea that property values ought to be related to the income earned from land. In rural areas, where farming and timber growing are the usual land uses, market values of property are usually related to the income potential of farming and timber growing. But near cities, property values are influenced by the potential that land has for housing, commercial development, and other high-value uses. Taxes based on those higher land values can be heavy burdens for farmers and timber growers.

By basing assessments on the income potential of the land in farming or timbering, current use relieves near-urban landowners of the extra tax burdens from the high property values. Current use uses an analogy. First, assessors estimate the income from land used in farming or timber growing (suppose it is \$40 per acre per year), and then look to other investments that produce similar net incomes. Finally they argue that the value of land ought to be the same as the value of the other investments. If, for example, the Federal Land Bank earns \$40 every year from a \$400 loan to a farmer—the bank is charging 10 percent interest—then land that produces the same net income ought to be worth \$400 (computed by dividing farm income by the interest rate). Even land adjoining Birmingham, if it produces \$40 per acre per year when used for farming, would have a \$400 per acre value.

The Alabama Department of Revenue was charged with writing regulations to implement current-use assessment, but it never produced what the legislature wanted. Its officers believed property taxes were too low, and they were reluctant to write regulations that would lower them still further. The agency apparently took the position that current-use values were the same as fair-market values. Such intransigence did little to calm rural landowners who feared that property assessments, because they were under a continuing Federal court

order, had become uncontrollable. By 1982 the State was facing another court-ordered reappraisal which would raise property taxes again. The legislature preempted the Department of Revenue and passed a law establishing a uniform current-use assessment procedure—Ala. Code § 40-7-25.1, 1975 (1).

The law extended use valuation to all property used for agricultural or forest production. Current-use assessment is optional: landowners are required to make an application. If accepted, enrolled lands are classified into one or more of 10 soil productivity groups. These groups are used to estimate crop and/or timber yields which, when combined with current product prices and production costs, provide a basis for determining taxable use values by means of income capitalization. This assessment procedure continues until such time as the property is either withdrawn from the program or converted to an ineligible use. In cases where the use of the land is changed within 2 years of withdrawal, a “rollback tax” penalty is imposed—Ala. Code § 40-7-25.3, 1985, Supplements (1). The rollback provision requires the assessor to appraise the land at its fair-market value or its sales price, whichever is higher. The current owner must pay taxes based on that higher appraisal for the year of conversion and the 2 previous years. Since property taxes presumably would have been paid in those earlier 2 years, the penalty consists of paying them a second time at the higher rate.

This bulletin describes the results of a study designed to measure some of the effects of Alabama’s current-use program. Objectives of the research included estimating the amount of land enrolled in the program, estimating the impact of the program on tax collections from rural land, and identifying the socio-economic characteristics of landowners participating in the program. Before describing the results of the research, a brief discussion of some related research on property taxes is presented.

## **THE PROPERTY TAX PROBLEM ON RURAL LAND**

Since 1960, most states have adopted some form of current-use assessment for rural lands, and researchers throughout the Nation have studied the effects of the new laws. Gloudemans

(7) has reviewed many of the studies done in the 1960's and early 1970's. He noted that during the period from 1950 to 1972, the real value of farmland nearly doubled, and he identified two causes. First, because farm labor was more productive (and wages apparently did not rise as fast), a greater share of income was allocable to land. Second, especially near cities, people were buying farmland for nonfarming purposes—as investments and weekend retreats, for example. Rising property taxes follow rising land values, and Gloudemans (7) notes that the effective tax rates on agricultural land in the early 1970's were the highest they had been since the 1930's. Yet during the same period (1950-72), real farm income declined. Farmers felt the pinch and lobbied for relief. Tax relief was touted to increase farmers' incomes and to influence land use. The land-use issue was especially relevant near cities where demand for farmland was intense.

Gloudemans (7) found that current-use assessment lowered the tax base most where there was a large amount of agricultural land subject to urban pressures. He further found that current-use assessment had little effect on land use. The tax savings from current use were not enough to prevent farmers from cashing in on large increases in the value of their property. He noted that where use-value laws imposed big penalties for development, farmland owners near cities tended not to enroll their lands.

In a similar review of current-use programs, Hady and Sibold (8) concluded that pure preferential assessment was the least effective way to influence land use. Restrictive agreements in which landowners contract with government to restrict the development of their land in return for lower taxes were the most effective ways to influence land use.

Similar results and conclusions were expressed in later studies by Coughlin, Berry, and Plaut (5) and Atkinson (3). Coughlin, Berry, and Plaut (5) noted that, as the cost of entering or leaving a current-use program increased participation dropped off. New Jersey was apparently a typical example, where almost 95 percent of all farmland was enrolled in current use, but enrollment near cities was significantly lower. Near cities, the cost of foregoing development was greatest. They also cited several studies showing that soil productivity and the demand for developable land had more influence on land use than any reduction in taxes. Atkinson

noted that tax reductions from current use were capitalized into higher land values and influenced the development decisions of only the initial owners of enrolled properties.

Hickman (11) found that 12 Southern States had current-use statutes for forest land. Five states had laws which imposed no penalties for withdrawing land and changing land use, while the other seven provided for either full or partial recapture of the tax savings from current use. He noted that laws with no penalties offered the surest tax relief to landowners but were the least effective way of affecting land use. This suggested that states chose which of the two policy objectives was primary.

Hickman (10,12) also studied both Tennessee's and Louisiana's current-use programs. The results in the two states were decidedly different. In Tennessee, after 4 years, only 3.2 percent of eligible land was enrolled. In Louisiana, after 1 year, 98.2 percent was enrolled. In both states, current use had little effect on tax revenues. In Tennessee the effect was small because of limited participation, and in Louisiana the effect was small because current-use assessment actually increased the taxes on enrolled land.

This unexpected result occurred because the old fair-market-value assessments were far below the actual market values of the properties. Enrollment was high in Louisiana because most parish assessors thought the law mandated enrollment (12). In New Jersey and Washington, researchers have studied the characteristics of landowners electing current use. Both studies were based on mail surveys of landowners. They found that the majority of applicants owned less than 100 acres, and that approximately one-third of the applicants were farmers (13,4). In both instances, the investigators concluded that the programs were not being abused by large corporations or speculators. The landowners (78 percent in New Jersey and 46 percent in Washington) also said their future land-use decisions would not be affected by current-use assessment. In Washington, an estimated 72 percent of the applicants were simply seeking tax relief.

