

## Get Involved with the Block Boundary Suggestion Project for Census 2020

### Why get involved?

Montana will lose 36% of its Census Blocks in 2020.

From Census 2000 to Census 2010 the number of blocks increased by 35% across the country. The Census Bureau has acknowledged the need to identify methods for reducing the number of blocks to their Census 2000 tallies.

For Montana this will include reducing the number of blocks for Census 2010 to Census 2020 by 36%, 132,228 to 84,307 blocks. Many of the eliminated 2010 blocks were small with no population but many of the prototype block changes may affect redistricting across Montana.

Taking an active role in BBSP will assist the Census Bureau in reducing the census block inventory into a more manageable dataset and **develop a meaningful inventory of census blocks for Montana.**

### What types of changes can be suggested?

Suggested updates can be made during the below BBSP reviews.

- **Linear Feature Review – add or delete features**

It is important that Census Bureau data reflect the most recent linear features to ensure that new or previously missed housing units located along these features are identified and located. When reviewing linear features (Edges shapefile), first determine whether any features are missing or need to be deleted. Pay particular attention to any areas that have experienced recent population growth or construction activities, as these are the most likely to possess new or altered linear features (e.g., new streets in subdivisions, traffic circles converted to straight ways, or privately maintained roads that serve as public streets but exclude private driveways).

- **Area Landmark and Area Hydrography Review**

The Census Bureau accepts updates to area landmarks and area hydrography as part of the Block Boundary Suggestion Project.

- **Legal Boundary Review and Update**

You may submit legal boundary updates for Minor Civil Divisions (MCDs), incorporated places, and consolidated cities. The Census Bureau will assume the responsibility for reconciling the updates with the appropriate local governments as part of our 2016 and 2017 Boundary and Annexation Surveys (BAS).

- **Block Size Review**

The Census Bureau has assigned a size indicator to the 2020 planned tabulation blocks. Each block has an assigned letter, blocks with letters "A" through "H" represent potentially large blocks, blocks

with the letter “I” represent medium-sized blocks, and blocks with the letter “Z” may contain no housing units.

Montana has 83 blocks that represent potentially large blocks and 33,987 that may contain no housing units. The Block Size Review should focus on these blocks.

- **Block Boundary Suggestion Flagging (Must Hold and Do Not Hold)**

The Census Bureau has identified features planned as 2020 tabulation block boundaries; these planned tabulation block boundaries may change if the criteria change, or if a feature’s attributes are updated through other Census programs, such as BAS.

You may assign a must hold flag to features to suggest them as 2020 tabulation block boundaries. You can also assign “do not hold” flags to features that you do not want to become 2020 tabulation block boundaries. New 2020 Feature Extensions can also be added to close polygons.

- **Point Landmark Review – no suggestions needed**

This review is an optional activity that permits are very limited updates.

- **2010 Linear Feature Extension Review – no suggestions needed**

All block boundary suggestions are contingent upon the lines intersecting to form a closed polygon at the time the Census Bureau creates tabulation blocks. As a result, all block boundary suggestions, when combined with other features and planned holds, must form a closed polygon.

For Census 2010, states could place a “must-hold” on an existing feature that did not form a closed polygon. By adding a feature extension to close the polygon, they then created a new block. Montana did not create any Linear Feature Extensions in 2010, therefore this review is not needed.

- **Block Area Grouping Delineation Review – no suggestions needed**

Used to group islands into tabulation blocks.

### **How can you suggest changes?**

CEIC will be working with stakeholders across the state to help incorporate suggested changes into the Geographic Update Partnership software (GUPS) developed by the Census Bureau for this project. As a nonpartisan liaison CEIC will accept suggestions from multiple sources, compile them and submit them to the Census Bureau. (It is possible for counties to serve as a state designee for BBSP. Please see County Involvement section below for detailed information.)

The first step to making change suggestions is to inform CEIC of your intent to submit BBSP suggestions before March 14. Please email CEIC and identify which counties that will be commented on. This will

aid in tracking changes and insure all stakeholders have an opportunity to make suggestions before the county file is submitted to the Census Bureau.

### **How to determine where changes need to be made**

Specific reviews will be performed as part of BBSP as outlined in the Types of Changes section above. All suggestions will involve adding or deleting features or flagging Census Edge boundaries with a “Must Hold” or “Do Not Hold” designation. Detailed instructions for suggestions can be found in the [BBSP Geographic Update Partnership Software Participant Guide](#).

