

The American Community Survey: Serious Implications for Indian Country.

Paper Presentation, Census Race and
Ethnic Advisory Committee, Suitland,
MD. (April 2011)

Summary of NCAI's ACS Analysis of 2005-2009 Five Year Estimates

Questions:

Will appropriate data be available from the ACS for all areas with Native populations, including the smaller reservations?

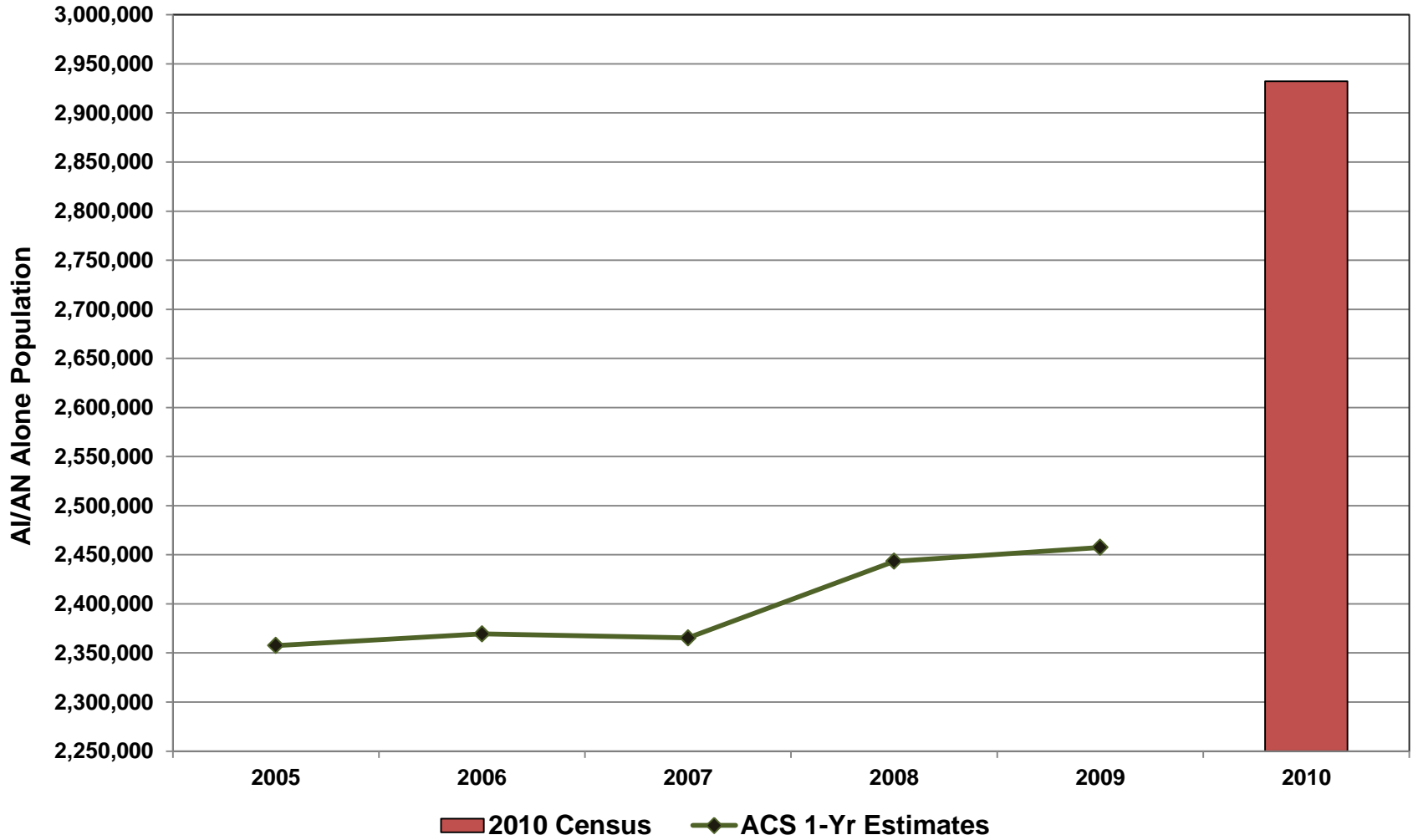
If ACS data is available for all areas, will it be accurate?

Will the data be timely? That is, can it be used to examine the status of the AI/AN population on an annual rather than a decennial basis?