## **OBTAINING DATA ABOUT ALABAMA**

For data about Alabama's experience with current-use assessment, a random sample of 20 of the State's 67 counties was selected. The sample was stratified into rural and urban

subsamples, and 6 counties classified as Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) were chosen along with 14 nonSMSA counties. Within each county, a sample of not more than 100 landowners who were participating in the current-use assessment program in 1982 was selected. The exact number in the sample depended on the total number of participants in the county. In counties having 100 or fewer participants, a 100 percent sample was taken; in counties having 101-200 participants, a 50 percent sample was taken; in counties with 201-300 participants, a 33 percent sample was taken, and so on. From records in the county tax assessor's office, the acreage, fair-market-value appraisal, current-use appraisal, and applicable millage rate were recorded for each parcel which the selected participants had enrolled in the program. In addition, each tract was identified as being cropland, pasture, forestland, or other rural land. All data collected were for 1982, the first year in which current-use assessment was widely implemented.

County assessors did not record the total acreage of land enrolled in current use, so that number was estimated for each county, by land class. For this estimation, the average acreage per sampled participant was computed from sample data. This average was then multiplied by the total number of participants, which could be counted from the tax rolls. Crop and pastureland data from the Census of Agriculture were taken as an estimate of the amount of land eligible for current-use assessment (18). Similar data for forestland were obtained from the U.S. Forest Service's periodic forest survey (15). In counties containing tax exempt state and national forestland, the forest survey figures were appropriately reduced. The ratio of the estimated enrolled acreage to the total eligible acreage gave an estimate of the percentage of eligible land that was participating in the program.

Multiplying the estimated enrolled acreage in each county by the average tax per acre under fair-market and current-use assessments (both computed from sample data) gave an estimate of the revenues which could be collected from enrolled land under each system. An estimate of the potential decline in county revenues due to current-use assessment was found by computing the difference between the potential revenues under each system.

The county tax rolls contained the names and addresses of the taxpayers in the sample, so it was easy to construct a mailing list to accomplish the last objective—identifying the



characteristics of landowners in the program. The sample, established in the spring of 1984, consisted of 1,664 landowners who participated in current use in 1982. The questionnaire and survey of those landowners followed the procedures recommended in *The Total Design Method* (6). The questionnaire is reproduced in Krietemeyer (14).

Of the 1,664 questionnaires sent out, 790 usable replies were received (47.5 percent response rate). Among those not usable, 120 were returned by the post office as undeliverable, 34 were returned with a note stating that the addressee was deceased, 19 stated they had sold the land, and 10 said they were not participating in the program. A more current sample of participants would likely have reduced these causes of nonresponse.

From the usable questionnaires, tables showing the frequency of responses were prepared. When possible, the sample of responses was compared with data on Alabama's farm and ranch landowners or the general rural population, data primarily obtained from Adrian and Dunkelberger (2).

## **RESULTS**

### **Enrollment Levels**

Estimates of the amount and proportion of land enrolled in current use, by sample county, are presented in table 1. Totals represent the sum of crop, pasture, forest, and other land, which includes barren land, unclassified transitional areas, and beaches. Only small amounts of other land were in the sample.

The most striking feature of table 1 is the variability in enrollment levels among counties. This variability is apparent in all three measures of program participation: number of participants, amount of enrolled land, and proportion of eligible land enrolled in the program. The number of participants ranged from zero in Washington County to 2,677 in Houston County. Eight counties had participation levels above the average of 970, while the remaining 12 counties were below the average.

The estimated amounts of cropland enrolled in the program ranged from zero acres in Washington County to 132,977 acres in Houston County, with the other counties skewed toward the upper extreme. Six of the 20 counties had enrolled cropland

TABLE 1. PARTICIPATION IN THE CURRENT-USE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM, SELECTED ALABAMA COUNTIES, 1982

County	Part.	Amount of participating property (acres)				Proportion of eligible land participating (pct.)		
		Crop	Pasture	Timber	Total	Agri.	Timber	Total
Bullock	492	8,823	4,153	90,474	103,470	11.71	3.81	27.32
Coffee	571	26,134	11,703	39,581	77,418	30.71	15.95	20.81
Colbert	975	23,238	12,033	50,720	85,991	28.41	23.77	25.44
Coosa	12	13	55	2,459	2,527	0.34	0.67	0.63
Dallas	748	28,757	29,143	113,094	171,326	26.08	38.31	32.73
Etowah <sup>1</sup>	626	20,260	13,475	49,802	83,538	44.89	27.02	31.95
Fayette	87	4,710	0	612	5,323	13.27	0.19	1.50
Geneva	1,974	97,830	45,326	85,818	231,788	93.21	65.81	80.98
Houston <sup>1</sup>	2,677	132,977	29,653	78,489	241,118	100.00 <sup>2</sup>	81.59	97.23
Lawrence	1,982	67,123	55,527	39,123	161,967	77.56	37.63	61.67
Lee	1,577	9,310	22,986	134,841	169,111	63.85	60.28	61.22
Lowndes	353	6,304	66,543	41,616	114,463	53.05	16.11	28.62
Macon	696	17,332	26,418	64,531	110,258	46.54	29.86	35.45
Mobile <sup>1</sup>	1,727	64,846	20,130	150,668	235,685	100.00 <sup>2</sup>	27.14	36.17
Montgomery <sup>1</sup>	1,391	16,793	144,253	128,771	289,817	73.78	64.26	68.96
Perry	611	58,456	87,573	14,004	160,033	100.00 <sup>2</sup>	4.94	38.67
Pickens	674	37,528	13,035	73,408	125,412	69.69	15.98	23.55
Shelby <sup>1</sup>	1,979	30,251	36,387	199,131	265,769	100.00 <sup>2</sup>	49.07	57.61
Washington	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Winston	243	636	4,639	28,980	34,255	16.93	12.84	13.32
Average	970	32,566	31,152	69,306	133,463			
Wt. average <sup>3</sup>						61.51	24.47	34.25

<sup>1</sup>Counties designated as SMSA.

<sup>2</sup>The calculated values actually exceeded 100 percent. This obviously impossible result is probably due to the fact that the samples included a disproportionately high share of large landowners. This would have the effect of inflating both the average agricultural acreage per participant, and the final estimates of the proportion of agricultural land enrolled.

