

**REVENUE AND TAXATION CODE - RTC**  
**DIVISION 1. PROPERTY TAXATION [50 - 5911]**

*( Division 1 enacted by Stats. 1939, Ch. 154. )*

**PART 2. ASSESSMENT [201 - 1367]**

*( Part 2 enacted by Stats. 1939, Ch. 154. )*

**CHAPTER 3. Assessment Generally [401 - 674]**

*( Chapter 3 enacted by Stats. 1939, Ch. 154. )*

**ARTICLE 1.5. Valuation of Open-Space Land Subject to an Enforceable Restriction [421 - 430.5]**

*( Article 1.5 added by Stats. 1967, Ch. 1711. )*

**421.**

For the purposes of this article:

(a) "Agricultural preserve" means an agricultural preserve created pursuant to the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act) (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 51200) of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code).

(b) "Contract" means a contract executed pursuant to the California Land Conservation Act.

(c) "Agreement" means an agreement executed pursuant to the California Land Conservation Act prior to the 61st day following the final adjournment of the 1969 Regular Session of the Legislature and that, taken as a whole, provides restrictions, terms and conditions that are substantially similar or more restrictive than those required by statute for a contract.

(d) "Scenic restriction" means any interest or right in real property acquired by a city or county pursuant to Chapter 12 (commencing with Section 6950) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, where the deed or other instrument granting such right or interest imposes restrictions that, through limitation of their future use, will effectively preserve for public use and enjoyment, the character of open spaces and areas as defined in Section 6954 of the Government Code.

A scenic restriction shall be for an initial term of 10 years or more, and shall provide for either of the following:

(1) A method whereby the term may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties.

(2) That the initial term shall be subject to annual automatic one-year extensions as provided for contracts in Sections 51244, 51244.5, and 51246 of the Government Code, unless notice of nonrenewal is given as provided in Section 51245 of the Government Code.

A scenic restriction may not be terminated prior to the expiration of the initial term, and any extension thereof, except as provided for cancellation of contracts in Sections 51281, 51282, 51283 and 51283.3 of the Government Code, and subject to the provisions therein for payment of the cancellation fee.

(e) "Open-space easement" means an open-space easement granted to a county or city pursuant to Chapter 6.5 (commencing with Section 51050) of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code if the easement is acquired prior to January 1, 1975, or an open-space easement granted to a county, city, or nonprofit organization pursuant to Chapter 6.6 (commencing with Section 51070) of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code if the easement is acquired after January 1, 1975, or an open-space easement granted to a regional park district, regional park and open-space district, or regional open-space district under Article 3 (commencing with Section 5500) of Chapter 3 of Division 5 of the Public Resources Code.

(f) "Wildlife habitat contract" means any contract or amended contract or covenant involving, except as provided in Section 423.8, 150 acres or more of land entered into by a landowner with any agency or political subdivision of the federal or state government limiting the use of lands for a period of 10 or more years by the landowner to habitat for native or migratory wildlife and native pasture. These lands shall, by contract, be eligible to receive water for waterfowl or waterfowl management purposes from the federal government.

(g) "Open-space land" means any of the following:

- (1) Land within an agricultural preserve and subject to a contract or an agreement.
- (2) Land subject to a scenic restriction.
- (3) Land subject to an open-space easement.
- (4) Land that has been restricted by a political subdivision or an entity of the state or federal government, acting within the scope of its regulatory or other legal authority, for the benefit of wildlife, endangered species, or their habitats.

(h) "Typical rotation period" means a period of years during which different crops are grown as part of a plant cultural program. Typical rotation period does not mean the rotation period of timber.

(i) "Wildlife" means waterfowl of every kind and any other undomesticated mammal, fish, or bird, or any reptile, amphibian, insect, or plant.

(j) "Endangered species" means any species or subcategory thereof, as defined in the California Endangered Species Act (Chapter 1.5 (commencing with Section 2050) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code) or the federal Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq.), that has been classified and protected as an endangered, threatened, rare, or candidate species by any entity of the state or federal government.

