



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

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Research Policy Update

2020 Census Results: NCAI Rocky Mountain Region Tribal Land Data

This research update is a supplement to the *2020 Census Results: Regional Tribal Land Data Summary* update. To learn details about the 2020 Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting data, methodology, and overall analysis for the NCAI regions, read the update at <https://bit.ly/3C3W3Ra>.

To learn about the overall American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population changes at the national and state level in the 2020 Census, read the *A First Look at the 2020 Census American Indian/Alaska Native Redistricting Data* update at <https://bit.ly/3AG5sOd>.

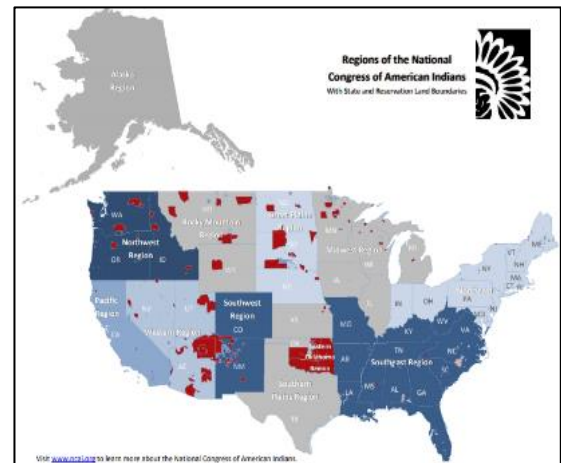
2020 Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data – Tribal Lands by NCAI Regions

This update summarizes population count changes for individual tribal lands in the 2020 Census compared to 2010 results in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region defined by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). The areas included in each NCAI region are shown in **Figure 1**.

This report used the IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS) tabulations of the 2020 Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data File derived from the Legacy Format.¹ The data used in this report are from IPUMS Table 1 and include the AIANNHⁱ Tribal Geographies, also referred to as tribal lands for this report. The data for this report includes racial and population data for the tribal lands.

This report used two additional datasets for comparisons: 1) 2010 Census Summary File 1 tribal land data² to show changes since the last Decennial Census; and 2) 2020 Census self-response rate data³ for tribal lands to show the potential impact of self-response rates on 2020 Census data results.

Figure 1: NCAI Regions



Source: <https://bit.ly/3hzoHID>

ⁱ American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian. Native Hawaiian Homelands were not included in this analysis.

2020 Census – Data Limitations for the NCAI Rocky Mountain Region

This report examines the population counts on tribal lands as reported by the 2020 Census for the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. “Tribal lands” refer to the U.S. Census Bureau geographic boundaries for the Census Bureau surveys and censuses and may not reflect all Tribal Nations, federally recognized or otherwise. The boundaries for tribal lands (geographies) are created by the U.S. Census Bureau through coordinated efforts with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, state officials, and tribal consultation. To learn more about how the geographic boundaries and the tribal lands are created and agreed upon for use by the U.S. Census Bureau, read the *2020 Census Results: Regional Tribal Land Data Summary Appendix A* update.

The 2020 Census enumeration (count) experienced several challenges that affected the final data results. In addition to changes in the tribal lands, challenges emerged from the enumeration process, data processing, differences in coding race/ethnicity in 2020, COVID-19 shutdowns, and the new data privacy measures. All of these challenges likely impacted the final 2020 Census counts generally and for tribal lands. Due to all these factors, the U.S. Census Bureau has stated that comparisons from the 2010 Census to the 2020 Census should be considered in the context of these factors. To read more about the limitations in the 2020 Census Redistricting dataset, read the *2020 Census Results: Regional Tribal Land Data Summary* update.

Region Specific Data Limitations

There were no new Census tribal geographies added to the NCAI Rocky Mountain region between the 2010 and 2020 Census.