<sup>3</sup>Weighted by the number of acres enrolled.

above the average of 32,566 acres. Enrolled pastureland ranged from zero acres in Fayette and Washington counties to 144,253 acres in Montgomery County. Here again, six counties had enrolled pastureland above the average of 31,152 acres. Estimates of enrolled timberland varied from zero acres in Washington County to 199,131 acres in Shelby County. Nine counties had greater than average enrollment (69,306 acres), and 11 counties had less.

Since tax assessors and the Census of Agriculture did not use consistent definitions of crop and pastureland, the two land classes were aggregated into agricultural land to calculate proportions of eligible land enrolled. As indicated, the proportion of enrolled land ranged from zero percent in Washington County to over 100 percent in four counties. For the 20 sampled counties, an estimated 61.5 percent of all agricultural land was enrolled in the current-use assessment program.

The estimated proportion of eligible timberland enrolled in the program ranged from zero percent in Washington County to 82 percent in Houston County, with an average of 24.5 percent for the 20 sampled counties.

More landowners from SMSA counties enrolled in current use than from nonSMSA counties, but this pattern was less pronounced in the proportion of eligible land participating. Large inter-county variation in the proportion of eligible land participating occurred not only between SMSA and nonSMSA counties, but also within each category.

To explain the variation in participation between counties and the unexpectedly low levels of participation, researchers telephoned the assessors or their assistants in the 20 sampled counties. From these conversations, several factors emerged as being partially responsible for the inter-county variability. The extremely low levels of enrollment in some counties, notably Coosa, Fayette, and Washington, were because qualifying properties in these counties had current-use appraisals higher than their fair-market-value appraisals. Therefore, only a few landowners had any incentive to enroll in the program. In several other counties the tax assessors said that, although most landowners had lower taxes under current-use assessment, many landowners would have had higher taxes.

Advertising apparently influenced participation. Some assessors, believing that the news media had covered the law sufficiently, did not vigorously advertise current use. Others

mailed an application and an explanation of the program to every eligible landowner in the county. Newspaper ads were the most widely mentioned means of publicizing the current-use program. A few assessors mentioned that the Farm Bureau had been active in encouraging farmers to enroll. As a result of these efforts the assessors felt the majority of landowners had been informed of the program, except perhaps absentee landowners and people acquiring land since 1982.

Several assessors mentioned that the rollback provision of the law kept landowners from enrolling, particularly where annual tax savings were small. To demonstrate the magnitude of the penalty, the Montgomery County assessor described a 10-acre parcel which had been taxed at \$1.38 per acre under current use. It recently sold for \$1,000,000 for use in commercial development. The penalty for converting the land to another use, which is borne by the new owner, was near \$11,000. In another case, a 120-acre parcel in Mobile County was recently converted to a nonqualifying use, and the tax penalty on it was nearly \$95,000. These examples show that where the tax savings from current use are small relative to the potential penalty, only landowners without conversion plans are likely to enroll.

Finally, the telephone interviews indicated that some assessors interpret the law narrowly, requiring that land be used "actively" in agriculture or forestry to qualify for current-use assessment. That interpretation may have caused assessors to deny current-use assessment to forested land which was not "actively" managed for timber or wildlife purposes. This may partly explain why the proportion of timberland enrolled was generally less than agricultural land.

### **Impact on Property Appraisals and Taxes**

The incentive for a landowner to enroll in the current-use program is the expectation of lower property taxes. An individual's tax bill is a function of the land's appraised value and the millage rate. Both of these are likely to be higher near urban centers. Table 2, which presents average fair-market and current-use appraisals, shows the degree of urban influence on appraisals. In interpreting these figures, it should be noted that the sampled participants were drawn from the population

TABLE 2. AVERAGE APPRAISALS PER ACRE, SELECTED ALABAMA COUNTIES, 1982

County	(In dollars)											
	Fair market value				Current-use				Difference			
	Crop	Past.	Timber	Total	Crop	Past.	Timber	Total	Crop	Past.	Timber	Total
Bullock	585	382	308	335	323	299	256	263	262	83	52	71
Coffee	730	509	326	490	456	439	268	357	274	70	58	133
Colbert <sup>1</sup>	1,037	915	383	634	388	471	220	301	648	444	162	333
Coosa	470	592	303	310	340	443	261	265	130	150	42	44
Dallas	831	687	413	532	403	375	243	292	428	312	171	240
Etowah <sup>1</sup>	775	647	389	524	496	458	308	378	278	189	81	146
Fayette <sup>2</sup>	504	-----	748	532	380	-----	361	378	124	-----	387	154
Geneva	894	668	349	641	474	465	264	391	420	203	86	251
Houston <sup>1</sup>	1,006	748	657	861	402	413	265	358	604	335	393	502
Lawrence	830	611	337	637	421	415	253	378	410	196	84	259
Lee	740	707	470	525	438	472	276	314	302	235	194	211
Lowndes	626	541	306	460	437	437	275	378	189	104	31	82
Macon	752	584	345	466	425	443	243	320	327	141	102	146
Mobile <sup>1</sup>	2,304	1,910	1,110	1,507	419	455	232	302	1,885	1,455	878	1,205
Montgomery <sup>1</sup>	1,758	1,163	530	916	458	493	270	392	1,300	670	260	524
Perry	715	495	377	565	456	428	356	432	259	67	22	133
Pickens	572	539	307	410	474	494	268	352	99	45	38	58
Shelby <sup>1</sup>	1,597	1,904	1,063	1,239	532	498	282	340	1,065	1,406	780	899
Winston	774	683	316	374	443	456	274	302	331	227	41	72
Wt. average <sup>3</sup>	894	737	462	622	435	445	264	345	458	292	198	278

<sup>1</sup>Counties designated as SMSA.

<sup>2</sup>Dashes indicate no data in sample.

<sup>3</sup>Weighted by number of acres enrolled.

of landowners who had elected current use. In Washington County, since no landowners signed up, no results are reported.

The data clearly show current use eliminates the urban influence on agricultural and forestland values. Values of \$2,304 and \$470 per acre for Mobile and Coosa county cropland, respectively, demonstrate the wide fluctuations in market-value appraisals encountered within each land-use category. The range of current-use appraisals was much less variable, both within and between land classes, with the extremes being \$532 for Shelby County cropland and \$220 per acre for Colbert County timberland. Average current-use appraisals for the sampled counties were 51.2, 39.6, and 42.9 percent lower than the average fair market value appraisals of \$894, \$737, and \$462 per acre for crop, pasture, and timber land, respectively.