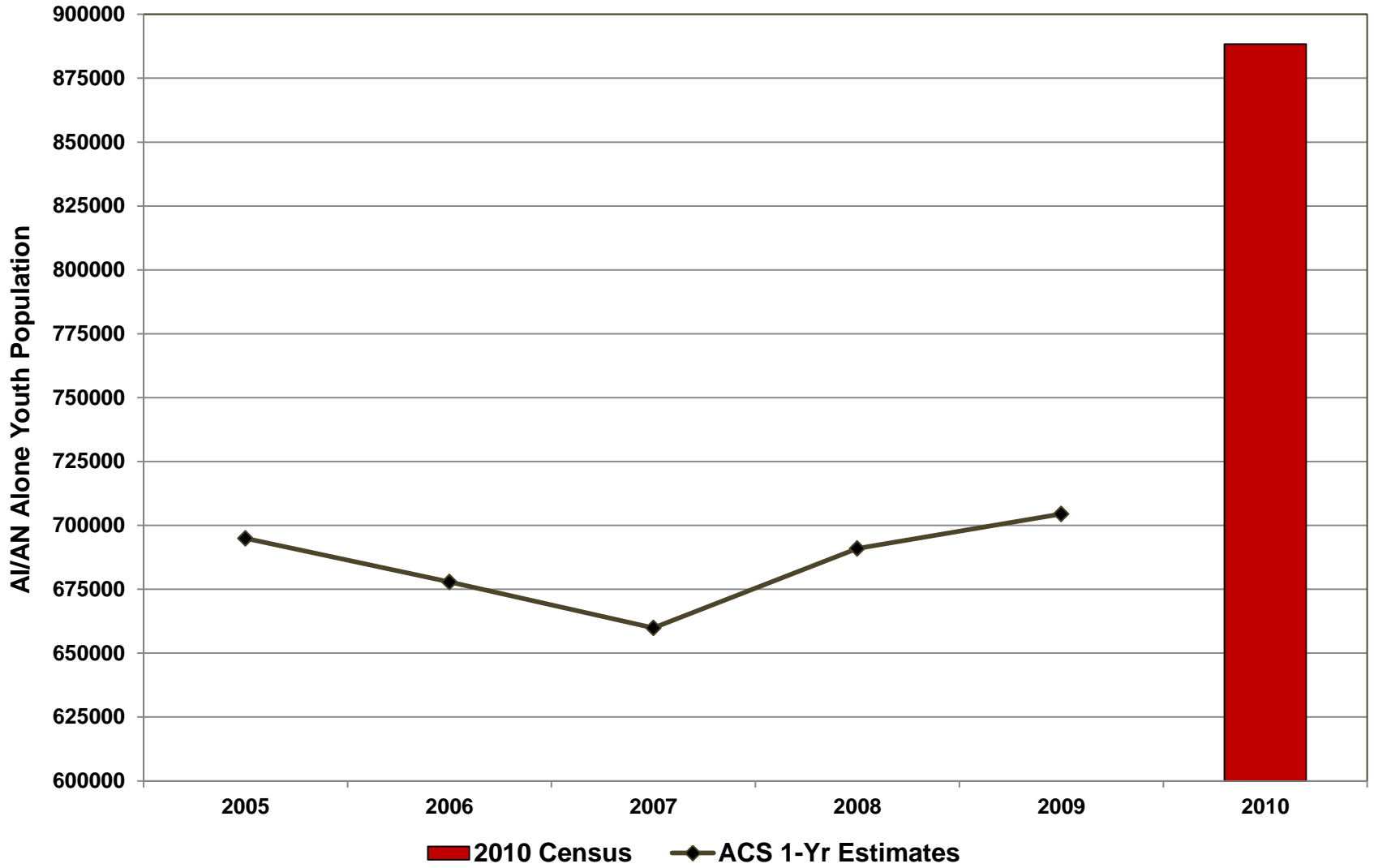
Data in the Analyses

- **First Analysis:** ACS 3-year estimates covering the time frame from 2006 to 2008. That examination compared ACS figures with data from the 2000 Census and, for the nation and county areas, data from the Census Bureau's population estimates program.
- The analysis examined: Nation, ten federal reservations, eight other types of AI/AN areas, eleven counties and one city.
- **Second Analysis:** ACS 5-year estimates from 2005 to 2009. The analysis also draws on the recently published figures for the AI/AN population from the 2010 Census redistricting (PL 94-171) data file.
- ACS data was compared with the 2010 Census data for the same geographic areas that were included in the earlier analysis.