Disruptions to the 2020 enumeration process left some tribal lands dependent on the non-response follow up (NRFU) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for their 2020 population counts. NRFU efforts included an individual employed by the U.S. Census Bureau physically counting the households within a community. The 2020 Census self-response rates for the NCAI Rocky Mountain region reviewed for this report are limited to the Census responses submitted by households by phone, mail, and internet. For more details on the 2020 self-response rates, read the *2020 Census Response Rates* update series at <http://bit.ly/2P8Xnu6>.

This data update covers the population that was counted by the 2020 Census on tribal lands within the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. This does not mean that the total population on tribal lands is only American Indian/ Alaska Native (AI/AN) and does not mean that entire population count represents enrollment in the Tribal Nation. The 2020 Census data on race/ethnicity was by self-identification, and these important distinctions were reviewed in our report on national and state results from the 2020 Census.

NCAI Rocky Mountain Region Tribal Land Population Results – Summary

This section covers 2020 Census population counts for tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. The results cover the changes from 2010 to 2020 in the region’s total population, AI/AN population, and population counts for each Census tribal land within the region.

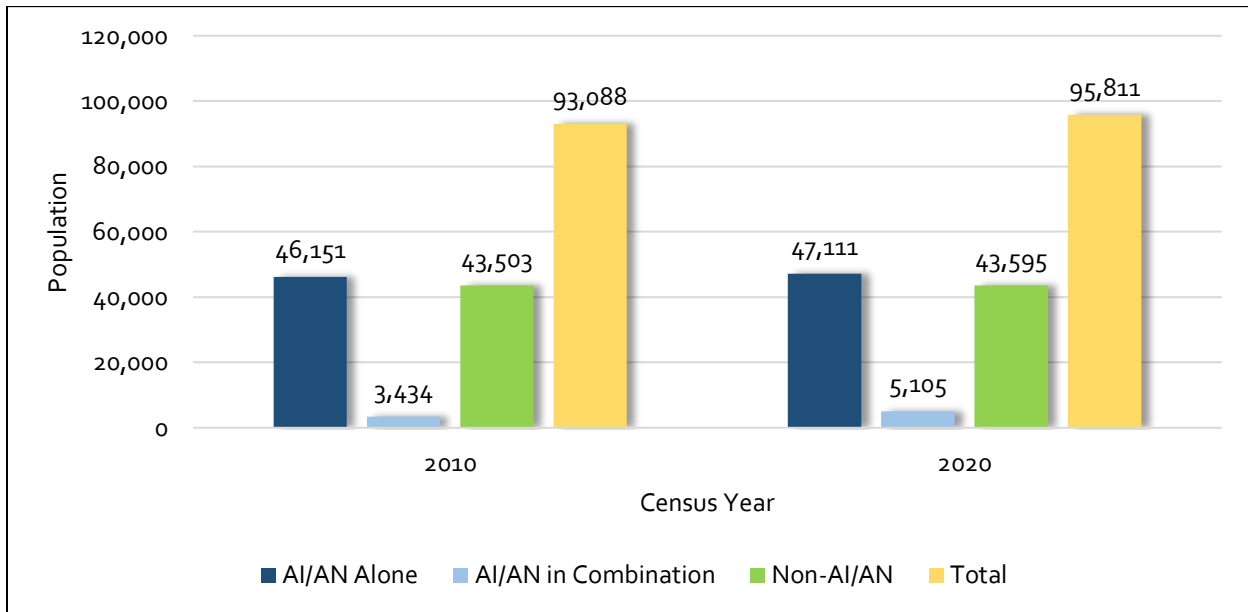
The 2020 Census results show that the total population for tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region grew between 2010 and 2020. **Figure 2** shows the total population counts for the NCAI Rocky Mountain region in 2010 compared to 2020. The tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain Region grew by 2,723 counts, from a total population of 93,088 counted in 2010 to a total population of 95,811 counted in 2020. Population totals in some NCAI regions may not match the results from the *2020 Census Results: Regional Tribal Land Data Summary* update due to the exclusion of tribal lands with significant boundary changes in the previous analysis.