Interestingly, the average current-use appraisals for pastureland exceeded those for cropland in nine counties. This is likely explained by the tracts' soil classification. Current-use appraisals require that a productivity rating of good, average, poor, or nonproductive be given to each parcel. By law, cropland and pastureland having the same productivity rating receive the same current-use appraisal. The data of table 2 suggest then that pastureland in these nine counties generally had a higher productivity rating than cropland.

The average taxes which sampled participants would have paid under both fair market and the current-use appraisals are compared in table 3. Again, these figures came from a sample of landowners who had elected current use; the differences between them may not equal the tax savings that the average landowner would receive. Many landowners who would have received smaller tax reductions or actual tax increases likely did not apply for current-use assessment. The extreme examples are in Coosa, Fayette, and Washington counties where most landowners would have had higher taxes on pasture and timberland enrolled in the program. Washington was dropped from table 3 because no land was enrolled.

Despite this qualification, the lower taxes under current use undoubtedly explain much of the inter-county variability in participation. Counties with the highest market value appraisals tended to have the highest levels of tax savings on enrolled land, and in turn the highest levels of participation.

The figures point out that in 1982, participants paid considerably less tax than they would have in the absence of the

TABLE 3. AVERAGE TAXES PER ACRE, SELECTED ALABAMA COUNTIES, 1982

County	Fair market value				(In dollars) Current-use				Difference			
	Crop	Past.	Timber	Total	Crop	Past.	Timber	Total	Crop	Past.	Timber	Total
Bullock	2.68	1.76	1.41	1.53	1.48	1.37	1.17	1.20	1.20	0.39	0.24	0.33
Coffee	2.48	1.74	1.12	1.67	1.55	1.49	0.91	1.22	0.93	0.24	0.20	0.46
Colbert <sup>1</sup>	2.90	2.67	1.05	1.78	1.06	1.36	0.60	0.83	1.83	1.31	0.45	0.95
Coosa	1.32	1.66	0.85	0.87	0.95	1.24	0.73	0.74	0.36	0.42	0.12	0.12
Dallas	3.37	3.03	1.70	2.22	1.63	1.54	0.98	1.19	1.73	1.49	0.71	1.03
Etowah <sup>1</sup>	2.61	2.20	1.31	1.77	1.67	1.56	1.04	1.28	0.94	0.64	0.27	0.49
Fayette <sup>2</sup>	1.39	-----	2.68	1.54	1.04	-----	1.31	1.07	0.35	-----	1.37	0.47
Geneva	3.13	2.34	1.22	2.25	1.66	1.63	0.92	1.37	1.47	0.71	0.30	0.88
Houston <sup>1</sup>	2.65	1.95	1.75	2.27	1.05	1.08	0.71	0.94	1.60	0.87	1.04	1.33
Lawrence	2.35	1.76	0.95	1.81	1.18	1.19	0.72	1.07	1.17	0.57	0.23	0.74
Lee	2.48	2.42	1.60	1.79	1.45	1.58	0.92	1.05	1.03	0.83	0.68	0.74
Lowndes	2.13	1.84	1.04	1.56	1.48	1.49	0.94	1.29	0.64	0.35	0.11	0.28
Macon	2.48	1.98	1.14	1.55	1.40	1.48	0.80	1.06	1.08	0.50	0.34	0.49
Mobile <sup>1</sup>	11.87	9.86	5.73	7.78	2.16	2.35	1.20	1.56	9.71	7.51	4.54	6.22
Montgomery <sup>1</sup>	5.14	2.94	1.21	2.30	1.16	1.11	0.60	0.88	3.97	1.83	0.62	1.42
Perry	2.22	1.54	1.17	1.75	1.41	1.33	1.10	1.34	0.80	0.21	0.07	0.41
Pickens	1.45	1.44	0.80	1.06	1.20	1.31	0.69	0.90	0.25	0.13	0.11	0.16
Shelby <sup>1</sup>	5.21	6.80	3.36	4.24	1.73	1.76	0.96	1.16	3.48	5.04	2.67	3.09
Winston	2.48	2.19	1.01	1.20	1.42	1.46	0.88	0.97	1.06	0.73	0.13	0.23
Wt. average <sup>3</sup>	3.09	2.38	1.67	2.15	1.41	1.40	0.92	1.14	1.68	0.98	0.75	1.01

<sup>1</sup>Counties designated as SMSA.

<sup>2</sup>Dashes indicate no data in sample.

<sup>3</sup>Weighted by number of acres enrolled.

program. Table 3 shows participants paid average taxes of \$1.41, \$1.40, and \$0.92 per acre on enrolled crop, pasture, and forest land, respectively. In the absence of the current-use law, and assuming that millage rates would have remained at their 1982 levels, participants would have paid taxes of \$3.09, \$2.38, and \$1.67 per acre on their crop, pasture, and forest land. This implies hypothetical tax reductions of 54.4, 41.2, and 44.9 percent on enrolled crop, pasture, and forest lands. The reductions are hypothetical because participants never actually paid taxes based on the new fair-market-value appraisals of their properties. Since current-use procedures and reappraised fair-market values went into effect in the same year, the current-use provisions simply prevented taxes from increasing as much as they would have in their absence. It is also conceivable that without current-use assessment, some counties would have reduced millage rates.

### **Impact on Revenues**

Table 4 shows hypothetical losses of tax receipts—the amount not collected due to current use. On agricultural land, they range from zero in Washington County to \$780,978 in Mobile County. For timberland, they range from zero to \$683,778 in the same counties. The extreme variability is due to the variation in both the enrollment and the average tax savings per acre.

The last column of table 4 shows the lost tax receipts as a percent of the potential tax receipts. Potential receipts are the sum of the losses and the actual tax collections (17). Column 6 shows that the relative losses varied widely too, ranging from zero in Washington County to 27 percent in Geneva County. The weighted average of revenues foregone is 8.80 percent. Interestingly, while the largest tax forfeitures were in SMSA counties, the largest percentage losses of property tax receipts generally occurred in the nonSMSA counties.