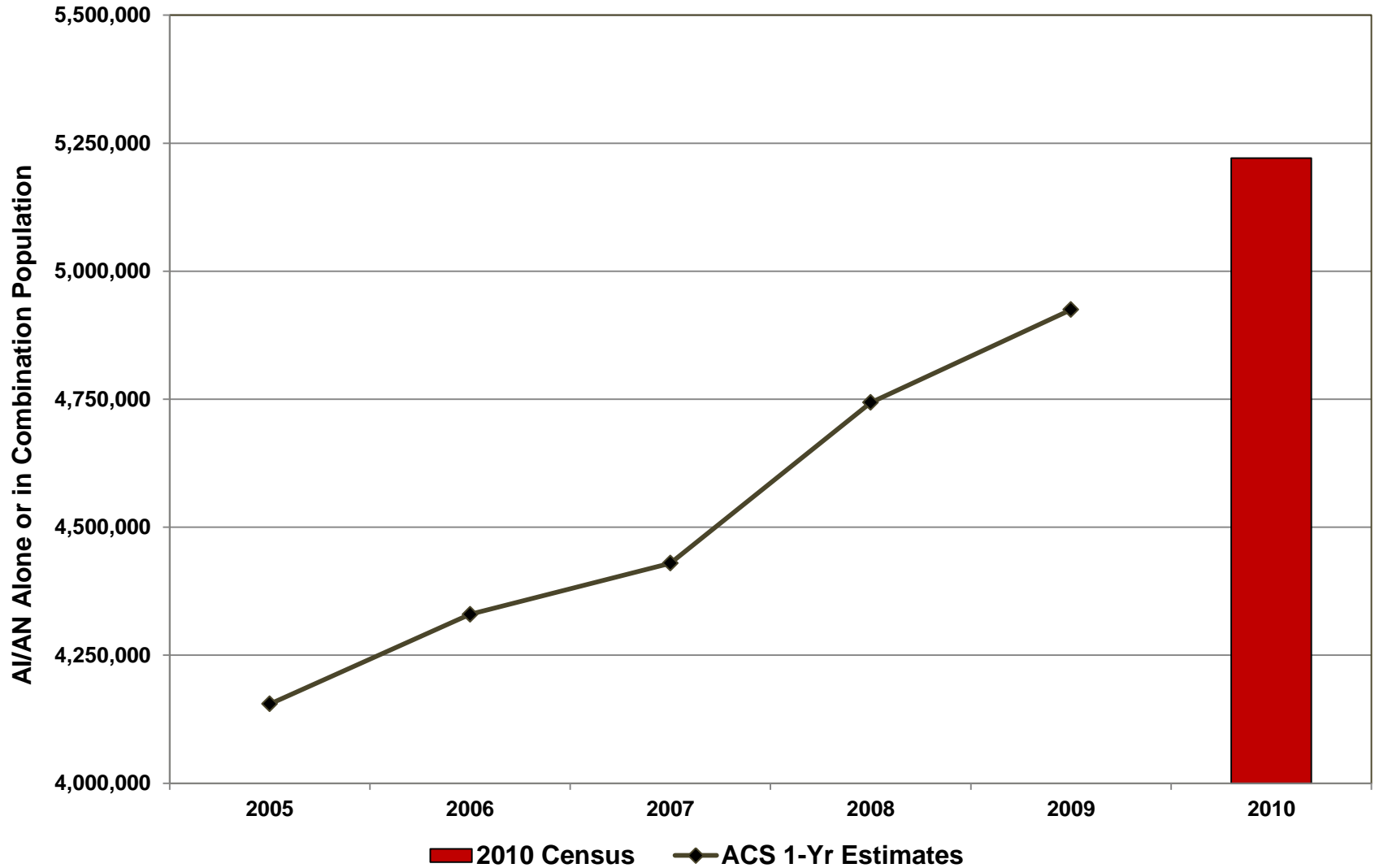
AI/AN Alone Population - Nation



AI/AN Alone Youth Population - Nation



AI/AN Alone or in Combination Population - Nation

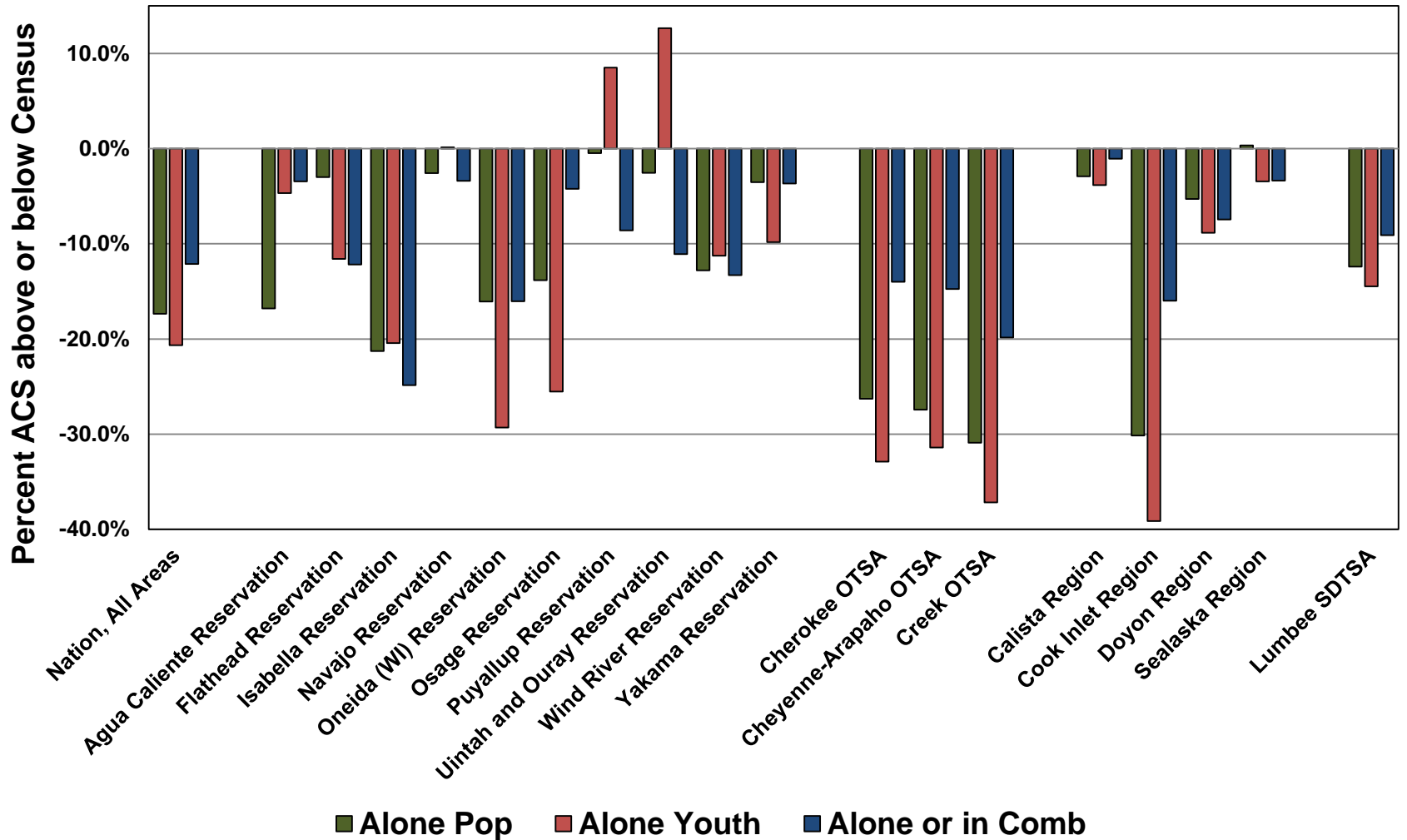


The ACS would appear to be significantly under estimating the AI/AN Alone and AI/AN Alone youth populations, while doing a better job of estimating the size of the AI/AN Alone or in Combination population.

The possibility that ACS is tracking the total size of the AI/AN Alone or in Combination population relatively accurately, but is underestimating the size of the AI/AN Alone population, has several implications. The Alone population is a component of the Alone or in Combination population. If the Alone population is under represented, but the Alone or in Combination population is reported correctly, then the ACS is over representing the "in Combination" component -- those identifying as members of other races in addition to American Indian or Alaska Native.

The "in Combination" population has different characteristics than the Alone population.

AI/AN Population Percent Difference - 2005-09 ACS v 2010 Census



National unemployment rate for the AI/AN Alone population

2005-09 5-year ACS data: 13.2%

In the Census 2000 it was 12.4%

Figures for individual AI/AN areas vary.

The more recent 5-year estimates for 2005-09 show declines that are somewhat less steep than the recent 3-year estimates, though still subject to question by local observers.

The ACS 2005-09 AI/AN Alone unemployment rate

Navajo: ACS shows 15.0% compared to a 2000 rate of 26.4%

Wind River: ACS shows a rate of 18.4% while the 2000 rate was 27.4%.