*(Amended by Stats. 1996, Ch. 997, Sec. 1. Effective September 27, 1996. Applicable, by Sec. 5 of Ch. 997, commencing with property taxes levied for the first lien date after September 27, 1996.)*

#### **421.5.**

For purposes of this article, the following terms have the following meaning:

(a) "Agricultural conservation easement" shall have the same meaning as defined in Section 10211 of the Public Resources Code.

(b) "Open-space land" includes land subject to an agricultural conservation easement.

*(Amended by Stats. 2002, Ch. 616, Sec. 37. Effective January 1, 2003.)*

#### **422.**

For the purposes of this article and within the meaning of Section 8 of Article XIII of the Constitution, open-space land is "enforceably restricted" if it is subject to any of the following:

(a) A contract;

(b) An agreement;

(c) A scenic restriction entered into prior to January 1, 1975;

(d) An open-space easement; or

(e) A wildlife habitat contract.

For the purposes of this article no restriction upon the use of land other than those enumerated in this section shall be considered to be an enforceable restriction.

*(Amended by Stats. 1975, Ch. 224.)*

#### 422.5.

For the purposes of this article, open-space land is “enforceably restricted” within the meaning of Section 8 of Article XIII of the California Constitution if it is subject to an agricultural conservation easement.

*(Added by Stats. 1995, Ch. 931, Sec. 3. Effective January 1, 1996.)*

#### 422.7.

(a) For purposes of this section, the term “open-space land” includes land subject to contract for an urban agricultural incentive zone, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 51040.3 of the Government Code. For purposes of this section, open-space land is enforceably restricted within the meaning of Section 8 of Article XIII of the California Constitution if it is subject to an urban agriculture incentive zone contract.

(b) (1) Open-space land subject to contract for an urban agricultural incentive zone pursuant to Section 52010.3 shall be valued for assessment at the rate based on the average per-acre value of irrigated cropland in California, adjusted proportionally to reflect the acreage of the property under contract, as most recently published by the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

(2) Notwithstanding the published rate, the valuation resulting from the section shall not exceed the lesser of either the valuation that would have resulted by a calculation under Section 110, or the valuation that would have resulted by a valuation under Section 110.1, as though the property was not subject to an enforceable restriction in the base year.

(c) The State Board of Equalization shall post the per-acre land value as published by the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the United States Department of Agriculture on its Internet Web site within 30 days of publication, and shall provide the rate to county assessors no later than January 1 of each assessment year.

*(Added by Stats. 2013, Ch. 406, Sec. 3. Effective January 1, 2014.)*

**423.**

Except as provided in Sections 423.7 and 423.8, when valuing enforceably restricted open-space land, other than land used for the production of timber for commercial purposes, the county assessor shall not consider sales data on lands, whether or not enforceably restricted, but shall value these lands by the capitalization of income method in the following manner:

(a) The annual income to be capitalized shall be determined as follows:

(1) Where sufficient rental information is available the income shall be the fair rent which can be imputed to the land being valued based upon rent actually received for the land by the owner and upon typical rentals received in the area for similar land in similar use, where the owner pays the property tax. Any cash rent or its equivalent considered in determining the fair rent of the land shall be the amount for which comparable lands have been rented, determined by average rents paid to owners as evidenced by typical land leases in the area, giving recognition to the terms and conditions of the leases and the uses permitted within the leases and within the enforceable restrictions imposed.

(2) Where sufficient rental information is not available, the income shall be that which the land being valued reasonably can be expected to yield under prudent management and subject to applicable provisions under which the land is enforceably restricted. There shall be a rebuttable presumption that "prudent management" does not include use of the land for a recreational use, as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 51201 of the Government Code, unless the land is actually devoted to that use.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provision herein, if the parties to an instrument which enforceably restricts the land stipulate therein an amount which constitutes the minimum annual income per acre to be capitalized, then the income to be capitalized shall not be less than the amount so stipulated.

For the purposes of this section, income shall be determined in accordance with rules and regulations issued by the board and with this section and shall be the difference between revenue and expenditures. Revenue shall be the amount of money or money's worth, including any cash rent or its equivalent, which the land can be expected to yield to an owner-operator

annually on the average from any use of the land permitted under the terms by which the land is enforceably restricted, including, but not limited to, that from the production of salt and from typical crops grown in the area during a typical rotation period, as evidenced by historic cropping patterns and agricultural commodities grown. When the land is planted to fruit-bearing or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or perennial plants, the revenue shall not be less than the land would be expected to yield to an owner-operator from other typical crops grown in the area during a typical rotation period, as evidenced by historic cropping patterns and agricultural commodities grown. Proceeds from the sale of the land being valued shall not be included in the revenue from the land.

