

Hi All,

I really appreciate George’s updates on the mil and population rate for Rumford. I think this really helps illustrate what I hope will be a key take away. I reworked that chart below.

The amounts are calculated using the lower new valuation number for the future tax bills (.0225) rather than 2020 mil rate (.0305) but retained the last Tree Growth State assessed land value based on the 2020 state valuation and the current \$20k-\$40k average taxable value for those undeveloped lands at the “highest and best use”. The estimated average per residence burden is using the census bureau and Maine Housing reported average Maine household size (2.3) multiplied by the per resident share.

The amount of land in Tree Growth remains the same (25,907 acres) and the model assumes the state will continue to value the land in mixed wood at the same value. Unfortunately, that wouldn’t be the case as Tree Growth calculations are based on the county-wide valuation and the portion of the lost value’s impact on school funding for the community. Thus, a reduction in value of land in any community would result in lower county valuation and Tree Growth “Penalties” (or state partial value reimbursement) will decline proportionally. These lost value and tax shift numbers are very optimistic as a result.

*(.0225 mils and 5,780 for resident population, per acre assessment value based on \$20k-\$40k in current schedule)*

Full Per Acre Value	Full Value Ttl	TG Reduced Value	Lost Value	Per Resident Burden	Estimated Avg Residence Burden
\$ 450	\$ 11,658,150	\$ 262,308	\$ 46,351.38	\$ 8.02	\$ 18.44
\$ 900	\$ 23,316,300	\$ 524,617	\$ 308,659.75	\$ 53.40	\$ 122.82

When George and I were chatting, I provided him some information on revised numbers using a mil rate of .0215 because I heard him incorrectly. I am including that chart too. All the other numbers are the same though.

*(.0215 mils and 5,780 for resident population, per acre assessment value based on \$20k-\$40k in current schedule)*

Full Per Acre Value	Full Value Ttl	TG Reduced Value	Lost Value	Per Resident Burden	Estimated Avg Residence Burden
\$ 430	\$ 11,140,010	\$ 250,650	\$ 34,693.22	\$ 6.00	\$ 13.81
\$ 860	\$ 22,280,020	\$ 501,300	\$ 285,343.45	\$ 49.37	\$ 113.54

**Key points:**

- Even when a program is reimbursed by the state, there is a burden shift to only the adjacent taxpayers for a state-wide goal or benefit.
- The Open Space and Farmland programs are not reimbursed to the community.
- Solar projects along the midcoast are buying undeveloped land at market rate and paying property tax under the “highest and best use” valuation.

- Both the tax benefit and the tax penalty are constitutionally protected and would require a referendum vote to change.
- More technical support to advance sound projects is needed for most communities to make geographically appropriate decisions.
- Municipal officials need clear and consistent and responsive contact information for damage and repairs that interface with the public way including new transmission lines.
- It would be helpful to have policies that would help weed through the vast numbers of solar developers to have clear best practices and protections for both landowners, habitat and communities.

[Microsoft Word - Bulletin 20 \(Farmland\).doc \(maine.gov\)](#)