AI/AN Alone poverty rate

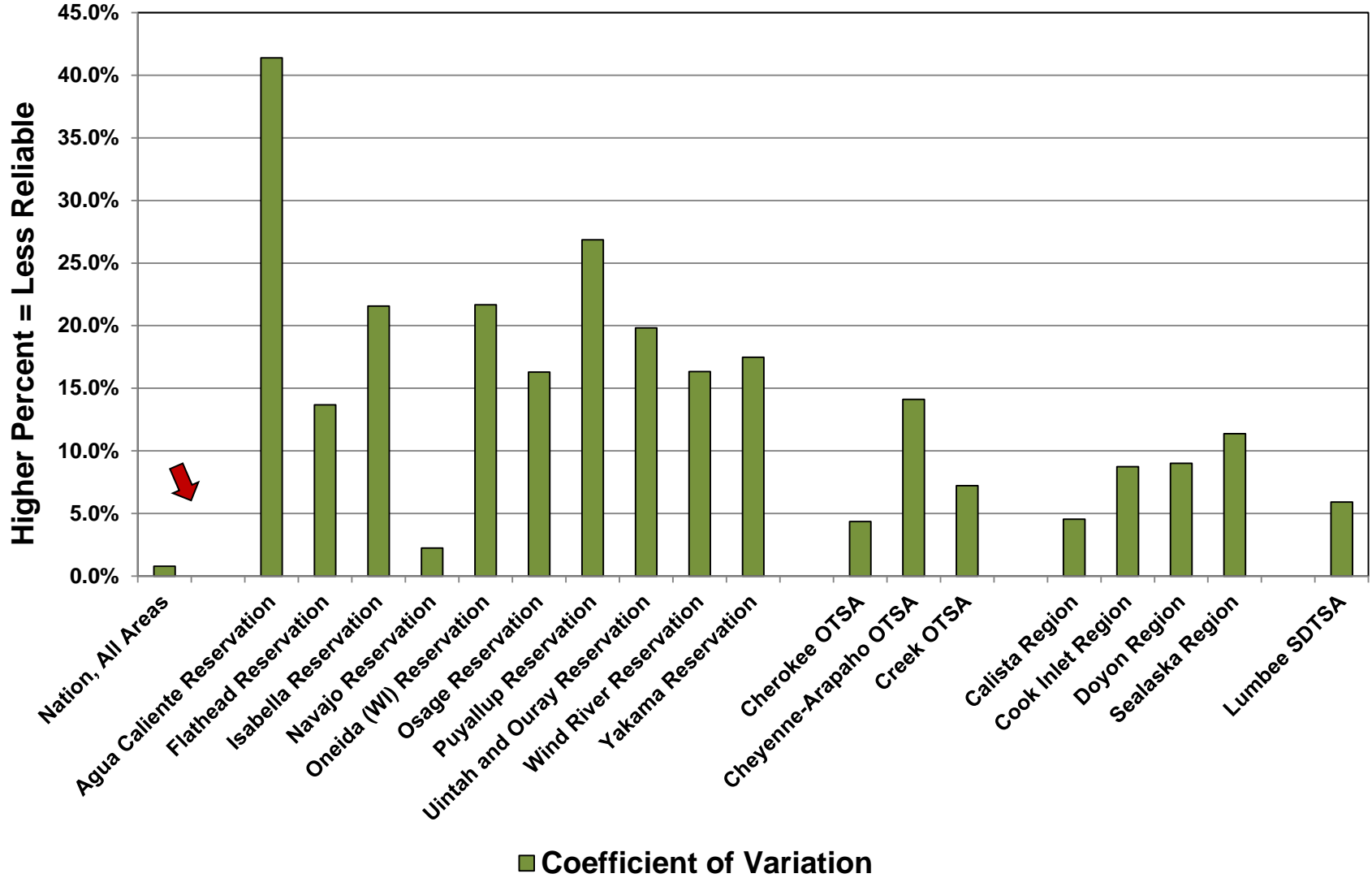
National figure calculated from the ACS 5-year estimates was **25.9%**, relatively unchanged from the 2000 Census rate of **25.7%**.

Navajo: ACS shows **38.2%**, compared *to* **43.8%** as measured in 2000.

Wind River: ACS figures show an AI/AN Alone poverty rate of **22.0%**, an even steeper decline from the 2000 rate *of* **42.3%** than was the case using the 3-year estimates.

There continues to be reason to question whether the labor force and income data in the ACS is accurate for all local areas.

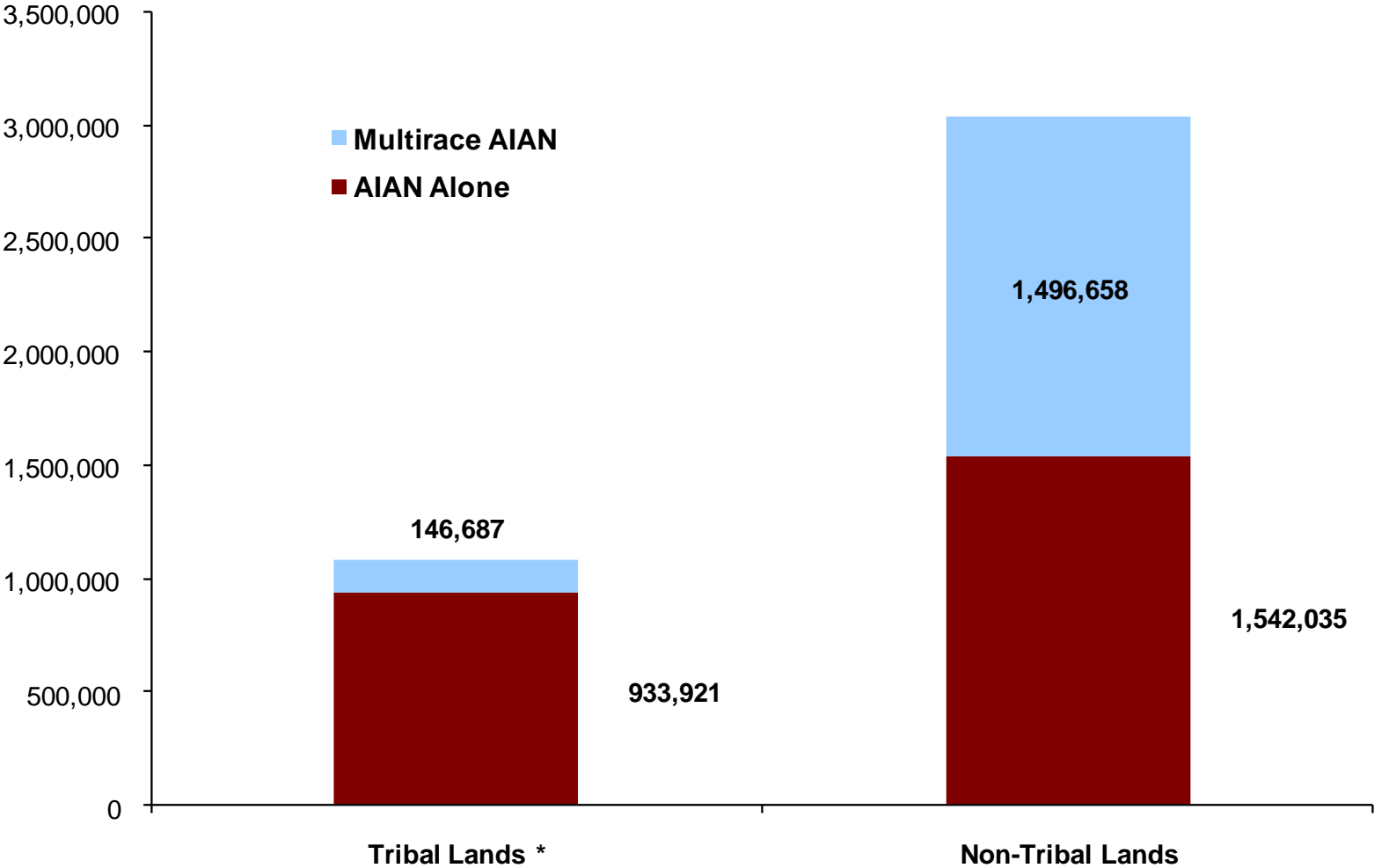
Statistical Reliability - AI/AN Alone Poverty Count