Expenditures shall be any outlay or average annual allocation of money or money's worth that has been charged against the revenue received during the period used in computing that revenue. Those expenditures to be charged against revenue shall be only those that are ordinary and necessary in the production and maintenance of the revenue for that period. Expenditures shall not include depletion charges, debt retirement, interest on funds invested in the land, interest on funds invested in trees and vines valued as land as provided by Section 429, property taxes, corporation income taxes, or corporation franchise taxes based on income. When the income used is from operating the land being valued or from operating comparable land, amounts shall be excluded from the income to provide a fair return on capital investment in operating assets other than the land, to amortize depreciable property, and to fairly compensate the owner-operator for his operating and managing services.

(b) The capitalization rate to be used in valuing land pursuant to this article shall not be derived from sales data and shall be the sum of the following components:

(1) An interest component, to be determined by the board and announced no later than October 1 of the year preceding the assessment year, which is the arithmetic mean, rounded to the nearest  $\frac{1}{4}$  percent, of the yield rate for long-term United States government bonds, as most recently published by the Federal Reserve Board as of September 1, and the corresponding yield rates for those bonds, as most recently published by the Federal Reserve Board as of each September 1 immediately prior to each of the four immediately preceding assessment years.

(2) A risk component that shall be a percentage determined on the basis of the location and characteristics of the land, the crops to be grown thereon and the provisions of any lease or rental agreement to which the land is subject.

(3) A component for property taxes that shall be a percentage equal to the estimated total tax rate applicable to the land for the assessment year times the assessment ratio. The estimated total tax rate shall be the cumulative rates used to compute the state's reimbursement of local governments for revenues lost on account of homeowners' property tax exemptions in the tax rate area in which the enforceably restricted land is situated.

(4) A component for amortization of any investment in perennials over their estimated economic life when the total income from land and perennials other than timber exceeds the yield from other typical crops grown in the area.

(c) The value of the land shall be the quotient for the income determined as provided in subdivision (a) divided by the capitalization rate determined as provided in subdivision (b).

(d) Unless a party to an instrument which creates an enforceable restriction expressly prohibits such a valuation, the valuation resulting from the capitalization of income method described in this section shall not exceed the lesser of either the valuation that would have resulted by calculation under Section 110, or the valuation that would have resulted by calculation under Section 110.1, as though the property was not subject to an enforceable restriction in the base year.

In determining the 1975 base year value under Article XIII A of the California Constitution for any parcel for comparison, the county may charge a contractholder a fee limited to the reasonable costs of the determination not to exceed twenty dollars (\$20) per parcel.

(e) If the parties to an instrument that creates an enforceable restriction expressly so provide therein, the assessor shall assess those improvements that contribute to the income of land in the manner provided herein. As used in this subdivision "improvements which contribute to the income of the land" shall include, but are not limited to, wells, pumps, pipelines, fences, and structures which are necessary or convenient to the use of the land within the enforceable restrictions imposed.

*(Amended by Stats. 2003, Ch. 471, Sec. 13. Effective January 1, 2004.)*

### 423.3.

Any city or county may allow land subject to an enforceable restriction under the Williamson Act or a migratory waterfowl habitat contract to be assessed in accordance with one or more of the following:

(a) Land specified in subdivision (a) of Section 16142 of the Government Code shall be assessed at the value determined as provided in Section 423, but not to exceed a uniformly applied percentage of its base year value pursuant to Section 110.1, adjusted to reflect the percentage change in the cost of living not to exceed 2 percent per year. In no event shall that percentage be less than 70 percent.

(b) Prime commercial rangeland shall be assessed at the value determined as provided in Section 423, but not to exceed a uniformly applied percentage of its base year value pursuant to Section 110.1, adjusted to reflect the percentage change in the cost of living not to exceed 2 percent per year. In no event shall that percentage be less than 80 percent.

