

OWNERS OF AGRICULTURAL, FOREST LANDS ASKED TO VERIFY LAND USE,
PRODUCTION INFORMATION

(HELENA) - This month, the Montana Department of Revenue will begin mailing preliminary 2009 property reappraisal materials to more than 25,000 owners of agricultural and forest land in the state. The department is asking landowners to review preliminary maps showing land use and production data, and to contact their local revenue office to discuss the accuracy of that information.

The Montana Constitution charges the Department of Revenue to complete reappraisal of all property in the state every sixth year. In 2005, the Montana Legislature directed the department to reclassify agricultural and forest land.

"We are inviting landowners to help us ensure the accuracy of the reappraisal information," said Dan Bucks, Director of the Montana Department of Revenue. "Our local staff is trained and stands ready to work with landowners in this discussion process. The phone number for the local office will be included in the letter each landowner will receive."

Providing agricultural and forest landowners with such an early preview of the reappraisal information is unprecedented. This opportunity to preview the information is in addition to the informal review process and appeal rights still available to all agricultural and forest landowners after they receive their assessment notices in June of 2009.

The mailing will contain photomaps that represent the department's understanding of land use and estimated yields based on average management practices. The department will use this information to determine the new reappraisal values that will be used for property tax purposes in 2009.

"We've tried to make this land reclassification as clear and accurate as possible for Montana's farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners," said Bucks. "This is an opportunity for them to be involved in the process, and we hope they take advantage of it."

Many resources are utilized to obtain the best, most accurate information available during reappraisal, including interviews and participation from landowners. Landowners who believe the determination of classification or productivity is not accurate are encouraged to call or visit their local Department of Revenue appraisal office as soon as possible after receiving their photomaps to explain any concerns. The department will research each landowner's concerns and provide notification of the results.

Mailings are anticipated to begin December 11 and continue for about 12 weeks. Information will be packaged based on the mailing address provided for the property. Landowners who have multiple mailing addresses may receive more than one mailing of materials.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
December 10, 2008

CONTACT:
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PROPOSED MAILING SCHEDULE

December 11-12, 2008

Cascade, Golden Valley, Lincoln, Mineral, Phillips and Silver Bow Counties

Week of December 15, 2008

Dawson, Fergus, Flathead, Gallatin, Granite and Wheatland Counties

Week of December 22, 2008

Beaverhead, Carter and Chouteau Counties

Week of December 29, 2008

Lake, Lewis & Clark, and Roosevelt Counties

Week of January 5, 2009

Blaine, Richland, Sanders, Sweet Grass, Toole and Valley Counties

Week of January 12, 2009

Fallon, Madison, Pondera, Ravalli and Sheridan Counties

Week of January 19, 2009

Daniels, Deer Lodge, Powell, Teton and Treasure Counties

Week of January 26, 2009

Broadwater, Judith Basin, McCone, Missoula and Stillwater Counties

Week of February 2, 2009

Glacier, Meagher, Prairie and Rosebud Counties

Week of February 9, 2009

Big Horn, Garfield, Liberty, Musselshell and Park Counties

Week of February 16, 2009

Carbon, Custer, Hill, Jefferson, Petroleum and Wibaux Counties

Week of February 23, 2009

Powder River and Yellowstone Counties