Characteristics of AI/AN Alone and
AI/AN Alone and In Combination
with other Races in the 2000 Census

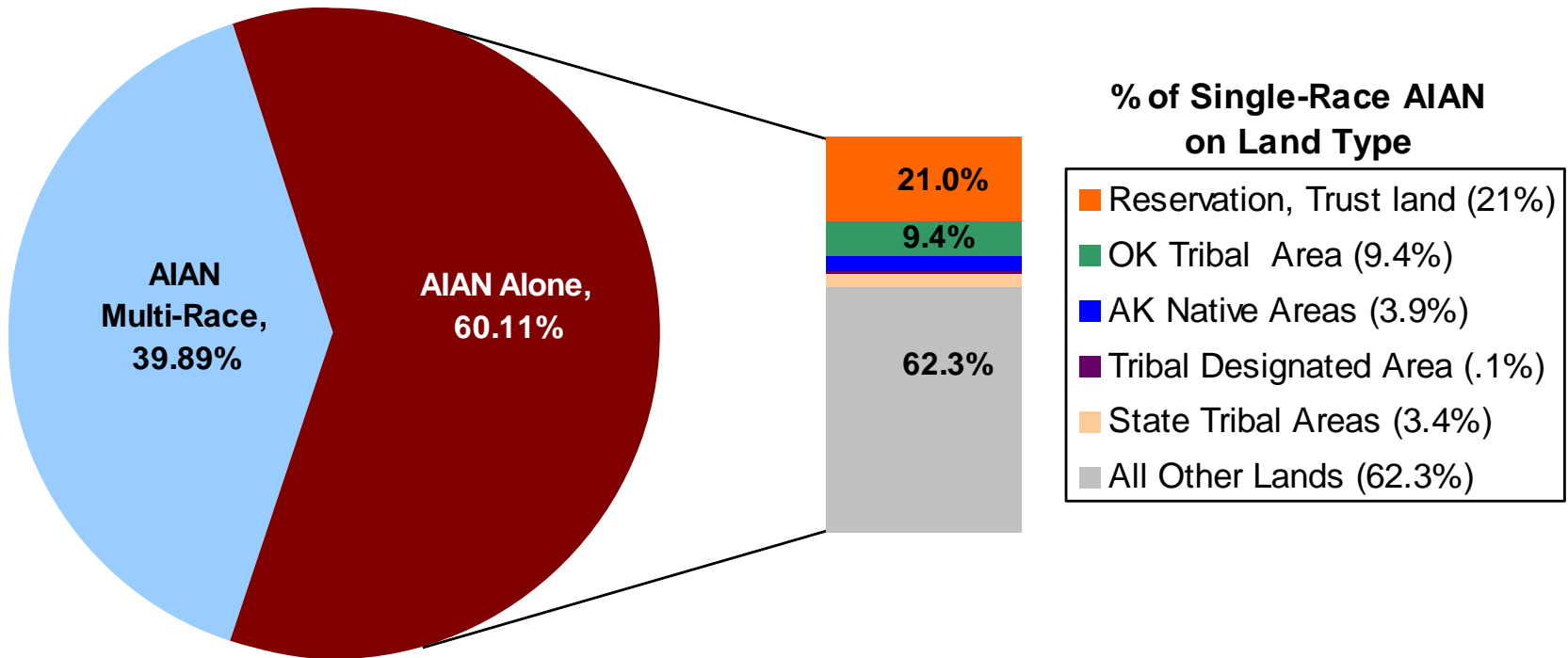
AIAN Population on Tribal vs. Non-Tribal Land

US Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF-1



26% of AIAN lived on tribal lands; 74% lived on non-tribal lands in 2000. On tribal land, 86% AIAN were single-race; on non-tribal land, 51% were single-race.