For purposes of this subdivision, “prime commercial rangeland” means rangeland which meets all of the following physical-chemical parameters:

- (1) Soil depth of 12 inches or more.
- (2) Soil texture of fine sandy loam to clay.
- (3) Soil permeability of rapid to slow.
- (4) Soil with at least 2.5 inches of available water holding capacity in profile.
- (5) A slope of less than 30 percent.
- (6) A climate with 80 or more frost-free days per year.
- (7) Ten inches or more average annual precipitation.
- (8) When managed at potential, the land generally requires less than 17 acres to support one animal unit per year.

Property owners of land specified in this subdivision, shall demonstrate that their land falls within the above definition when requested by the city or county.

(c) Land specified in subdivision (b) of Section 16142 of the Government Code shall be assessed at the value determined as provided in Section 423, but not to exceed a uniformly applied percentage of its base year value pursuant to Section 110.1, adjusted to reflect the percentage change in the cost of living not to exceed 2 percent per year. In no event shall that percentage be less than 90 percent.

(d) Waterfowl habitat shall be assessed at the value determined as provided in Section 423.7 but not to exceed a uniformly applied percentage of its base year value pursuant to Section 110.1, adjusted to reflect the percentage change in the cost of living not to exceed 2 percent per year. In no event shall that percentage be less than 90 percent.

*(Amended by Stats. 1998, Ch. 689, Sec. 16. Effective January 1, 1999.)*

#### **423.4.**

Land subject to a farmland security zone contract specified in Section 51296.1 of the Government Code shall be valued for assessment purposes at 65 percent of the value under Section 423 or 65 percent of the value under Section 110.1, whichever is lower.

*(Amended by Stats. 2002, Ch. 616, Sec. 38. Effective January 1, 2003.)*

#### **423.5.**

When valuing open-space land which is enforceably restricted and used for the production of timber for commercial purposes, the county assessor shall not consider sales data on lands, whether or not enforceably restricted, but shall determine the value of such timberland to be the present worth of the income which the future harvest of timber crops from the land and the income from other allowed compatible uses can reasonably be expected to yield under prudent management. The value of timberland pursuant to this section shall be determined in accordance with rules and regulations issued by the board. In determining the value of timberland pursuant to this section, the board and the county assessor shall use the capitalization rate derived pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 423. The ratio prescribed in Section 401 shall be applied to the value of the land determined in accordance with this section to obtain its assessed value.

For the purposes of this section, the income of each acre of land shall be presumed to be no less than two dollars (\$2), and the present worth of this income shall not be reduced by the value of any exempt timber on the land.

There shall be a rebuttable presumption that “prudent management” does not include use of the land for recreational use, as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 51201 of the Government Code, unless the land is actually devoted to such use.

*(Amended by Stats. 1984, Ch. 678, Sec. 21.)*

#### 423.7.

(a) When valuing open-space land subject to a wildlife habitat contract, as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 421, the board, for purposes of surveys required by Section 15640 of the Government Code, and all assessors shall value that land by using the average current per-acre value based on recent sales including the sale of an undivided interest therein, of lands subject to a wildlife habitat contract within the same county. Whenever ownership of open-space land is held by a corporation and the principal underlying asset of that corporation is represented by those lands, the price received for each bona fide sale of shares of stock in those corporations or certificates of membership in nonprofit corporations shall be treated as a sale of open-space land by the assessor in determining average value for open-space lands within the meaning of this section.

(b) In the valuation of open-space land subject to a wildlife habitat contract as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 421, irrespective of the number of parcels represented by a single ownership, the assessor shall use sales of less than 150 acres in determining the average value of those lands only if the sale is of an undivided interest of land subject to a wildlife habitat contract as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 421. The assessor shall not use any other sale of less than 150 acres of land.

(c) In the event of sales of corporate stock or membership, as referred to in subdivision (a), the assessor shall determine the average per-acre sales price and multiply such sales price by the number of acres held under the single ownership from which the land was sold, in order to determine the current total value of the single ownership.

(d) The assessor shall then determine the average current per-acre value of that land subject to a wildlife habitat contract, as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 421, by adding the current value of all those lands including corporate sales as set forth in subdivision (c), of which there

has been a recent sale, and then dividing the total current value by the total number of acres of all that land of which there has been a recent sale.