### **Impact On Urban Sprawl**

If current-use assessment moderates urban expansion, a substantial part of enrolled land should be near urban centers. To test that hypothesis, participants were asked how far their largest tract was from a city of 20,000 or more people. The



TABLE 4. PROPERTY TAX REVENUES FORGONE, SELECTED ALABAMA COUNTIES, 1982

County	(In dollars)			Property tax receipts (x\$1,000)	Percent revenue forgone
	Estimated revenue forgone				
	Agri.	Timber	Total		
Bullock	12,210	21,560	33,808	368	8.41
Coffee	27,175	8,078	35,253	924	3.68
Colbert <sup>1</sup>	58,335	22,986	81,321	1,472	5.24
Coosa	32	335	367	175	0.21
Dallas	93,270	80,614	176,146	1,245	12.39
Etowah <sup>1</sup>	27,690	13,606	41,296	2,832	1.44
Fayette	1,656	841	2,497	563	0.44
Geneva	176,011	25,754	203,383	542	27.29
Houston <sup>1</sup>	238,464	81,911	320,375	4,535	6.60
Lawrence	109,698	9,143	119,499	572	17.28
Lee	28,724	91,557	125,881	1,772	6.63
Lowndes	27,653	4,391	32,043	434	6.88
Macon	31,854	21,715	54,148	375	12.62
Mobile <sup>1</sup>	780,978	683,778	1,465,036	16,959	7.95
Montgomery <sup>1</sup>	330,853	79,452	410,304	3,242	11.23
Perry	65,275	934	66,209	302	17.98
Pickens	11,220	8,148	19,655	454	4.15
Shelby <sup>1</sup>	288,408	531,641	820,049	3,393	19.46
Washington	0	0	0	1,008	0.00
Winston	4,043	3,834	7,877	432	1.79
Average	115,677	84,514	200,757	2,080	
Wt. average <sup>2</sup>					8.80

<sup>1</sup>Counties designated as SMSA.

<sup>2</sup>Weighted by number of acres enrolled.

distribution of responses is shown below, and it reveals that a large proportion of the respondents was in close proximity to urban centers:

<i>Distance (in miles) of largest tract from a city of 20,000 or more persons based on 741 responses</i>	<i>Percentages of respondents</i>
Within city .....	5.0
1-5 .....	15.4
6-10 .....	17.2
11-20 .....	24.3
21-30 .....	18.6
31-50 .....	16.1
51 or more .....	3.4

Five percent held tracts within the city limits, while 37.7 and 62.0 percent held parcels within 10 and 20 miles of such cities, respectively. This suggests that many people with land close to urban areas are finding it advantageous to apply for current use; however, it does not confirm that current use is discouraging land conversion.

A more interesting issue is how would future land-use plans change if current use was abolished. The data below show how participants responded when asked of their land-use plans:

<i>Future land-use plans</i>	<i>With    Without program    program</i>	
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
Maintain present use .....	85.2	75.9
Commercially develop within 5 years ....	0.5	0.5
Commercially develop after 5 years .....	1.4	2.5
Sell within 5 years .....	7.1	13.8
Sell after 5 years .....	2.4	3.9
Other .....	3.4	3.4

The most striking feature of the results is that even without current-use assessment, 75.9 percent of the respondents intend to maintain their present land use.

If current use is preserving existing land uses (because of tax savings), then abolishing it should cause the greatest land-use

change near urban centers (where tax savings are greatest). That pattern, however, doesn't seem to exist, as table 5 shows. The proportion of landowners influenced by current use, which is estimated by dividing an entry in the first row of table 5 by that entry's corresponding column total, is highest in the 11-20 miles column (18.6 percent), followed by those over 50 miles (16.7 percent) and 1-5 miles (13.9 percent) away. This reinforces the observation that land-use choices are not appreciably influenced by the current-use program.

Generally, the data from this study support the conclusions reached by other investigators—current-use assessment does not preserve existing land uses. While near-urban landowners may be more likely to apply, their land-use decisions are not especially dependent on current-use assessment.

TABLE 5. EFFECT UPON LAND-USE PLANS OF ABOLISHING CURRENT USE AS INFLUENCED BY DISTANCE OF LAND FROM A CITY OF 20,000 OR MORE INHABITANTS

Effect	Effect by distance in miles						
	0	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31-50	50+
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
Change in plans .....	0.5	2.6	1.6	5.8	1.1	1.1	0.5
No change in plans .....	3.7	16.4	12.2	25.4	13.8	12.7	2.6
Total .....	4.2	19.0	13.8	31.2	14.8	13.8	3.2
Percentage of total changing plans .....	11.9	13.7	11.6	18.6	7.4	7.8	15.6

### Characteristics of the Participants

The data from the mail survey indicated that participants in the current-use program were much like Alabama landowners, generally. For example, their distribution by size of holdings was similar to the size distribution of Alabama farms as reported in the 1982 Census of Agriculture, table 6. It was not, in other words, only the large corporate owners of farmland and timberland that benefitted from current use. Over half of

TABLE 6. DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS' LANDHOLDINGS AND ALABAMA FARMS, BY SIZE CLASS

Size class (acres)	Participants' landholdings	Farms <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
1-9 .....	3.2	6.3
10-49 .....	23.4	29.2
50-99 .....	17.8	21.0
100-179 .....	17.0	16.8
180-499 .....	21.2	17.5
500-999 .....	8.4	5.8
1,000-1,999 .....	5.1	2.4
2,000+ .....	3.9	1.1

<sup>1</sup>Source: 1982 Census of Agriculture (18).

the respondents owned less than 180 acres in Alabama, and 26.6 percent had less than 50 acres. Current-use participants did own slightly larger tracts than "farmers." Current-use participants, however, included owners of only timberland, which tends to occur in larger tracts than farms. Such timberland owners were not included as farms in the Census of Agriculture.

Table 7 shows the distribution of participants' landholdings and farm and ranch land in the State, by form of ownership.

TABLE 7. DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS' LANDHOLDINGS OF ALABAMA FARM AND RANCH LAND, BY FORM OF OWNERSHIP

Form of ownership	Participants landholdings	Ala. farm and ranch land
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
Individual .....	35.3	47
Family .....	62.2	51
Husband/wife .....	52.7	45
Partnership .....	5.5	6
Corporation .....	0.5	-
Other .....	3.5	-
Nonfamily .....	2.6	2
Partnership .....	0.4	1
Corporation .....	1.5	-
Other .....	0.7	-

<sup>1</sup>Source: Adrian and Dunkelberger (2).

