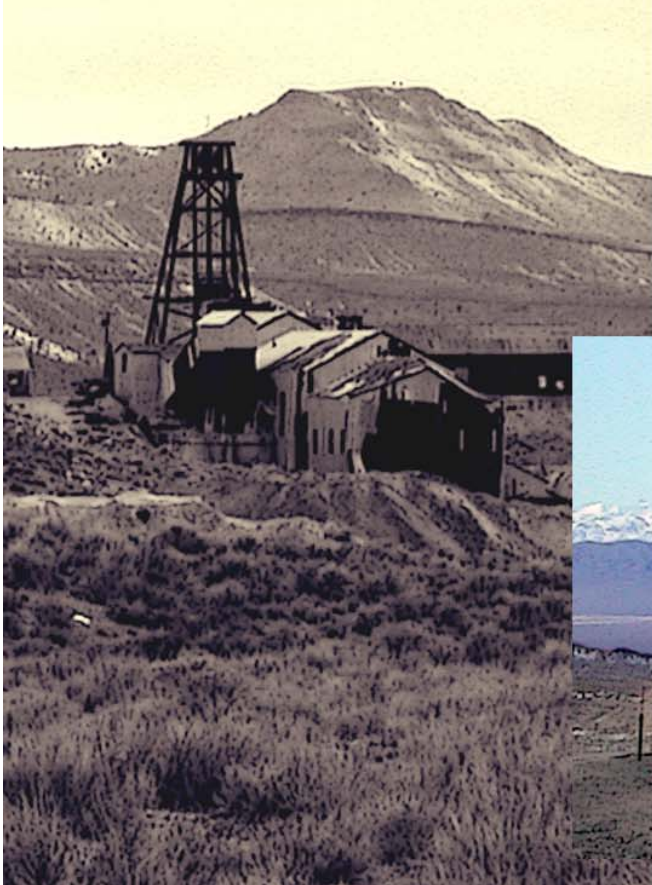




**An Investigation of
Residential
Dwellings
And Population:**

**Esmeralda County,
Nevada
March 2008**



Housing in Esmeralda County: A Brief History

Esmeralda County enjoys a long and proud record for mineral production, particularly precious metals. From glittering, bonanza ore bodies of Goldfield, Silver Peak, and Divide to some of the oldest mining districts in the State at Columbus Marsh, Montezuma, and Palmetto, the search for wealth has been rewarded.

Consistent with all of these and other mining booms in the county has been a rapid rise in population and the need for housing to support the influx of people. Often that housing was flimsy and transitory. When the early booms went bust, the prospector packed up what was valuable and capable of being moved. The advent of mobile homes and modular housing on wheels minimizes the cost of housing in a transitory local economy. Remnants of all types of abandoned housing can be found throughout the County.

Esmeralda County does not enjoy abundant water required to sustain agriculture in the arid region adjacent to Death Valley. Without rail transportation and far from the interstate highway, there is little opportunity or need for a modern city. What minimal population does call Esmeralda County home is dispersed in five clusters at Dyer/Fish Lake Valley, Gold Point, Goldfield, Silver Peak, and a single apartment complex west of Tonopah in Esmeralda County.

Fish Lake Valley does receive surface and groundwater runoff from the nearby peaks that do snare precipitation and does support modest agricultural employment. Dyer continues to host a U.S. Post Office. Goldfield remains the County Seat and is bisected by U.S. Highway 95. However, little but minimal government sector employment remains in this once proud boomtown. Gold Point retains some residents and numerous structures, but no longer sustains an active post office. The substantial portion of Esmeralda County residents formerly occupying a trailer court west of Tonopah on the highway is now abandoned. The lone county multi-family residential unit is the apartment complex in the adjacent location on the highway. Three of the four structures of this modest complex are located within Esmeralda County, and those inhabitants are county residents. Silver Peak is currently enjoying another revival from resource extraction, with lithium from brines contributing an important commodity to the global market. However, the small production labor force does not support a thriving local economy.



Population data is compiled and reported by the U. S. Census Bureau. Every ten years the enumeration of population determines the distribution of representation in Congress. Over the years, the methods of collection of official population counts have expanded and changed. States distributed revenues to counties based on formulas including number of inhabitants. Money for schools, highways, and public utilities among other services are distributed based on the population served. As interaction between federal and state agencies evolved over time, collaboration involved state estimates and projections for population in the years between the official census counts.

Tabulations of inhabitants are a critical element in the state and county budget process. Post-processing of population tabulations involves mathematical modeling using information garnered from other sources such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Internal Revenue Service, and these agency's state counterparts. However, this modeling assumes central tendencies for populations of similar characteristics. Esmeralda County is a statistical outlier in the population of U.S. counties, a unique case. Model outputs do not "fit" the county well, and county experience rarely matches model predictions and estimates.

In size, Esmeralda County is the equivalent of a small New England state. In inhabitants, few county units in the nation are smaller. Error is introduced to estimation when population characteristics are gathered from a sample, and those characteristics are proportionally assumed for the whole. That error can be estimated for the normal distribution, but the outlier is a unique case and must be examined as such.

Some residents drawn to such a remote and lonely location have their own reasons for protecting their privacy and have every constitutional right to that privacy. None of the local experts assisting in this study are identified, even by occupation, to protect *their* privacy and to assure confidentiality. This is not a tabulation of individuals, but is part of a larger effort to monitor and provide local feedback to the Department of Energy project at Yucca Mountain.