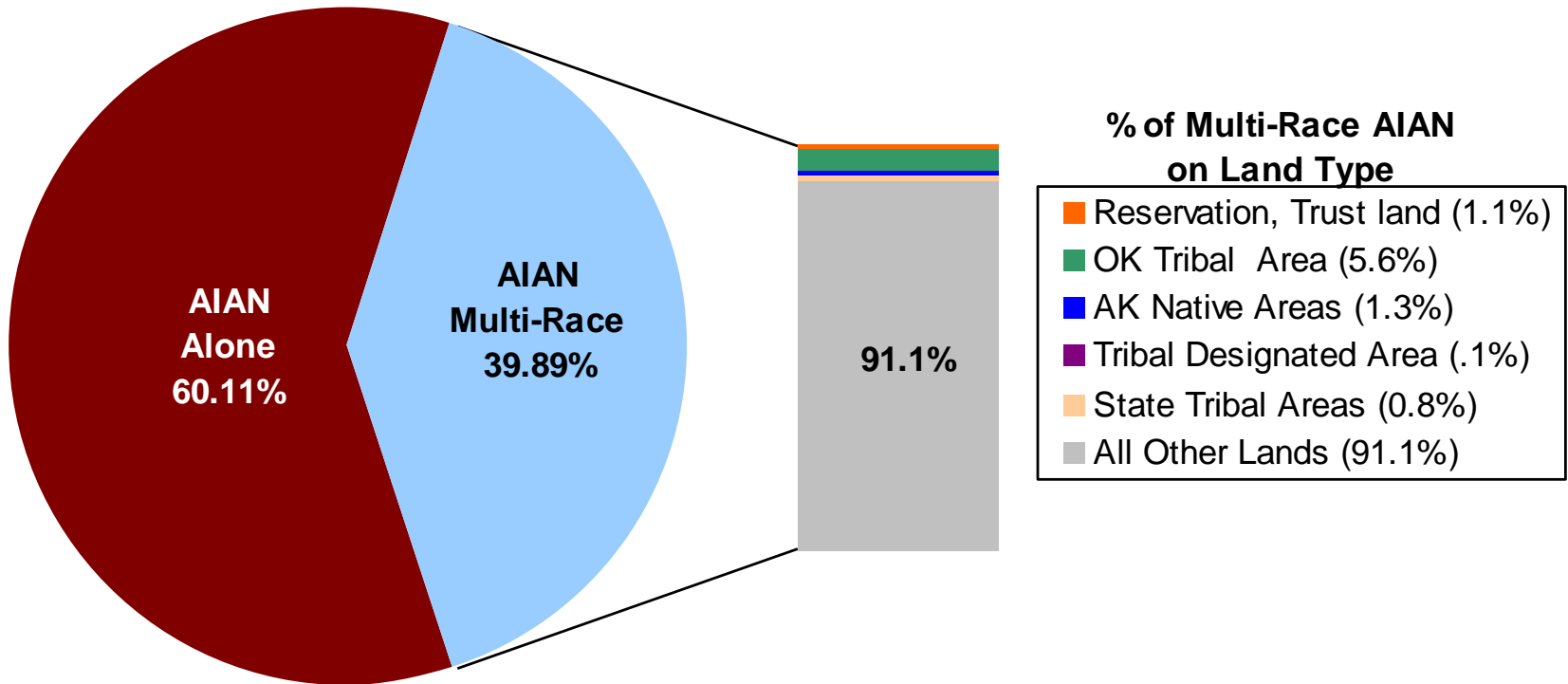
Single-Race American Indians/Alaska Natives by Land Type



60% of AIAN people identified as single race.

- 38% of single-race AIAN live on tribal land.
- 62% of single-race AIAN live off tribal land.

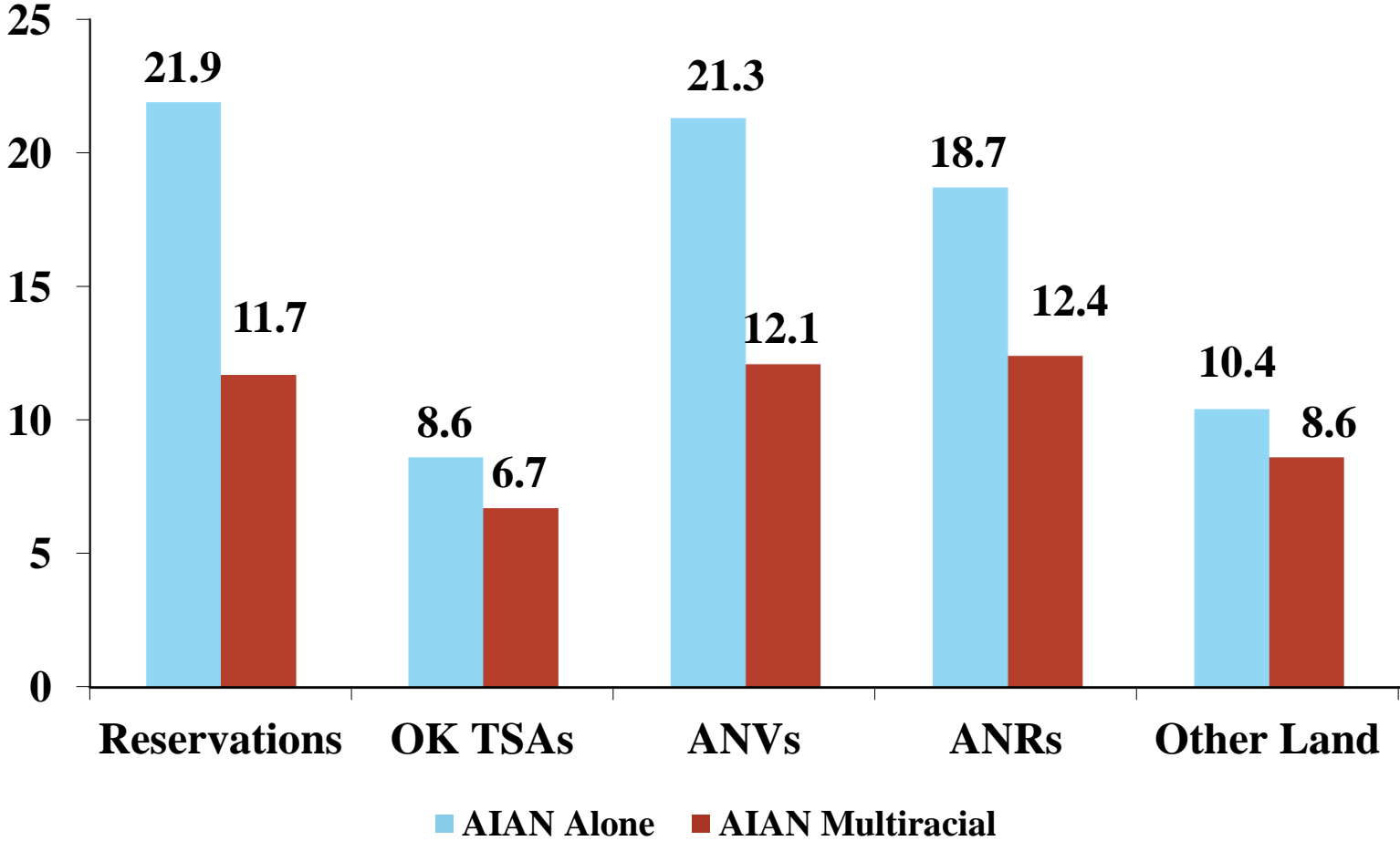
Multi-Race American Indians/Alaska Natives by Land Type



40% of AIAN people identified as multi-race.