Over 97 percent of the respondents owned land either individually or as part of a family enterprise. Compared with Alabama’s farm and ranch landowners, current-use participants held a smaller percentage of landholdings individually, but a larger percentage in family ownerships. These results also show that the great majority of participants are noncorporate landowners. Participants were also asked to give their principal occupation, the proportion of their time spent in farm or forest activities, and the proportion of their income derived from these activities. Table 8 shows the distribution of respondents by occupational type and compares it with the occupation of all farmland owners. Almost 11 percent of the respondents were farmers or foresters, 46.7 percent primarily worked off the farm, and 42.6 percent were retired. Compared with all farmland owners in Alabama, a smaller proportion of the participants were farmers or foresters, and a much larger proportion were retired.

TABLE 8. OCCUPATION OF CURRENT-USE PARTICIPANTS AND OCCUPATION OF ALABAMA FARM LANDOWNERS

Occupational type	Participants	Farm landowners <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
Farmer/forester .....	10.7	14.0
Nonfarm .....	46.7	56.1
Retired .....	42.6	25.7
Not reported .....		4.2

<sup>1</sup>Source: Adrian and Dunkelberger (2).

Data on the proportion of work time devoted to and the income derived from agricultural and forest activities are more informative than occupational titles. Table 9 shows that while only 10.7 percent of respondents identified themselves as farmers or foresters, 18.4 percent said they spend 50 percent or more of their work time in agricultural or forest activities.

The proportion of respondents receiving 50 percent or more of their income from agricultural or forest activities exceeded the 10.7 percent who were farmers or foresters. Nevertheless, a majority of respondents (54.8 percent) indicated that they spend less than 10 percent of their work time in agricultural and forest activities. An even larger majority (67.8 percent) derive less than 10 percent of their income from these activities.

TABLE 9. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY CATEGORIES OF WORK TIME SPENT IN AND PERCENT OF INCOME DERIVED FROM, AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST ACTIVITIES

Categories	Percentage of respondents	
	Work time	Income
<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
Less than 10 .....	54.8	67.8
10-19 .....	14.7	10.2
20-49 .....	12.2	8.9
50 and above .....	18.4	13.1

Participants were also asked about the agricultural associations to which they belong. Of the 535 people responding to this question, 47.7 percent were association members. Nearly half (255) identified their associations, and the three most frequent were the Farm Bureau, Cattlemen's Association, and Forestry Association, with respondent memberships of 211, 139, and 36, respectively.

When asked how far their home was from their farm or forest land, half of the participants indicated they lived on the property itself; another 17 percent lived within 5 miles. The full distribution of responses is shown below:

<i>Distance from house to farm or forest land</i>	<i>Percentage of respondents</i>
0 miles .....	50.1
1-5 miles .....	17.0
6-20 miles .....	15.4
21-50 miles .....	8.8
51 + miles .....	8.7

Participants were asked about the size of their present and childhood hometowns. Table 10 shows that 70.3 percent of the respondents had childhood homes in rural areas, perhaps suggesting that participants have an emotional attachment to their land, as opposed to a purely financial interest in the land.

The distribution of respondents by income is presented in table 11. As indicated, most participants had incomes exceeding \$20,000, and 17.3 percent earned more than \$50,000 annually. A substantial number—17.8 percent—of the respon-

TABLE 10. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SIZE OF CHILDHOOD AND PRESENT HOMETOWNS

Size of hometown (No. of people)	Percentage of respondents	
	Childhood	Present
Big city (100,000+) .....	6.1	12.8
Small city (10,000-99,999) .....	9.8	15.2
City or town (less than 10,000) .....	13.8	12.9
Rural area .....	70.3	59.0

dents had incomes of less than \$10,000 per year. This may be due to the large number of respondents who were retired, many of whom may be on fixed incomes. Compared with the distribution of incomes for Alabama’s entire citizenry, and especially the rural population, table 11, participants have substantially higher incomes. To what degree the participants’ income distribution deviates from that of all eligible landowners is not, however, clear.

The mean age of respondents was 58.2 years. Their distribution by age class is given in table 12. Compared with the 1978 data on farm and ranch landowners in the State, program participants appear to be considerably older. This statement is further supported by the observation that, from notes made on return of questionnaires, at least 34 of the nonrespondents have died since 1982.

TABLE 11. DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS, ALL STATE RESIDENTS AND RURAL RESIDENTS, BY INCOME CLASS

Income class (dollars)	Participants	Ala. residents	Rural residents <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
Less than 5,000 .....	8.6	19.1	20.3
5,000-7,499 .....	5.0	9.7	10.4
7,500-9,999 .....	4.2	8.9	9.2
10,000-14,999 .....	11.3	16.2	17.0
15,000-19,999 .....	12.1	13.8	14.6
20,000-24,999 .....	11.0	11.1	11.2
25,000-34,999 .....	16.6	12.7	11.4
35,000-49,999 .....	13.9	5.8	4.2
50,000 or more .....	17.3	2.7	1.7

<sup>1</sup>Source: U.S. Department of Commerce (16).

TABLE 12. DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND ALABAMA FARM AND RANCH LANDOWNERS, BY AGE CLASS

Age	Participants	Farm and ranch landowners <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
Under 30 .....	1.4	0.1
30-39 .....	8.0	18.7
40-49 .....	16.1	14.5
50-59 .....	24.3	30.8
60-69 .....	31.2	12.9
70 and older .....	19.1	19.6
Not reported .....		3.4

<sup>1</sup>Source: Adrian and Dunkelberger (2).

Current-use participants were generally better educated than the general population of Alabama's farm and ranch land owners. Table 13 shows that over a third of the participants had completed a 4-year college degree, while only 5.3 percent of the general population of Alabama's farmland owners had done likewise as of 1978.

Finally, 4.1 percent of the respondents indicated that they were black, table 14. This is considerably smaller than the 12.7 percent of Alabama's farm and ranch landowners who are black.

TABLE 13. DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND ALABAMA'S FARM AND RANCH LANDOWNERS, BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Education	Participants	Farm and ranch landowners <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
Elementary school .....	3.8	26.6
Some high school .....	12.2	28.0
High school .....	27.3	29.2
Some college .....	20.4	6.2
Four-year college degree .....	18.5	5.3 <sup>2</sup>
Graduate degree .....	17.8	---
Not reported .....		4.7

<sup>1</sup>Source: Adrian and Dunkelberger (2).

<sup>2</sup>Only a figure for 16 or more years of education is reported.