March 2008 Estimation of Population and Residential Dwelling Units



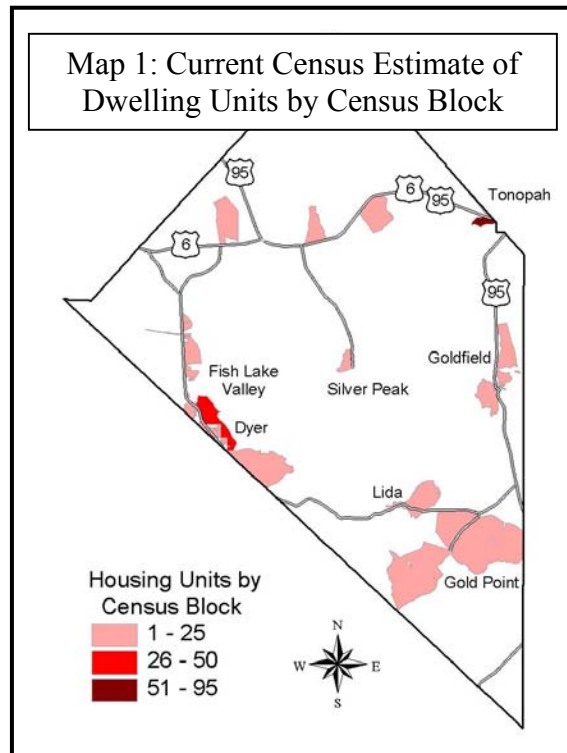
Two objectives stimulated this examination of population and housing in Esmeralda County. First, the U.S. Census is conducting a “dry-run” of new field data collecting procedures in preparation for the next decennial census. Without a street numbering system in the county, the Nevada State Demographer was stymied in providing an estimate of housing units to the U.S. Census Bureau. The Esmeralda County Repository Oversight Program required accurate estimates of population for planning and mitigation activities related to the proposed repository for spent fuel and high-level material at Yucca Mountain. This study utilized GIS aerial imagery and maps, and the local knowledge of several residents of long standing to identify habitable dwellings and estimate the number of residents.

Several limitations in this methodology are recognized. First, the definition of dwelling is carefully defined in the census (U.S. Census, 2008b. See Appendix A). Many of the structures in Esmeralda County are no longer suitable for occupation, and have been abandoned for considerable time. Without the assistance of knowledgeable experts, many such structures could be miss-identified as dwellings from the aerial imagery. Confidentiality is another concern. There is no public-records database linked to the GIS or to street records. This study identifies dwellings and numbers of residents at points in space within Census Block boundaries geo-referenced to the aerial photos. It does not identify individual residents, but is based on the familiarity with the local expert.

With a transitory population and wide-open empty spaces, this can only be a snapshot in time. Itinerant farm workers and their families may be missed. An occupied dwelling today could be vacant tomorrow. In this remote location, most want to be here because they value their independence and privacy. Some may have residences in other locations and rarely spend time in the county. However, for the period of late March 2008, it provides a local estimate of habitable dwellings and residents of Esmeralda County.



The 2008 Census Dress Rehearsal Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Program involves testing of procedures for the field collection of the sample data interviews on which the census is derived. Following this exercise, procedures for the 2010 decennial census will be finalized from the lessons learned. However, without street addresses, Esmeralda County posed a unique problem. Without addresses, the State Demographer had no ability to geocode addresses and estimate which Census Blocks within the county contain residents. They were prepared to use aerial imagery and digitize all structures that might be in use as residential dwellings. Such a methodology would result in a significant over-count of the actual number of residences in the county.



The major constraint on this investigation was time. The request for an estimate of residential dwellings came from the state on March 10, 2008. Their deadline for submission was the end of March. Due to the short time frame, a simple methodology was devised and data collection implemented on a two-week schedule. The estimate of inhabitable residential dwellings was digitally transmitted on March 26, 2008.

Local experts were asked to identify dwellings with Full-Time Residents and those units with Part-Time Residents that regularly occupy the unit, but would not be considered Full-Time occupants. Additionally, those structures that had recently been occupied and were not abandoned were identified as Vacant. There was no attempt to quantify abandoned structures.



Since an estimate of the number of current residents in the Esmeralda County was also desired, the local experts also provided that count for the occupied dwellings. These points and numbers, drawn on the map, were digitized in the GIS and population numbers for each point were added for each pertinent residential category in the associated data file. These data were summed by Census Block and for each community.

Esmeralda County Estimate of Population and Dwelling Units

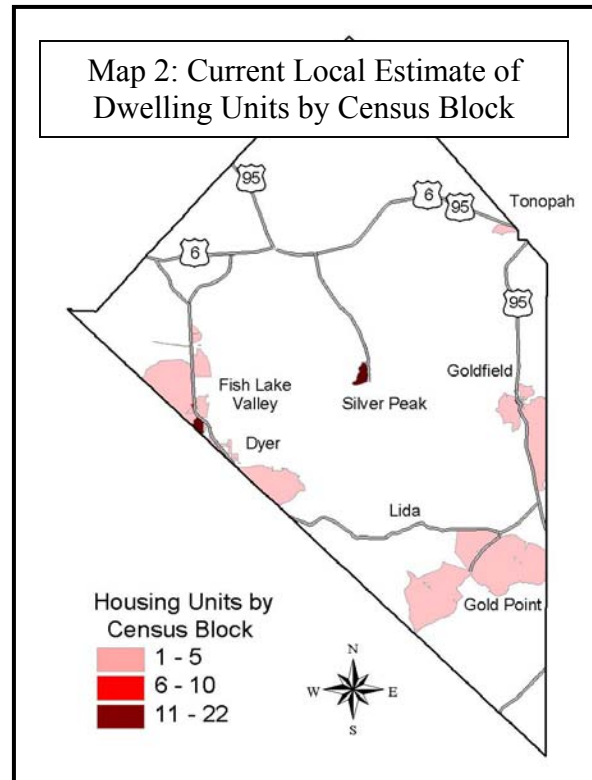
FULL TIME	PART TIME	TOTAL POP	VACANT	HOUSING UNITS	LOCATION
268	18	286	2	77	Fish Lake Valley
11	2	13	12	19	Gold Point
233	37	270	38	200	Goldfield
103	5	108	31	90	Silver Peak
101	0	101	0	1	Tonopah
716	62	778	83	387	County Total