### **Identify suggestions before webinar**

CEIC has developed a set of maps that provide boundaries for the 2020 prototype blocks and other Census boundaries. View the below maps to determine change areas, use the print feature at the bottom of the map to save areas of interest to PDF and make a note of the Block IDs you will be making suggestions on. This information will be needed during the webinar with CEIC or MSL.

Available interactive maps.

#### **2020 Census Prototype Block Map**

<http://ceic.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=7e5e5a19a53f4a788e6759658788fa5f>

To view the 2020 prototype blocks zoom into an area of interest. When you click on a block you can view a popup that contains the block number and the block size classification.

The icons along the bottom allow you to view a legend, turn on and off layers, change the basemap and print the map area in view. The print function and block ID can aid in submitting suggested changes to CEIC.

#### **2020 Prototype Block vs. 2010 Block Swipe Map**

<http://ceic.maps.arcgis.com/apps/StorytellingSwipe/index.html?appid=068999e70f4a4171bff40ba23454c5d3#>

This map can be used to compare the 2020 prototype blocks to the 2010 blocks. Zoom into an area of interest to load the blocks. 2020 blocks will appear in red on the left side of the slider and 2010 blocks will appear in blue to the right.

When a block is selected a popup will appear. As the slider is moved 2020 and 2010 boundaries and popup information will update. The block ID can aid in submitting suggested changes to CEIC.

#### **2010 Tract vs 2020 Tract Map**

<http://ceic.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=7c5e3577a0524dc08b197ee6452a9f5b>

The numbers of tracts have not changed and only minimal changes have occurred to the 271 tracts. Areas of change appear in yellow and red in this map. The icons at the bottom allow you to view a legend, turn on and off layers and swipe between layers.

The major changes at the tract level are listed below

- The two largest areas of change are in Flathead Lake just outside of Bigfork.
- An area of Northern Cheyenne Reservation has changed. This affects the tract level but not the block or tribal levels.
- An area outside of Three Forks has been adjusted to follow the river.
- Two other areas in Hungry Horse and outside Columbia Falls also have large changes.

### **Map with all available 2010 and 2020 boundaries**

<http://ceic.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d151385e756a49bd950b67c2bcd40922>

This map provides all available layers for 2010 and 2020. The icons along the bottom allow you to view a legend, turn on and off layers, change the basemap, take measurements and print the map area in view.

### **Schedule a GoToMeeting to submit change suggestions**

Email or call CEIC to setup a date and time for a webinar meeting. In this meeting we will add your BBSP suggestions into Geographic Update Partnership Software (GUPS). Please be prepared for the webinar with a detailed list of the suggestions you plan to make.

### **How to prepare for the webinar**

Compile a list of change suggestions along with PDF maps and Block IDs. Detailed directions can be found [here](#).

### **County Involvement**

Counties can serve as a state designee and perform work on the behalf of the State Redistricting Data Program Liaison, CEIC, but all work must be submitted to CEIC for final review and approval.

The Census Bureau has developed Geographic Update Partnership Software (GUPS) to make suggestions on BBSP. (This is the software that is currently used in BAS, Boundary and Annexation Survey, updates.) GUPS is the preferred method of submitting suggestions; however GIS software can be utilized if Census guidelines are strictly followed. See the [BBSP Using Your Own Software Participant Guide](#) for complete procedures. Please note that CEIC has some additional procedures that will be provided during training.

### **How do I get the software?**

GUPS software can be requested directly from CEIC and is available as a download link or on disk.

### **How do I get trained?**

Join the Montana GUPS webinar training on March 11, 9:00-12:00. This training will be specific to Montana and will be provided by the Census Bureau. If you are in Helena please join us at the CEIC office by reserving a seat.

Webinar link

<https://census.webex.com/census/j.php?MTID=mb12ee70e2e478d0e156c6ba60d6f02c0>

Phone information: 1-866-797-5128

Participant Code: 9272097

### **How do I get Census 2020 prototype block boundaries?**

County level files can be requested from CEIC. It is also possible to download files from the Census Bureau to use in a GIS; however the Census downloaded files can not be loaded into GUPS after use in GIS. If you plan on using GIS to suggest changes please contact CEIC to request county files.

#### Other useful documents

[BBSP Montana timeline](#)

[2020 Census Redistricting Briefing](#)

[Training and map links](#)