TABLE 14. RACE OF PARTICIPANTS AND OF ALABAMA FARM AND RANCH LANDOWNERS

Owners' race <sup>1</sup>	Participants	Farm and ranch land
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>
White .....	95.8	84.2
Black .....	4.1	12.7
Other .....	0.1	3.1
Not reported .....		4.2

<sup>1</sup>Source: Adrian and Dunkelberger (2).

## DISCUSSION

Rural property has become valuable. Two factors seem most responsible for rising rural land values: improved productivity in agriculture and forestry, and more demand for rural land in nonfarming uses. Whatever the causes, one major result has been higher property taxes. As land values increased, taxes increased, and rural landowners petitioned their legislatures for relief. One popular way of providing relief has been current-use assessment, and, like many other states, Alabama adopted that approach.

A current-use assessment of land value is based on the prospective income from the land in its current use. If a tract of land yields \$50 of net income per acre per year in agriculture, then the current-use assessment is the present value of that prospective income stream. While the productivity of agriculture affects the use-value assessment, the demand for non-farming uses does not. Even if the tract is adjacent to a major city and developers are willing to pay \$20,000 per acre, the current-use assessment would be the present value of the prospective agricultural incomes.

Current-use programs are promoted to preserve agricultural and timber land near developing urban areas and to give farmers and timber growers a tax break. This is based on two ideas: (1) if taxes on land used for agriculture and timber growing are related to the income from those uses (instead of the market value), then farmers will be able to continue producing food products near cities, and the rapid rate of urban sprawl

will slow; and (2) farmers and timber growers simply cannot afford the high taxes associated with rapidly rising land values.

When enacted in Alabama in 1982, current-use assessment was controversial. Because of the controversy, this study was undertaken to provide public officials and citizens with some concrete information about the effects of current use.

The effects of use-value assessment depend first on the extent of enrollment in the program—it is a voluntary program which requires application. Second, the effects depend on differences in assessment and tax levels between current-use and fair-market-value assessment. Third, since much of the controversy focused on who would benefit from current use, it was important to learn some of the characteristics of the enrolled landowners. Was it a subsidy for big corporate landowners, or was it likely to benefit small landowners as well? In addition, some questions were included in the survey to learn if landowners' land-use decisions depended greatly on current use. While the law does not say its purpose is to preserve farming and timber growing near cities, that was part of the controversy surrounding its adoption.

Landowner enrollment in current use varied greatly. Measured by the proportion of eligible land enrolled, participation rates among the sampled counties ranged from 0 to 97 percent. When SMSA counties were compared with nonSMSA counties, there was a trend toward higher rates of participation among the SMSA counties. But enrollment variability within SMSA and nonSMSA counties was only slightly less than that for all 20 counties. Apparently, the proximity to urban centers and their influence on land values was not the primary determinant of the level of program participation.

One would expect reduced taxes to induce enrollment, and therefore that the rates of participation would be highest in counties with the largest tax reductions. Surprisingly, the data suggest this is true in only a very general sense. Mobile County with by far the largest average tax reduction for enrolled property of \$6.22 per acre ranked only eighth in 20 sampled counties in the proportion of eligible land enrolled in the program. Mobile County was not alone in this respect, indicating that some other factor or factors also played important roles in determining the rates of participation. The telephone survey of county tax assessors showed that other influential factors have been the degree to which county tax assessors and others

promoted the program, consideration of the rollback provisions, and the county tax assessor's interpretation of which land uses are eligible for current-use assessment. Finally, with a weighted average enrollment level of 34 percent, almost two-thirds of the eligible land in the sampled counties is still being taxed on the basis of fair-market-value assessment.

The estimated tax savings to landowners who enrolled was substantial. Enrolled crop, pasture, and forest land received tax savings of 54.4, 41.2, and 44.9 percent, respectively, and only 61.5 and 24.5 percent of eligible agricultural and forest land are estimated to have been enrolled. It is tempting to extend those estimates to the entire State, arguing that if all eligible land were enrolled, the per acre tax savings for all would be the same. That, however, is probably an erroneous conclusion. Only landowners already enrolled in current use were in the sample, which means that only landowners who found it to their advantage actually enrolled. Presumably many landowners found no or little savings with current use, or for another reason chose not to enroll. So extending the tax savings of landowners in the sample to the entire State would likely overestimate the tax savings the average rural landowner in Alabama would experience. Despite that limitation, the data still suggest that many additional landowners would benefit from enrolling in the program. While the landowners save taxes, the county governments lose revenue (assuming tax rates were held constant in the absence of current use). Current-use assessment did have an impact on potential property tax revenues in several counties. In the absence of the current-use assessment, the average county would have received an additional \$200,757 in property taxes. This represents a foregone increase in county revenues of 8.80 percent for 1982. Using the average loss, multiplying by the 67 counties in Alabama gives an estimated \$13.5 million loss for the entire State. But for the same reason mentioned above, that estimate is surely high, though it is impossible to tell by how much.

The data also indicate current use has little impact on land-use decisions, hence little impact on urban sprawl. When asked about their future plans, only 9.3 percent said they would change plans for the use of the land if the program were abolished. Of those respondents who would change their land use if current-use assessment were abolished, the wide locational distribution of their land does not suggest that urban development would accelerate. It appears then that the magni-

tude of the tax savings provided by current-use assessment is not large enough to appreciably alter the land use choices of participants. These general conclusions are consistent with the literature on the effects of current use in other states, where most researchers have concluded that current use is not an effective way of influencing land-use decisions.

Participants in the current-use assessment program are not typically large corporate landowners. While the size of participants' landholdings is generally larger than farms in the State, over half of the participants owned less than 180 acres, with only 9 percent having more than 1,000 acres. Thirty-five percent own their land individually, while 62 percent have some form of family ownership of the land. Only 2.6 percent own land as a nonfamily partnership, corporation, or trust.

The participants are not, however, primarily farmers. Only 10.7 percent of respondents identified themselves as farmers or foresters, only 18.4 percent indicated that at least half of their work time is spent in agricultural and forest activities, and only 13.1 percent stated that at least half of their income is derived from these activities. For the majority of respondents, these activities accounted for less than 10 percent of their work time and income. Many participants (47.7 percent), however, do belong to professional and commodity associations.

Though most participants are not financially dependent upon their landholdings, they do have historical and physical attachments to their land. Fully 70 percent of the respondents were raised in rural areas, while 59 percent continue to live in these areas. Half of the participants live on their farm and forest land, with an additional 17 percent living within 5 miles of it.