From the current investigation, population counts indicate the Dyer/Fish Lake Valley contains slightly more inhabitants than Goldfield with an estimated 286 and 270 respectively. Silver Peak maintains a modest population of 108, while only 13 call Gold Point home. The current residents of the apartment complex west of Tonopah in Esmeralda County number only 101.

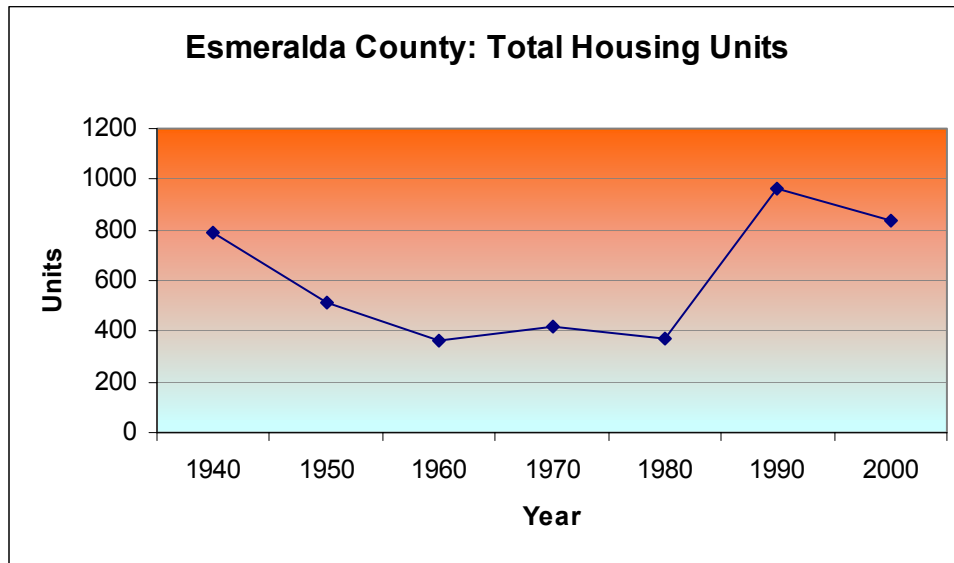
Mapping of the current distribution of residential dwelling units paints a very different portrait of the county than that in the census estimate. Of note is the decline in numbers west of Tonopah with the closed trailer park, and the large Census Blocks that no longer host inhabitants in remote mining camps. At the scale of this map, numerous small Blocks with residents are not evident.

The distribution of Esmeralda County residents is mainly concentrated in three locations: Dyer/Fish Lake Valley, Goldfield, and Silver Peak. The agricultural development in the Fish Lake Valley hosts dwellings dispersed among the fields while both Goldfield and Silver Peak show unmistakable development around mining production.

While estimates of residential dwelling units estimated in the current study diverge sharply from the official estimates, the current population estimate is remarkably consistent with the census projections. The most recent (2006) estimate of Esmeralda County population provided by the census is 790 persons. This study identified 778 current residents, dove-tailing well with the census estimate.