(e) Whenever less than 10 years remain to the expiration of a wildlife habitat contract, the value of land determined under subdivision (a) shall be modified pursuant to this subdivision. If the full cash value of that land as determined under Section 110.1 is greater than the value determined under subdivision (a) of this section, a pro rata share of the amount of that difference shall be added in annual equal installments to the value determined pursuant to subdivision (a) over the remaining term of the wildlife habitat contract.

(f) Owners of open-space land subject to a wildlife habitat contract which has been used exclusively for habitat by native or migratory wildlife, recreation, and native pasture shall report the sale of that land, or an interest therein, to the county assessor within 30 days of the sale.

(g) In the event that a wildlife habitat contract is canceled upon the application of an owner of the land covered by the contract, a penalty equal to 6 percent of the full cash value of the land as determined under Section 110.1 on the lien date next following cancellation shall be imposed. The penalty shall become delinquent on the December 10 next following that lien date and shall be treated in all respects as a delinquent penalty imposed under Section 2617 or 2704. This subdivision shall not apply when a wildlife habitat contract is canceled without the consent of an owner of the land affected.

(h) The provisions of Section 426 shall not apply to any lands valued for assessment purposes pursuant to the provisions of this section.

(i) The assessor shall not value any land under a single ownership under this section unless the owners of that land have provided the assessor with a schedule of sales of that land that have occurred during the previous four years.

(j) If there are no prior sales within the county of open-space land subject to a wildlife contract and used exclusively for habitat by native or migratory wildlife, recreation, and native pasture, the assessor shall value the land pursuant to Section 110.1.

(k) Unless a party to an instrument which creates an enforceable restriction expressly prohibits that valuation, the valuation resulting from the method described in this section shall not exceed the valuation that would have resulted by calculation under Section 110.1, as though the property was not subject to an enforceable restriction in the base year.

*(Amended by Stats. 1983, Ch. 1281, Sec. 16. Effective September 30, 1983.)*

**423.8.**

(a) Notwithstanding the acreage requirement specified in subdivision (f) of Section 421, both of the following apply with respect to enrollment in a wildlife habitat contract:

(1) Any open-space land that has been restricted as wildlife or endangered species habitat by a political subdivision of the state or entity of state government shall, upon the request of the owner of that land, be enrolled in a wildlife habitat contract with the political subdivision of the state or entity of state government that has so restricted the subject open-space land.

(2) Any open-space land that has been restricted as wildlife or endangered species habitat by an agency of the federal government shall, upon the request of the landowner, be enrolled in a wildlife habitat contract with the city or county having jurisdiction over the restricted open-space land.

For any open-space land eligible for valuation under Section 422.5, 423, 423.3, 423.5, 426, or 435, that has also been enrolled in a wildlife habitat contract pursuant to this section, the controlling value of the land shall, except as otherwise provided in the following sentence, be the lower of the values determined for that land pursuant to those sections or Section 402.1. Other lands enrolled in a wildlife habitat contract pursuant to this section shall be assessed at the value determined as provided in Section 402.1.

(b) In no event shall this section or Section 421 be construed to authorize a political subdivision or any entity of the state or federal government to restrict the otherwise lawful use of property by designating all or part of that property as wildlife habitat or endangered species habitat without the consent of the owner of that property.

(c) It is the intent of the Legislature in adding this section to establish a nonexclusive alternative method of recognizing, for purposes of property taxation, the existence of certain governmental restrictions on the use of property. Neither this section nor Section 402.1 shall be construed or applied to require the existence of a wildlife habitat contract, as described in this section, as a necessary condition for recognizing the effect upon the taxable value of property of any enforceable restriction that is recognized under Section 422, 422.5, or 402.1 and is

legally established by statute, regulation, or any action or classification by a governmental entity, for the benefit of wildlife, endangered species, or their habitats.

*(Amended by Stats. 2002, Ch. 616, Sec. 39. Effective January 1, 2003.)*

#### **423.9.**

Land which is zoned as timberland production pursuant to Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 51100) of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code and which is not under an open-space contract pursuant to Section 51240 of the Government Code shall be valued pursuant to Section 435.