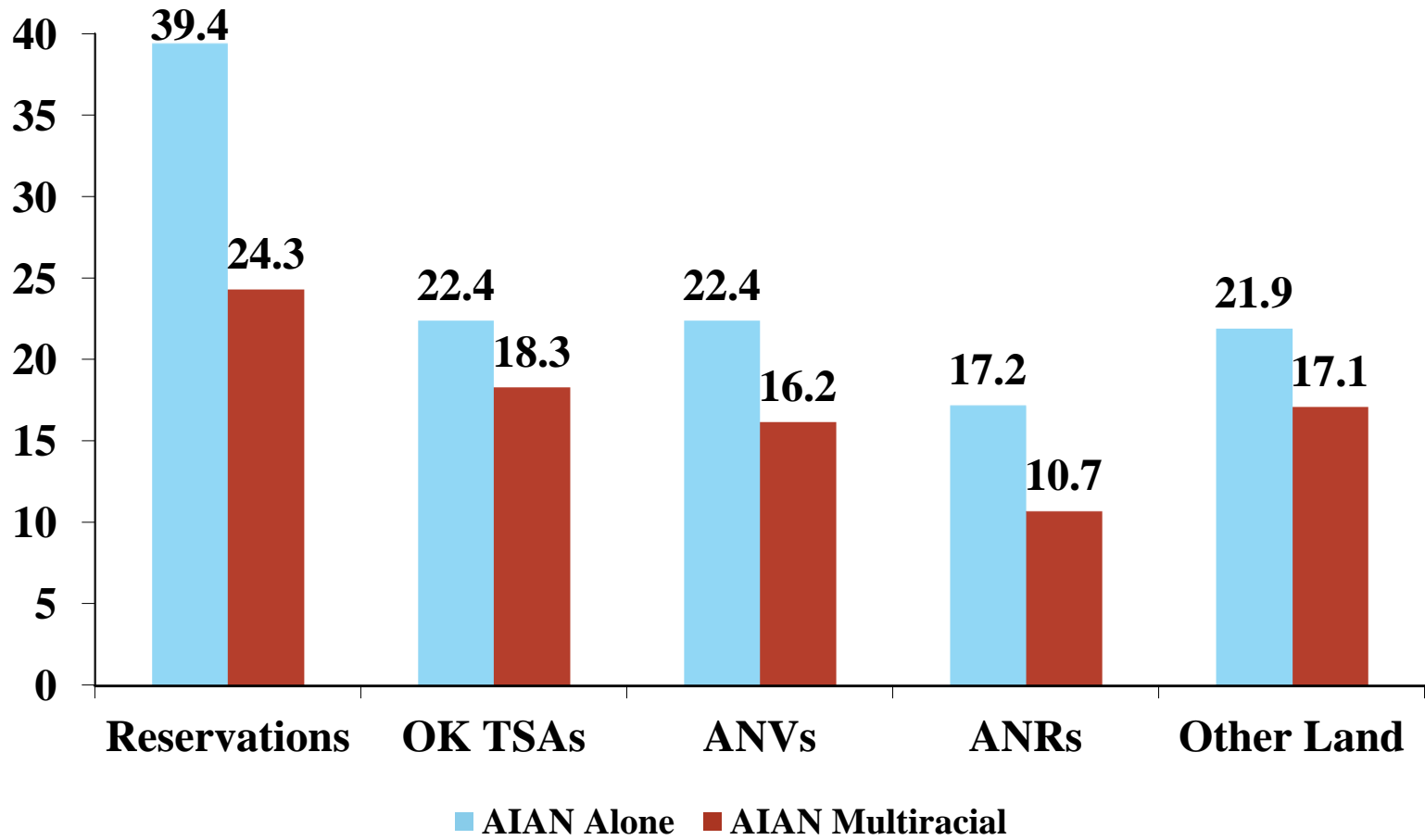
- 91% of multi-race AIAN live off tribal land.
- 9% of multi-race AIAN live on tribal land, most in OK tribal areas