County and City Data Book Estimates of Housing Units

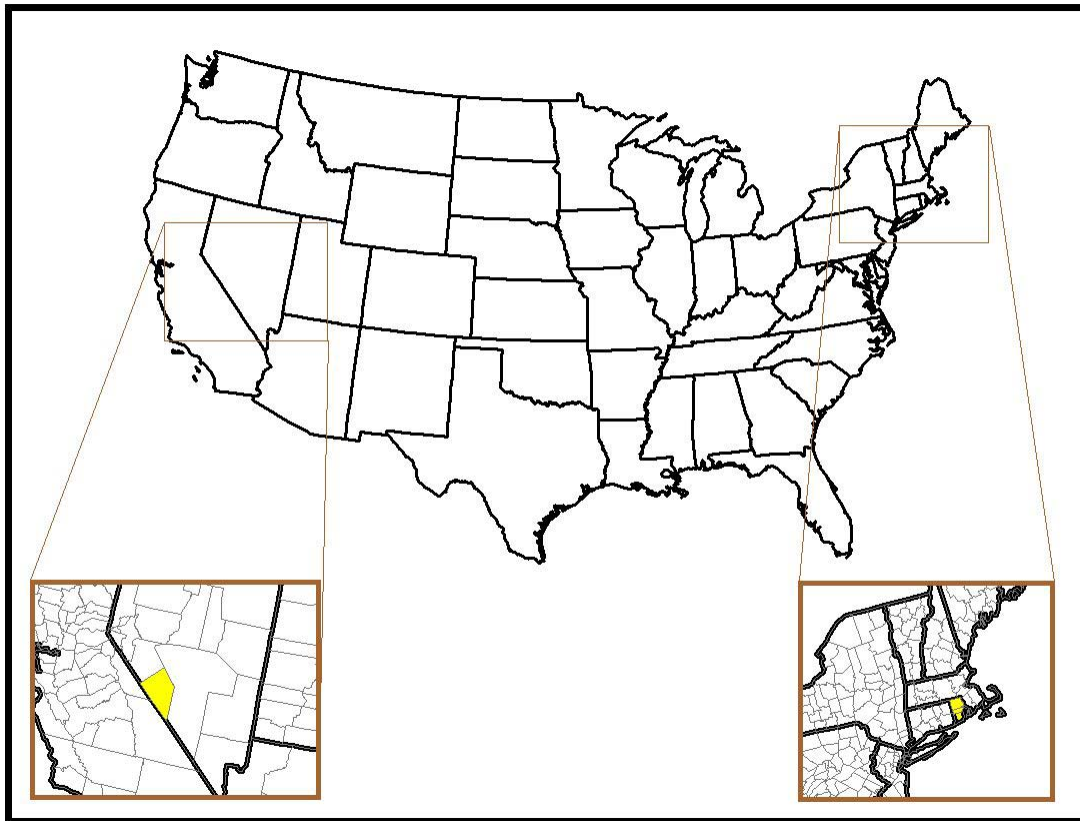


A comparison of the current housing unit count with the official estimate shows a clear divergence in magnitude. However, the current count of housing is consistent with the number of dwellings and trend prior to 1990. Renewed interest in the exploration of precious metals during the 1990 and 2000 decennial counts may explain the increase evident during the previous two counting intervals. A doubling of the current estimate would still not reach the estimated number of housing units reported for 2000, and a dramatic decline in habitable residential structures appears very real.

Open pit gold mining production in the historic Goldfield District began in the late 1980s, and production, exploration, and development work has been sporadic since that time (2008, Metallic Ventures Gold). Noranda, Cyprus, Newmont, Echo Bay, AMAX, and Kennecot are among the mining companies that sought to revive mining during this period. While several brief periods of production did occur on a limited scale, no new bonanza discoveries have revived the excitement of a century ago.

The increase in dwelling units in Esmeralda County during the 1990-2000 period is almost certainly related to increased employment in mining. Modern miners, and the industrial support workers also employed at modern mines, are often a transient lot traveling from job to job. Mobile homes and travel trailers are quickly and easily moved to a new job site as new opportunities arise.

As with previous boom and bust cycles, particularly those in Esmeralda County, with the decline of productive ore bodies, residents drift away and little remains of their presence but holes in the ground and piles of waste rock. It would appear that available local housing has returned to the levels of the 1980s.



The U.S. Census, collaborating with state agencies, provides a projection series between the official decennial counts. The County and City Data Book series is available on the World Wide Web through the American Fact finder portal (U.S. Census, 2008). According to 2006 public estimates published in the Table 1 ranking of size and population on this website, Esmeralda County ranks 150th of all U.S. counties in area. The population estimate ranks Esmeralda County at 3,113 out of 3,141 in the nation, 28th from the bottom as least populated county. The estimated 2006 population is 790 residents. The results of this study suggest the actual population is somewhat less than even this tiny figure. Table 7 from the same web report presents an estimate of dwelling units for 2005 in Esmeralda County of 865. The difference between this estimate and the current local estimate of housing is striking.

Several plausible explanations are readily obvious. One is a systematic over-count in habitable dwellings, at least over recent years. Time-series data collection and modeling utilize consistent data collected over consistent intervals. Previous estimates assume known characteristics and become the best predictor for the next interval. The difference between a small but steady decline in a small base instead of a small, steady increase can quickly and significantly magnify.

It is possible that the methodology used for this quickly organized investigation significantly under counted the number of dwellings and residents. Connections for

public services--sewer, water, and power--are limited in this remote desert upland of western Nevada, and those residents living off the power grid and away from the notice of their neighbors are likely small. Such residents would not likely be counted through official methods in any event. In an examination of aerial imagery during the entry of data provided by the local volunteers, there do appear to be areas with vacant but recently inhabited dwellings.

The Fish Lake Valley area in particular appears to have more vacant housing units than have been gathered to this point. However, whenever the local experts were questioned on the status of specific locations, they were familiar with the previous resident and provided an explanation for the vacancy. We are cautiously confident that this estimate is much closer for both residents and housing units than those estimated by the census.

Another explanation could be related to the transient nature of employment in resource extractive industries. Migrant farm-workers certainly have and do seek employment on the ranches and with producers of alfalfa and hay in the western county. Previous years saw public works construction and employment in mineral exploration supporting residents that were not present during March of 2008.

This investigation clearly indicates the population of Esmeralda County is substantially lower than recent, official estimates. The old town site of Lida, now a private ranch, is currently uninhabited but for sale. Other more remote locations of sporadic mining activity reportedly do not currently sustain residents. However, a field trip to check the status of historic sites on Oriental Wash in the southern portion of the county revealed a large residence of fairly recent construction that appeared occupied. Behind a locked gate near the head of the canyon, a field-glass search disclosed an old cabin and travel trailer that both appeared habitable. Several locations in Fish Lake Valley appear from the aerial photographs as suitable for occupation, but were not flagged for addition.