Figure 2: Total Population for the NCAI Rocky Mountain Region, 2010 to 2020

<i>NCAI Rocky Mountain Region</i>	Total Population
<i>2010</i>	93,088
<i>2020</i>	95,811

The total population counts for AI/AN Alone, AI/AN in Combination with another race, and the non-AI/AN count in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region tribal lands changed from 2010 to 2020. **Figure 3** shows the AI/AN and non-AI/AN populations counted on tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region during the 2010 and 2020 Census. The dark blue bar shows the total AI/AN Alone population for all tribal lands within the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. The light blue bar shows the total AI/AN in Combination population for all the tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. The green bar shows the total non-AI/AN population counted on tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. The yellow bar is the total population counted on tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region during the 2010 and 2020 Census. The dark blue, light blue, and green bars all add up to equal the yellow bar.

Figure 3: NCAI Rocky Mountain Region Population on Tribal Lands by AI/AN Alone, AI/AN in Combination, Non-AI/AN, and the Total Population Counts, 2010 and 2020



The AI/AN Alone population made up just over half of the population on tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region during the 2010 and the 2020 Census. **Figure 3** shows that most of the population growth in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region on tribal lands was from an increase in the AI/AN Alone and the AI/AN in Combination population count. There was no population decline counted on the tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region for any of the categories shown.

Census tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region ranges from areas with a population between 2,500 to under 50,000. In the 2020 Census, factors ranging from enumeration challenges to the new data privacy measures can have disproportional impacts on small, rural, and remote populations. **Figure 4** shows the census population count percent losses and gains on tribal lands between 2010 and 2020 for different sized tribal land populations.

The tribal lands with the greatest population loss from 2010 to 2020 are on the left side of the table, and the tribal lands with the greatest population gains are on the right. Each row in **Figure 4** indicates the size of the 2020 total population for each tribal land. Each cell in the table shows the number of tribal lands with a specific population size (row) and a specific population loss or gain between 2010 and 2020 (column). The first cell with data is in the row showing the population size is between 2,500 to 4,999 and in the second column, showing a population decrease between five to 9.99 percent. One tribal land with a total population between 2,500 and 4,999 in the 2020 Census lost between five to 9.99 percent of their population between 2010 and 2020.

Figure 4. Population Gains and Losses in the NCAI Rocky Mountain Region by Population Size, 2010 to 2020 Census

<i>NCAI Rocky Mountain Region Population Size</i>	<i>Loss >10%</i>	<i>Loss 5 - 9.99%</i>	<i>Loss > 0 - 4.99%</i>	<i>No Gain/Loss</i>	<i>Gain > 0 - 4.99%</i>	<i>Gain 5 - 9.99%</i>	<i>Gain > 10%</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>
<i>2,500 to 4,999</i>		1				1	1	3
<i>5,000 to 9,999</i>			1		1			2
<i>10,000 to 24,999</i>					1			1
<i>25,000 to 49,999</i>			1			1		2
<i>Grand Total</i>		1	2		2	2	1	8

Figure 4 highlights that the tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region didn't appear to show a connection between the population size of the Census tribal land and the percent of population gained/lost in the 2020 Census results. The total population counts on tribal lands for the NCAI Rocky Mountain region grew between 2010 and 2020, but some tribal lands lost total population counts. More analysis on rural and remote tribal lands compared to those closer to metropolitan areas could provide additional insight into the populations with total gains or losses.

The 2020 enumeration faced several challenges to a complete count, and counting for small, rural, and remote populations was likely impacted by COVID-19 enumeration delays and 2020 Census privacy measures. The U.S. Census Bureau released and updated daily the self-response rates for tribal lands during the 2020 enumeration efforts. NRFU efforts increased the population counted, but the self-response rates provide some insight into the potential impacts that the disrupted enumeration efforts may have had on the 2020 Census results for total population on tribal lands.

Figure 5 shows the losses and gains for the tribal land total populations that had different 2020 Census self-response rates in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. The tribal lands with the lowest self-response rates are in the top rows and the tribal lands with the greatest self-response rates are in the lower rows in the Figure. The tribal lands with the greatest percent loss in population between 2010 and 2020 are shown in the columns on the left side of the Figure. The tribal lands with the greatest percent increase are on the right side of the Figure. The cells within the Figure indicate the number of tribal lands within the NCAI Rocky Mountain region with the self-response rate and percent loss/gain.