2000 Unemployment Rates for AIAN Alone and AIAN Multiracial Populations by Land Area, 2000 Census

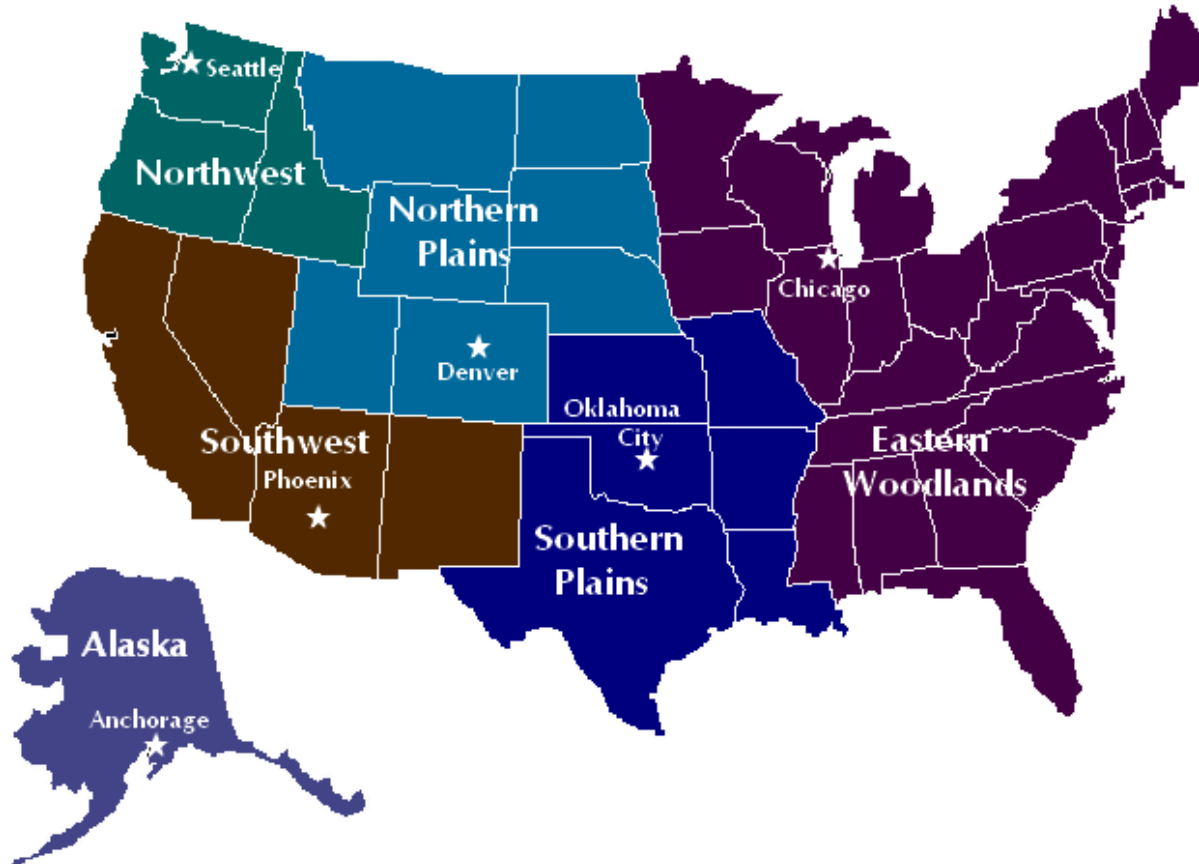


Source: Indian and Native American Training Coalition, 2004, Table 3.

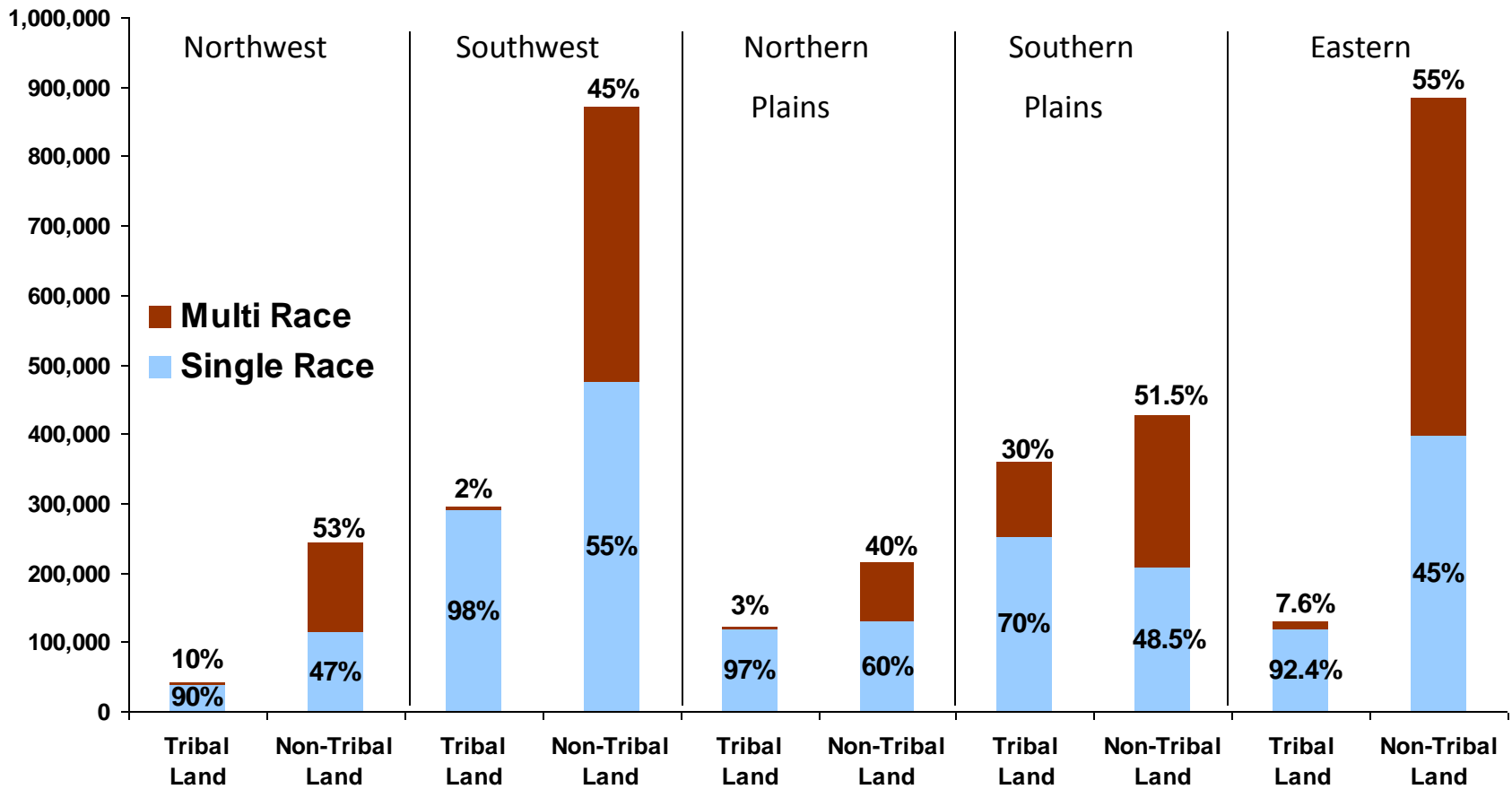
2000 Poverty Rates for AIAN Alone and AIAN Multiracial Populations by Land Area, 2000 Census



HUD Regions



Number of Single- and Multi-Race AIAN People by HUD Region and Land Type



US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Summary

- **There still appears to be a potentially serious undercount of the AI/AN Alone population, especially AI/AN Alone youth, in the ACS numbers at the national level and for many local areas.**
- **The available ACS data for some reservations still contains hard to explain changes in key labor force and income-related characteristics of the AI/AN Alone population from the characteristics as measured in the "long form" data from the 2000 Census.**
- **The extent of sampling error in the poverty data for the AI/AN Alone population still raises questions about the statistical reliability of the published ACS estimates for many local areas.**

- **Federal agencies** that, in the past have used data for fund allocation purposes that is now found only in the ACS need to carefully examine whether they should rely on the ACS to equitably distribute money to tribal and other Native American grantees.
- **Data users, at the tribal level, among Native American organizations serving off-reservation populations and among state and local agencies need to become well acquainted with the ACS and the potential pitfalls of relying on this data to accurately measure the well-being of the American Indian and Alaska Native population.**