It does appear some dwellings and inhabitants were missed in this study. The possibility of missing half the residents and dwellings, using locale expert knowledge, seems highly unlikely. Clearly, the official estimates for both population and housing are inflated and should be revised downward. If a more refined estimate is desirable, field checking this estimate and interviewing residents and experts would not require significant additional effort.



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U.S. Census Bureau, 2008a. *County and City Data Book: 2007*. Accessed online 4/10/2008. <http://www.census.gov/statab/ccdb/ccdbstcounty.html>

U.S. Census Bureau, 2008b. *Housing Characteristics*. Accessed online 4/10/2008. http://www.census.gov/geo/lv4help/apen_bhous.html#LIVING

Appendix A: U.S. Census Housing Definitions

http://www.census.gov/geo/lv4help/apen_bhous.html#LIVING

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

LIVING QUARTERS

Living quarters are classified as either housing units or group quarters. (For more information, see the discussion of "Group Quarters" under Population Characteristics.) Usually, living quarters are in structures intended for residential use (for example, a one-family home, apartment house, hotel or motel, boarding house, or mobile home). Living quarters also may be in structures intended for nonresidential use (for example, the rooms in a warehouse where a guard lives), as well as in places such as tents, vans, shelters for the homeless, dormitories, barracks, and old railroad cars.

Housing Units--A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms or a single room occupied as separate living quarters or, if vacant, intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall.

The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements. For vacant units, the criteria of separateness and direct access are applied to the intended occupants whenever possible. If that information cannot be obtained, the criteria are applied to the previous occupants.

Both occupied and vacant housing units are included in the housing unit inventory, except that recreational vehicles, boats, vans, tents, railroad cars, and the like are included only if they are occupied as someone's usual place of residence. Vacant mobile homes are included provided they are intended for occupancy on the site where they stand. Vacant mobile homes on dealers' sales lots, at the factory, or in storage yards are excluded from the housing inventory.

If the living quarters contains nine or more persons unrelated to the householder or person in charge (a total of at least 10 unrelated persons), it is classified as group quarters. If the living quarters contains eight or fewer persons unrelated to the householder or person in charge, it is classified as a housing unit.

Occupied Housing Units--A housing unit is classified as occupied if it is the usual place of residence of the person or group of persons living in it at the time of enumeration, or if the occupants are only temporarily absent; that is, away on vacation or business. If all the persons staying in the unit at the time of the census have their usual place of residence

elsewhere, the unit is classified as vacant. A household includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. By definition, the count of occupied housing units for 100-percent tabulations is the same as the count of households or householders. In sample tabulations, the counts of household and occupied housing units may vary slightly because of different sample weighting methods.

Vacant Housing Units--A housing unit is vacant if no one is living in it at the time of enumeration, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. Units temporarily occupied at the time of enumeration entirely by persons who have a usual residence elsewhere also are classified as vacant. (For more information, see discussion under "Usual Home Elsewhere.") New units not yet occupied are classified as vacant housing units if construction has reached a point where all exterior windows and doors are installed and final usable floors are in place. Vacant units are excluded if they are open to the elements; that is, the roof, walls, windows, and/or doors no longer protect the interior from the elements, or if there is positive evidence (such as a sign on the house or in the block) that the unit is condemned or is to be demolished. Also excluded are quarters being used entirely for nonresidential purposes, such as a store or an office, or quarters used for the storage of business supplies or inventory, machinery, or agricultural products.

Hotels, Motels, Rooming Houses, Etc.--Occupied rooms or suites of rooms in hotels, motels, and similar places are classified as housing units only when occupied by permanent residents; that is, persons who consider the hotel as their usual place of residence or have no usual place of residence elsewhere. Vacant rooms or suites of rooms are classified as housing units only in those hotels, motels, and similar places in which 75 percent or more of the accommodations are occupied by permanent residents.

If any of the occupants in a rooming or boarding house live and eat separately from others in the building and have direct access, their quarters are classified as separate housing units.

Staff Living Quarters--The living quarters occupied by staff personnel within any group quarters are separate housing units if they satisfy the housing unit criteria of separateness and direct access; otherwise, they are considered group quarters.

Comparability--The first Census of Housing in 1940 established the "dwelling unit" concept. Although the term became "housing unit" and the definition has been modified slightly in succeeding censuses, the 1990 definition is essentially comparable to previous censuses. There was no change in the housing unit definition between 1980 and 1990.

BOARDED-UP STATUS

Boarded-up status was obtained from questionnaire item C2 and was determined for all vacant units. Boarded-up units have windows and doors covered by wood, metal, or masonry to protect the interior and to prevent entry into the building. A single-unit structure, a unit in a multi-unit structure, or an entire multi-unit structure may be boarded-

up in this way. For certain census data products, boarded-up units are shown only for units in the "Other vacant" category. A unit classified as "Usual home elsewhere" can never be boarded up. (For more information, see the discussion under "Usual Home Elsewhere.")

CONTRACT RENT

The data on contract rent (also referred to as "rent asked" for vacant units) were obtained from questionnaire item H7a, which was asked at all occupied housing units that were rented for cash rent and all vacant housing units that were for rent at the time of enumeration.

Housing units that are renter occupied without payment of cash rent are shown separately as "No cash rent" in census data products. The unit may be owned by friends or relatives who live elsewhere and who allow occupancy without charge. Rent-free houses or apartments may be provided to compensate caretakers, ministers, tenant farmers, sharecroppers, or others.

Contract rent is the monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included. For vacant units, it is the monthly rent asked for the rental unit at the time of enumeration.