The U.S. Census Bureau did not compile and produce 2020 Census Self-Response Rates for all tribal lands and primarily published data for the Census tribal lands categorized as Federal Reservations and Off-Reservation Trust Lands, although not all Census tribal lands categorized as federal reservations and off-reservation trust lands had data published.

Figure 5. 2020 Census Population Gains and Losses by 2020 Census Self-Response Rates for Tribal Lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain Region

NCAI Rocky Mountain Region Tribal Land Self-Response Rate	Loss ≥ 10%	Loss 5 - 9.99%	Loss > 0 - 4.99%	No Gain/Loss	Gain > 0 - 4.99%	Gain 5 - 9.99%	Gain ≥ 10%	Grand Total
Less than 10%								
10 - 24.9%		1			1			2
25 - 34.9%					1	1	1	3
35 - 44.9%			1					1
45 - 54.9%			1			1		2
55 - 64.9%								
Greater than 65%								
Grand Total		1	2		2	2	1	8

Figure 5 shows that all tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region with population gains and losses had 2020 Census self-response rates between 10 percent and 55 percent. The U.S. national self-response rate was 67 percent. The results for the NCAI Rocky Mountain region do not appear to show a clear pattern between self-response rates and population gains and losses in the 2020 Census.

Figure 6 and 7 show the detailed 2020 Census Redistricting Data population count results for each tribal land in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. Figure 6 shows the total population counts for each of the Census tribal lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. Figure 6 includes information on the gain and loss in population total counts and the population percent increase or decrease between the 2010 and 2020 Census. The tribal lands are listed alphabetically by the official name designations by the U.S. Census Bureau. The negative numbers indicate the population lost between 2010 and 2020. The 2010 and 2020 Census did not have total population numbers for all tribal lands listed and those are indicated with a hyphen in the table.

Figure 6. 2020 Census Total Population Counts for Tribal Lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain Region

Census Tribal Land	2010 Census Total Population	2020 Census Total Population	Change in Total Population from 2010 to 2020 (± #)	Percent Gain or Loss from 2010 to 2020 (± %)
Blackfeet Indian Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	10,405	10,764	+359	+3.5%
Crow Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	6,863	6,974	+111	+1.6%
Flathead Reservation	28,359	30,849	+2,490	+8.8%
Fort Belknap Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	2,851	3,382	+531	+18.6%

Fort Peck Indian Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	10,008	9,988	-20	-0.2%
Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	4,789	4,456	-333	-7.0%
Rocky Boy's Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	3,323	3,639	+316	+9.5%
Wind River Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	26,490	25,759	-731	-2.8%

The total population numbers show the population that lived and was counted in the 2020 Census on the tribal lands on April 1, 2020. The data is measuring within an area of land and not a jurisdiction or membership. The 2020 Census data on race/ethnicity was by self-identification, and total population includes both AI/ANs and non-AI/ANs living and counted on those tribal lands. 2020 Census data does not measure tribal enrollment.

The Decennial Census data are used for purposes important to Tribal Nations, including apportionment to determine how many representatives each state receives in the U.S. House of Representatives; redistricting at federal, state, and local levels; federal funding formulas; local tribal governance; and research and public health surveillance. Minor changes in population counts could have significant effects on Tribal Nations for the next ten years until the 2030 Census.

Figure 6 showed the information for the Census tribal lands by total population and did not identify what proportion of the population was AI/AN. **Figure 7** compares the 2010 and 2020 Census data for the AI/AN Alone population counted on each tribal land and for the AI/AN Alone or in Combination with another race category population. **Figure 7** illustrates how the percent of the population that identified as AI/AN Alone or AI/AN Alone or in Combination increased or decreased on the tribal lands between 2010 and 2020.

