

High Country Rural Planning Organization Regional Demographic Analysis Narrative

Introduction

In accordance with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Title VI Nondiscrimination directives, this Demographic Analysis Narrative is provided to identify and describe the High Country Rural Planning Organization (HCRPO) region's demographics in an effort to identify the region's protected populations, including Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations.

The demographic data analyzed for this narrative consists of Block Group Level Title VI 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) Census data. Various maps are used to graphically illustrate the data and are used to supplement this narrative. HCRPO will continue to monitor these protected populations for changes and conduct a review of the data for all projects, as required.

Demographic Analysis

Population Age 65 and Over

The demographics of persons 65 years of age and over are relatively evenly distributed throughout the HCRPO region with pockets of 25.1-50% of the block group population scattered throughout each county (see Title VI Age 65 and Over map).

Limited English Proficiency: Spanish

There are Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Spanish persons throughout the HCRPO region. For Wilkes County, block group population areas around North Wilkesboro and Wilkesboro contain 5.1 – 15% LEP Spanish persons. Block groups of population to the west of North Wilkesboro and to the north of Wilkesboro as well as along the border with Surry County near NC 268 contain 15.1 – 25% LEP Spanish persons.

For Alleghany County, block group population areas that contain 5.1 – 15% LEP Spanish persons are located in the north central part of the county. For Ashe County, block group population areas that contain 5.1 – 15% LEP Spanish persons are located north of Jefferson and West Jefferson as well as along the south east of the county. For Watauga County, block group population areas that contain 5.1 – 15% LEP Spanish persons are located to the east near the Town of Boone, western Watauga near the US 421/ US 321 junction and north of 105 near the Avery County line. For Avery County, block group population areas that contain 5.1 – 15% LEP Spanish persons are located north of the Town of Newland. For Mitchell County, block group population areas that contain 5.1 – 15% LEP Spanish persons are located to the south east of the Town of Spruce Pine. Yancey County does not have block group population areas that contain 5.1 – 15% LEP Spanish persons. However, Yancey County does have large block group population areas that contain <5% LEP Spanish persons (see Title VI Limited English Proficiency: Spanish map).

Hispanic & Latino Population

There are Hispanic and Latino persons throughout the HCRPO region with block groups with 15.1 – 100% of the population in specific areas. For Wilkes County, block group population areas, around North

Wilkesboro and Wilkesboro contain 15.1 – 25% Hispanic and Latino population. In addition, Wilkes County has Hispanic and Latino block group population areas which contain 25.1 – 50% near Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro as well as near the Surry County line near NC 268.

For Alleghany County, block group population areas at the center and north of the county contain 15.1 – 25% Hispanic and Latino population. For Ashe County, block group population areas at the center of the county north of Jefferson and West Jefferson contain 15.1 – 25% Hispanic and Latino population. For Avery County, block group population areas at the south east of the county contain 15.1 – 25% Hispanic and Latino population. In Mitchell County, block group population areas that contain 15.1 – 25% Hispanic and Latino population are located south east of Spruce Pine (see Title VI Hispanic & Latino Population map).

Asian Population

2011-2015 Census Block group data shows that the HCRPO region has Asian populations with the highest concentration of the block group population of 5.1 – 15% in the south west corner of Watauga County (see Title VI Asian Population map).

Black or African American Population

2011-2015 Census Block group data shows that the HCRPO region has African American populations of 0.1 – 25% throughout all seven counties with the highest concentration of the block group population of 50.1 – 75% near Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro to the east. There is also an area in northern North Wilkesboro that has African American populations of 25.1-50%. (see Title VI Black or African American Population map).

American Indians & Alaskan Native Population

2011-2015 Census Block group data shows that the HCRPO region has American Indian and Alaskan Native populations with the highest concentration of the block group population of 15.1 – 25% in central Alleghany County west of the Town of Sparta (see Title VI American Indians & Alaskan Native Population map).

Poverty

According to 2011-2015 Census Block Group data, a majority of the HCRPO region has populations in block groups with <15% - >75% of the block group population in poverty. For Ashe, Wilkes and Watauga counties, there are block group population areas that contain 50.1 – 75% poverty. The Ashe County poverty block groups are located within and to the north of Jefferson and West Jefferson. For Wilkes County, there are block group population areas that contain 50.1 – 75% poverty in the western part of the county near the border with Watauga County and Caldwell County. For Watauga County, there are block group population areas that contain 50.1 – 75% poverty to the south, east, and north of the Town of Boone with a block group population that contains >75% poverty at the center of the county near the Town of Boone (see Title VI Poverty map).

Conclusion- Potential for Disparate Impacts to Protected Populations

Based on the Demographic Analysis noted above, there are potential for disparate impacts to protected populations as follows:

- Populations age 65 and over due to pockets of 25.1-50% of the block group population scattered throughout each county
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Spanish populations in Wilkes County due to block group population areas around North Wilkesboro and Wilkesboro containing 5.1 – 15% LEP Spanish persons and block groups of population to the west of North Wilkesboro and to the north of Wilkesboro as well as along the border with Surry County near NC 268 containing 15.1 – 25% LEP Spanish persons.
- Hispanic and Latino populations in Wilkes County due to Wilkes County having Hispanic and Latino block group population areas which contain 25.1 – 50% near Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro as well as near the Surry County line near NC 268.
- Black or African American populations in Wilkes County due to the highest concentration of the block group population of 50.1 – 75% near Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro.
- Population in poverty due to block group population areas that contain 50.1 – 75% poverty in Ashe, Wilkes, and Watauga counties. Specifically, there is a block group population that contains >75% poverty at the center of the county near the Town of Boone.