If the contract rent includes rent for a business unit or for living quarters occupied by another household, the respondent was instructed to report that part of the rent estimated to be for his or her unit only. Respondents were asked to report rent only for the housing unit enumerated and to exclude any rent paid for additional units or for business premises.

If a renter pays rent to the owner of a condominium or cooperative, and the condominium fee or cooperative carrying charge is also paid by the renter to the owner, the respondent was instructed to include the fee or carrying charge.

If a renter receives payments from lodgers or roomers who are listed as members of the household, the respondent was instructed to report the rent without deduction for any payments received from the lodgers or roomers. The respondent was instructed to report the rent agreed to or contracted for even if paid by someone else such as friends or relatives living elsewhere, or a church or welfare agency. In some tabulations, contract rent is presented for all renter-occupied housing units, as well as specified renter-occupied and vacant-for-rent units. Specified renter-occupied and specified vacant-for-rent units exclude one-family houses on 10 or more acres. (For more information on rent, see the discussion under "Gross Rent.")

Median and Quartile Contract Rent--The median divides the rent distribution into two equal parts. Quartiles divide the rent distribution into four equal parts. In computing median and quartile contract rent, units reported as "No cash rent" are excluded. Median

and quartile rent calculations are rounded to the nearest whole dollar. (For more information on medians and quartiles, see the discussion under "Derived Measures.")

Aggregate Contract Rent--To calculate aggregate contract rent, the amount assigned for the category "Less than \$80" is \$50. The amount assigned to the category "\$1,000 or more" is \$1,250. Mean contract rent is rounded to the nearest whole dollar. (For more information on aggregates and means, see the discussion under "Derived Measures.")

Limitation of the Data--In the 1970 and 1980 censuses, contract rent for vacant units had high allocation rates, about 35 percent.

Comparability--Data on this item have been collected since 1930. For 1990, quartiles were added because the range of rents and values in the United States has increased in recent years. Upper and lower quartiles can be used to note large rent and value differences among various geographic areas.

GROSS RENT

Gross rent is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid for by the renter (or paid for the renter by someone else). Gross rent is intended to eliminate differentials which result from varying practices with respect to the inclusion of utilities and fuels as part of the rental payment. The estimated costs of utilities and fuels are reported on a yearly basis but are converted to monthly figures for the tabulations. Renter units occupied without payment of cash rent are shown separately as "No cash rent" in the tabulations. Gross rent is calculated on a sample basis.

Comparability--Data on gross rent have been collected since 1940 for renter-occupied housing units. In 1980, costs for electricity and gas were collected as average monthly costs. In 1990, all utility and fuel costs were collected as yearly costs and divided by 12 to provide an average monthly cost.

GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989

Gross rent as a percentage of household income in 1989 is a computed ratio of monthly gross rent to monthly household income (total household income in 1989 divided by 12). The ratio was computed separately for each unit and was rounded to the nearest whole percentage. Units for which no cash rent is paid and units occupied by households that reported no income or a net loss in 1989 comprise the category "Not computed." This item is calculated on a sample basis.

KITCHEN FACILITIES

Data on kitchen facilities were obtained from questionnaire item H11, which was asked at both occupied and vacant housing units. A unit has complete kitchen facilities when it has all of the following: (1) an installed sink with piped water, (2) a range, cook top and

convection or microwave oven, or cookstove, and (3) a refrigerator. All kitchen facilities must be located in the structure. They need not be in the same room. Portable cooking equipment is not considered a range or cookstove. An ice box is not considered to be a refrigerator.

Comparability--Data on complete kitchen facilities were collected for the first time in 1970. Earlier censuses collected data on individual components, such as kitchen sink and type of refrigeration equipment. In 1970 and 1980, data for kitchen facilities were shown only for year-round units. In 1990, data are shown for all housing units.

PERSONS IN UNIT

This item is based on the 100-percent count of persons in occupied housing units. All persons occupying the housing unit are counted, including the householder, occupants related to the householder, and lodgers, roomers, boarders, and so forth.

The data on "persons in unit" show the number of housing units occupied by the specified number of persons. The phrase "persons in unit" is used for housing tabulations, "persons in households" for population items. Figures for "persons in unit" match those for "persons in household" for 100-percent data products. In sample products, they may differ because of the weighting process.

Median Persons in Unit--In computing median persons in unit, a whole number is used as the midpoint of an interval; thus, a unit with 4 persons is treated as an interval ranging from 3.5 to 4.5 persons. Median persons is rounded to the nearest hundredth. (For more information on medians, see the discussion under "Derived Measures.")

Persons in Occupied Housing Units--This is the total population minus those persons living in group quarters. "Persons per occupied housing unit" is computed by dividing the population living in housing units by the number of occupied housing units.

POVERTY STATUS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN 1989

The data on poverty status of households were derived from answers to the income questions. The income items were asked on a sample basis. Households are classified below the poverty level when the total 1989 income of the family or of the nonfamily householder is below the appropriate poverty threshold. The income of persons living in the household who are unrelated to the householder is not considered when determining the poverty status of a household, nor does their presence affect the household size in determining the appropriate poverty threshold. The poverty thresholds vary depending upon three criteria: size of family, number of children, and age of the family householder or unrelated individual for one and two-persons households. (For more information, see the discussion of "Poverty Status in 1989" and "Income in 1989" under Population Characteristics.)

SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS

The data on selected monthly owner costs were obtained from questionnaire items H20 through H26 for a sample of owner-occupied one-family houses, condominiums, and mobile homes. Selected monthly owner costs is the sum of payments for mortgages, deeds of trust, contracts to purchase, or similar debts on the property (including payments for the first mortgage, second or junior mortgages, and home equity loans); real estate taxes; fire, hazard, and flood insurance on the property; utilities (electricity, gas, and water); and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.). It also includes, where appropriate, the monthly condominium fee for condominiums and mobile home costs (personal property taxes, site rent, registration fees, and license fees) for mobile homes.

In certain tabulations, selected monthly owner costs are presented separately for specified owner-occupied housing units (owner-occupied one-family houses on fewer than 10 acres without a business or medical office on the property), owner-occupied condominiums, and owner-occupied mobile homes. Data usually are shown separately for units "with a mortgage" and for units "not mortgaged."

Median Selected Monthly Owner Costs--This measure is rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

Comparability--The components of selected monthly owner costs were collected for the first time in 1980. The 1990 tabulations of selected monthly owner costs for specified owner-occupied housing units are virtually identical to 1980, the primary difference was the amounts of the first and second mortgages were collected in separate questions in 1990, while the amounts were collected in a single question in 1980. The component parts of the item were tabulated for mobile homes and condominiums for the first time in 1990. In 1980, costs for electricity and gas were collected as average monthly costs. In 1990, all utility and fuel costs were collected as yearly costs and divided by 12 to provide an average monthly cost.

SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989

The information on selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income in 1989 is the computed ratio of selected monthly owner costs to monthly household income in 1989. The ratio was computed separately for each unit and rounded to the nearest whole percentage. The data are tabulated separately for specified owner-occupied units, condominiums, and mobile homes.

Separate distributions are often shown for units "with a mortgage" and for units "not mortgaged." Units occupied by households reporting no income or a net loss in 1989 are included in the "not computed" category. (For more information, see the discussion under "Selected Monthly Owner Costs.")

Comparability--The components of selected monthly owner costs were collected for the first time in 1980. The tabulations of "Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of

Household Income in 1989" for specified owner-occupied housing units are comparable to 1980.

TENURE

The data for tenure were obtained from questionnaire item H4, which was asked at all occupied housing units. All occupied housing units are classified as either owner occupied or renter occupied.

Owner Occupied--A housing unit is owner occupied if the owner or co-owner lives in the unit even if it is mortgaged or not fully paid for. The owner or co-owner must live in the unit and usually is the person listed in column 1 of the questionnaire. The unit is "Owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan" if it is being purchased with a mortgage or some other debt arrangement such as a deed of trust, trust deed, contract to purchase, land contract, or purchase agreement. The unit is also considered owned with a mortgage if it is built on leased land and there is a mortgage on the unit.

A housing unit is "Owned by you or someone in this household free and clear (without a mortgage)" if there is no mortgage or other similar debt on the house, apartment, or mobile home including units built on leased land if the unit is owned outright without a mortgage. Although owner-occupied units are divided between mortgaged and owned free and clear on the questionnaire, census data products containing 100-percent data show only total owner-occupied counts. More extensive mortgage information was collected on the long-form questionnaire and are shown in census products containing sample data. (For more information, see the discussion under "Mortgage Status.")

Renter Occupied--All occupied housing units which are not owner occupied, whether they are rented for cash rent or occupied without payment of cash rent, are classified as renter occupied. "No cash rent" units are separately identified in the rent tabulations. Such units are generally provided free by friends or relatives or in exchange for services such as resident manager, caretaker, minister, or tenant farmer. Housing units on military bases also are classified in the "No cash rent" category. "Rented for cash rent" includes units in continuing care, sometimes called life care arrangements. These arrangements usually involve a contract between one or more individuals and a health services provider guaranteeing the individual shelter, usually a house or apartment, and services, such as meals or transportation to shopping or recreation.

Comparability--Data on tenure have been collected since 1890. In 1970, the question on tenure also included a category for condominium and cooperative ownership. In 1980, condominium units and cooperatives were dropped from the tenure item, and since 1980, only condominium units are identified in a separate question.

For 1990, the response categories were expanded to allow the respondent to report whether the unit was owned with a mortgage or free and clear (without a mortgage). The distinction between units owned with a mortgage and units owned free and clear was

added in 1990 to improve the count of owner-occupied units. Research after the 1980 census indicated some respondents did not consider their units owned if they had a mortgage.

USUAL HOME ELSEWHERE

The data for usual home elsewhere are obtained from questionnaire item B, which was completed by census employees. A housing unit temporarily occupied at the time of enumeration entirely by persons with a usual residence elsewhere is classified as vacant. The occupants are classified as having a "Usual home elsewhere" and are counted at the address of their usual place of residence. Typical examples are people in a vacation home, persons renting living quarters temporarily for work, and migrant workers.

Limitation of the Data--Evidence from previous censuses suggests that in some areas enumerators marked units as "vacant--usual home elsewhere" when they should have marked "vacant--regular." **Comparability**--Data for usual home elsewhere was tabulated for the first time in 1980.

VACANCY STATUS

The data on vacancy status were obtained from questionnaire item C1, which was completed by census enumerators. Vacancy status and other characteristics of vacant units were determined by enumerators obtaining information from landlords, owners, neighbors, rental agents, and others. Vacant units are subdivided according to their housing market classification as follows:

For Rent--These are vacant units offered "for rent," and vacant units offered either "for rent" or "for sale."