Figure 7. 2020 Census American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Population Counts (Alone, and Alone or in Combination) on Tribal Lands in the NCAI Rocky Mountain Region

Census Tribal Land	2010 AI/AN Alone Population	2020 AI/AN Alone Population	AI/AN Alone Population Gain/Loss 2010 to 2020 (±%)	2010 AI/AN Alone or in Combination Population	2020 AI/AN Alone or in Combination Population	AI/AN Alone or in Combination Population Gain/Loss 2010 to 2020 (±%)
Blackfeet Indian Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	8,944	9,058	+1.3%	9,149	9,476	+3.6%
Crow Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	5,322	5,452	+2.4%	5,408	5,629	+4.1%

Census Tribal Land	2010 AI/AN Alone Population	2020 AI/AN Alone Population	AI/AN Alone Population Gain/Loss 2010 to 2020 (±%)	2010 AI/AN Alone or in Combination Population	2020 AI/AN Alone or in Combination Population	AI/AN Alone or in Combination Population Gain/Loss 2010 to 2020 (±%)
Flathead Reservation	7,042	7,673	+9.0%	9,138	10,153	+11.1%
Fort Belknap Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	2,704	3,142	+16.2%	2,738	3,228	+17.9%
Fort Peck Indian Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	6,714	6,596	-1.8%	6,973	7,210	+3.4%
Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	4,406	4,042	-8.3%	4,478	4,200	-6.2%
Rocky Boy's Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	3,221	3,512	+9.0%	3,256	3,565	+9.5%
Wind River Reservation and Off-Reservation Trust Land	7,798	7,636	-2.1%	8,445	8,755	+3.7%

The overall population and all three racial category populations may have increased in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region, but not all Tribal Nations saw an increase in AI/AN Alone and AI/AN in Combination population, and some saw a population loss. NCAI created a 2020 Census Tribal Land Population Count Generator that displays the results for each Census tribal land in the same format as in **Figure 3**. To access the NCAI 2020 Tribal Land Population Generator, visit <https://bit.ly/3hwiHka>.

For additional data coordination and assistance, NCAI encourages Tribal Nations to reach out to their State Data Centers or the NCAI Census Information Center. **Figure 8** lists the contact information for the State Data Centers in the NCAI Rocky Mountain region. The State Data Centers and Census Information Centers are a network of organizations that partner with the U.S. Census Bureau to provide data access and assistance to data users, including Tribal Nations. Many State Data Centers have compiled data resources for the Tribal Nations within their state.

Figure 8. NCAI Rocky Mountain Region State Data Centers and Census Information Centers

State Data Center	Contact Information
Montana	Mary Craigle Census and Economic Information Center Montana Department of Commerce mary.craigle@mt.gov

Wyoming	Amy Bittner Department of Administration and Information Economic Analysis Division amy.bittner@wyo.gov
Census Information Center	
National Congress of American Indians	Gwynne Evans-Lomayesva National Congress of American Indians Research@ncai.org

The State Data Centers can include coordinating agencies for the state in addition to the lead agencies. To contact a coordinating agency, visit the Census Bureau website: <https://www.census.gov/about/partners/sdc/member-network.html>.

Citation: NCAI Policy Research Center (2021). *2020 Census Results: NCAI Rocky Mountain Region Tribal Land Data*. Washington DC: National Congress of American Indians, September 2021.

Questions: NCAI Policy Research Center – email: research@ncai.org; website: <http://www.ncai.org/prc>

Endnotes

¹ Steven Manson, Jonathan Schroeder, David Van Riper, Tracy Kugler, and Steven Ruggles. IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 16.0 [2020 Census PL-94-171, Table 1, AIANNH]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS. 2021. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V16.0>

² Steven Manson, Jonathan Schroeder, David Van Riper, Tracy Kugler, and Steven Ruggles. IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 16.0 [2010 Census Summary File 1, Table 1, AIANNH]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS. 2021. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V16.0>

³ Bureau, U. S. C. (2021, June 16). Tracking self-response rates map. The United States Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/2020-census-self-response-rates-map.html>.