Participants tend to have higher incomes than Alabama's general and rural populations, and many are likely retired. Participants appear to be more highly educated and older than the general population of Alabama's farm and ranch land owners. Over a third of respondents had completed a 4-year college degree, while over half were 60 years or older. Finally, a relatively small percentage of blacks have enrolled in current use.

Has current use been successful? The question reaches beyond the data—even beyond most conceivable data. It is a rhetorical question, one on which data from this study can be used to argue each side, and one which will be answered in the

State's political processes. But the debate over current use can be more focused now that more is known about the program.

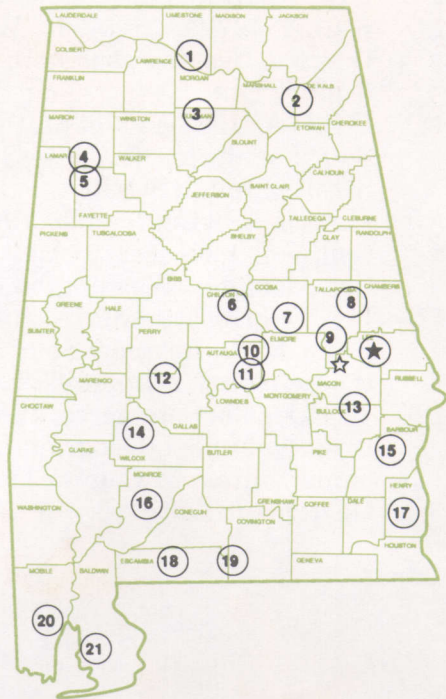
**LITERATURE CITED**

- (1) Alabama Code. 1975. Supplements 1985.
- (2) ADRIAN, J. L. and J. E. DUNKELBURGER. 1983. Private Landownership in Alabama. Ala. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bull. 554.
- (3) ATKINSON, G. W. 1977. The Effectiveness of Differential Assessment of Agricultural and Open Space Land. Amer. Jour. of Economics and Sociology 36(2):197-204.
- (4) BARRON, J. C. and J. W. THOMSON. 1973. Impacts of Open Space Taxation in Washington. Wash. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bull. 772.
- (5) COUGHLIN, R. E., D. BERRY, and T. PLAUT. 1978. Differential Assessment of Real Property as an Incentive to Open Space Preservation and Farmland Retention. National Tax Jour. 31(2):165-179.
- (6) DILMAN, D. A. 1978. Mail and Telephone Surveys: The Total Design Method. John Wiley. New York.
- (7) GLOUDEMANS, R. J. 1974. Use-Value Farmland Assessments: Theory, Practice, and Impact. Inter. Assoc. of Assessing Officers.
- (8) HADY, T. F. and A. G. SIBOLD. 1974. State Programs for the Differential Assessment of Farm and Open-Space Land. U.S. Dept. Agr., Econ. Res. Serv., Agr. Econ. Rep. 256.
- (9) HARGREAVES, L. A. 1977. Trends in Property Taxes. Forest Farmer 26(5):47-50.
- (10) HICKMAN, C. A. 1982. Property Tax Impacts of Current-Use Assessment of Forest and Other Rural Land in Tennessee. Southern Forest Exp. Sta. Res. Paper SO-180.
- (11) HICKMAN, C. A. 1982. "Use-Value Assessment of Forest Land in the South." Proceedings Southern Forest Economics Workshop. How to Cope with Hard Times. Charleston, S.C. April 1-2, 1982. Ed. by J. E. Granskog and H. L. Haney, Jr. p. 115-135.
- (12) HICKMAN, C. A. and P. D. GAYER. 1983. Use Valuation of Louisiana's Rural Lands: Short-Run Fiscal Impacts. Sou. Exp. Sta. Res. Paper SO-197.
- (13) KOCH, A. R., H. H. MORRILL and A. HAUSAMAUN. 1972. Implementation and Early Effects of the New Jersey Farmland Assessment Act. Rutgers University

- Exp. Sta. Bull. 830.
- (14) KRIETEMEYER, STEVEN W. 1986. Initial Impact of Current-Use Assessment in Alabama. Master's Thesis, Auburn Univ.
  - (15) U.S.D.A. 1983. Forest Statistics for Alabama Counties. Sou. For. Exp. Sta. New Orleans, La. Resource Bull. SO-91 through SO-96.
  - (16) U.S. Dept. of Commerce. 1983. 1980 Census of Population, Vol. 1, General Social and Economic Characteristics-Alabama. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Print. Off.
  - (17) U.S. Dept. of Commerce. 1983. Unpublished data from Form RS-9, Revenue Sharing. Govt. Div., U.S. Bur. of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233.
  - (18) U.S. Dept. of Commerce. 1984. 1982 Census of Agriculture. Volume 1 Geographic Area Series. Part 1 Alabama State and County Data. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Print. Off.

## Alabama's Agricultural Experiment Station System AUBURN UNIVERSITY

With an agricultural research unit in every major soil area, Auburn University serves the needs of field crop, livestock, forestry, and horticultural producers in each region in Alabama. Every citizen of the State has a stake in this research program, since any advantage from new and more economical ways of producing and handling farm products directly benefits the consuming public.



### Research Unit Identification

- ★ Main Agricultural Experiment Station, Auburn.
- ☆ E. V. Smith Research Center, Shorter.

1. Tennessee Valley Substation, Belle Mina.
2. Sand Mountain Substation, Crossville.
3. North Alabama Horticulture Substation, Cullman.
4. Upper Coastal Plain Substation, Winfield.
5. Forestry Unit, Fayette County.
6. Chilton Area Horticulture Substation, Clanton.
7. Forestry Unit, Coosa County.
8. Piedmont Substation, Camp Hill.
9. Plant Breeding Unit, Tallassee.
10. Forestry Unit, Autauga County.
11. Prattville Experiment Field, Prattville.
12. Black Belt Substation, Marion Junction.
13. The Turnipseed-Ikenberry Place, Union Springs.
14. Lower Coastal Plain Substation, Camden.
15. Forestry Unit, Barbour County.
16. Monroeville Experiment Field, Monroeville.
17. Wiregrass Substation, Headland.
18. Brewton Experiment Field, Brewton.
19. Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center, Covington and Escambia counties.
20. Ornamental Horticulture Substation, Spring Hill
21. Gulf Coast Substation, Fairhope.