*(Amended by Stats. 1982, Ch. 1489, Sec. 35.)*

#### **424.**

Parties to existing agreements and scenic easement deeds may modify such agreements and deeds to the requirements of Section 422.

*(Added by Stats. 1967, Ch. 1711.)*

#### **426.**

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of Section 423 to the contrary, if either the county, city, or nonprofit organization or the owner of land subject to contract, agreement, scenic restriction, or open-space easement has served notice of nonrenewal as provided in Section 51091, 51245, or 51296.9 of the Government Code, and the county assessors shall, unless the parties shall have subsequently rescinded the contract pursuant to Section 51254 or 51255 of the Government Code, value the land as provided in this section.

(b) If the owner of land serves notice of nonrenewal or the county, city, or nonprofit organization serves notice of nonrenewal and the owner fails to protest as provided in Section 51091, 51245, or 51296.9 of the Government Code, subdivision (c) shall apply immediately. If the county, city, or nonprofit organization serves notice of nonrenewal and the owner does protest as provided in Section 51091, 51245, or 51296 of the Government Code, subdivision (c)

shall apply when less than six years remain until the termination of the period for which the land is enforceably restricted.

(c) Where any of the conditions in subdivision (b) apply, the board or assessor in each year until the termination of the period for which the land is enforceably restricted shall do all of the following:

(1) Determine the value of the land pursuant to Section 110.1. If the land is not subject to Section 110.1 when the restriction expires, the value shall be determined pursuant to Section 110 as if it were free of contractual restriction. If the land will be subject to a use for which this code provides a special restricted assessment, the value shall be determined as if it were subject to the new restriction.

(2) Determine the value of the land by capitalization of income as provided in Section 423 and without regard to the existence of any of the conditions in subdivision (b).

(3) Subtract the value determined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (c) by capitalization of income from the full value determined in paragraph (1).

(4) Using the rate announced by the board pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 423, discount the amount obtained in paragraph (3) for the number of years remaining until the termination of the contract, agreement, scenic restriction, or open-space easement.

(5) Determine the value of the land by adding the value determined by capitalization of income as provided in paragraph (2) and the value obtained in paragraph (4).

(6) Apply the ratio prescribed in Section 401 to the value of the land determined in paragraph (5) to obtain its assessed value.

*(Amended by Stats. 2003, Ch. 62, Sec. 274. Effective January 1, 2004.)*

#### **427.**

Nothing in this article shall prevent the board or the assessor, in valuing open-space land for assessment purposes from taking into consideration the existence of any mines, minerals and quarries in or upon the land being valued, including, but not limited to oil, gas, and other hydrocarbon substances.

*(Added by Stats. 1969, Ch. 862.)*

#### 428.

The provisions of this article shall not apply to any residence, including any agricultural laborer housing facility as provided for in Sections 51220, 51231, 51238, and 51282.3 of the Government Code, on the land being valued or to an area of reasonable size used as a site for such a residence.

*(Amended by Stats. 1985, Ch. 186, Sec. 11.2.)*

#### 429.

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 105(b) of this code, in valuing land enforceably restricted pursuant to this article, fruit-bearing or nut-bearing trees and vines on the land and not exempt from taxation shall be valued as land. Any income shall include that which can be expected to be derived from such trees and vines and no other value shall be given such trees and vines for the purpose of assessment.

*(Amended by Stats. 1974, Ch. 311.)*

#### 430.

There shall be a rebuttable presumption that the present use of open-space land which is enforceably restricted and devoted to agricultural use is its highest and best agricultural use.

*(Added by renumbering Section 431 by Stats. 1976, Ch. 176.)*

#### 430.5.

No land shall be valued pursuant to this article unless an enforceable restriction meeting the requirements of Section 422 is signed, accepted, and recorded on or before the lien date for the fiscal year to which the valuation would apply. To provide counties and cities with time to meet the requirement of this section, the land that is to be subject to a contract shall have been included in a proposal to establish an agricultural preserve submitted to the planning commission or planning department, or the matter of accepting an open-space easement or

scenic restriction shall have been referred to that commission or department on or before October 15 preceding the lien date to which the contract, easement or restriction is to apply.

*(Amended by Stats. 1997, Ch. 941, Sec. 11. Effective January 1, 1998.)*