For Sale Only--These are vacant units being offered "for sale only," including units in cooperatives and condominium projects if the individual units are offered "for sale only."

Rented or Sold, Not Occupied--If any money rent has been paid or agreed upon but the new renter has not moved in as of the date of enumeration, or if the unit has recently been sold but the new owner has not yet moved in, the vacant unit is classified as "rented or sold, not occupied."

For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use--These are vacant units used or intended for use only in certain seasons or for weekend or other occasional use throughout the year.

Seasonal units include those used for summer or winter sports or recreation, such as beach cottages and hunting cabins. Seasonal units also may include quarters for such workers as herders and loggers. Interval ownership units, sometimes called shared-ownership or time-sharing condominiums, also are included here.

For Migrant Workers--These include vacant units intended for occupancy by migratory workers employed in farm work during the crop season. (Work in a cannery, a freezer plant, or a food-processing plant is not farm work.)

Other Vacant--If a vacant unit does not fall into any of the classifications specified above, it is classified as "other vacant." For example, this category includes units held for occupancy by a caretaker or janitor, and units held for personal reasons of the owner.

Homeowner Vacancy Rate--This is the percentage relationship between the number of vacant units for sale and the total homeowner inventory. It is computed by dividing the number of vacant units for sale only by the sum of the owner-occupied units and the number of vacant units that are for sale only.

Rental Vacancy Rate--This is the percentage relationship of the number of vacant units for rent to the total rental inventory. It is computed by dividing the number of vacant units for rent by the sum of the renter-occupied units and the number of vacant units for rent.

Comparability--Data on vacancy status have been collected since 1940. For 1990, the category, "seasonal/recreational/occasional use" combined vacant units classified in 1980 as "seasonal or migratory" and "held for occasional use." Also, in 1970 and 1980, housing characteristics generally were presented only for year-round units. In 1990, housing characteristics are shown for all housing units.

VALUE

The data on value (also referred to as "price asked" for vacant units) were obtained from questionnaire item H6, which was asked at housing units that were owned, being bought, or vacant for sale at the time of enumeration. Value is the respondent's estimate of how much the property (house and lot, mobile home and lot, or condominium unit) would sell for if it were for sale. If the house or mobile home was owned or being bought, but the land on which it sits was not, the respondent was asked to estimate the combined value of the house or mobile home and the land. For vacant units, value was the price asked for the property.

Value was tabulated separately for all owner-occupied and vacant-for-sale housing units, owner-occupied and vacant-for-sale mobile homes or trailers, and specified owner-occupied and specified vacant-for-sale housing units. Specified owner-occupied and specified vacant-for-sale housing units include only one-family houses on fewer than 10 acres without a business or medical office on the property. The data for "specified units" exclude mobile homes, houses with a business or medical office, houses on 10 or more acres, and housing units in multi-unit buildings.

Median and Quartile Value--The median divides the value distribution into two equal parts. Quartiles divide the value distribution into four equal parts. These measures are

rounded to the nearest hundred dollars. (For more information on medians and quartiles, see the discussion under "Derived Measures.")

Aggregate Value--To calculate aggregate value, the amount assigned for the category "Less than \$10,000" is \$9,000. The amount assigned to the category "\$500,000 or more" is \$600,000. Mean value is rounded to the nearest hundred dollars. (For more information on aggregates and means, see the discussion under "Derived Measures.")

Comparability--In 1980, value was asked only at owner-occupied or vacant-for-sale one-family houses on fewer than 10 acres with no business or medical office on the property and at all owner-occupied or vacant-for-sale condominium housing units. Mobile homes were excluded. Value data were presented for specified owner-occupied housing units, specified vacant-for-sale-only housing units, and owner-occupied condominium housing units.

In 1990, the question was asked at all owner-occupied or vacant-for-sale-only housing units with no exclusions. Data presented for specified owner-occupied and specified vacant-for-sale-only housing units will include one-family condominium houses but not condominiums in multi-unit structures since condominium units are now identified only in long-form questionnaires.

For 1990, quartiles have been added because the range of values and rents in the United States has increased in recent years. Upper and lower quartiles can be used to note large value and rent differences among various geographic areas.

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

The data on year structure built were obtained from questionnaire item H17, which was asked at both occupied and vacant housing units. This item was asked on a sample basis. Data on year structure built refer to when the building was first constructed, not when it was remodeled, added to, or converted. For housing units under construction that met the housing unit definition--that is, all exterior windows, doors, and final usable floors were in place--the category "1989 or March 1990" was used. For a houseboat or a mobile home or trailer, the manufacturer's model year was assumed to be the year built. The figures shown in census data products relate to the number of units built during the specified periods that were still in existence at the time of enumeration.

Median Year Structure Built--The median divides the distribution into two equal parts. The median is rounded to the nearest calendar year. Median age of housing can be obtained by subtracting median year structure built from 1990. For example, if the median year structure built is 1957, the median age of housing in that area is 33 years (1990 minus 1957).

Limitation of the Data--Data on year structure built are more susceptible to errors of response and nonreporting than data on many other items because respondents must rely on their memory or on estimates by persons who have lived in the neighborhood a long

time. Available evidence indicates there is underreporting in the older-year-structure-built categories, especially "Built in 1939 or earlier." The introduction of the "Don't know" category (see the discussion on "Comparability") may have resulted in relatively higher allocation rates. Data users should refer to the discussion in Appendix C, Accuracy of the Data, and to the allocation tables.

Comparability--Data on year structure built were collected for the first time in the 1940 census. Since then, the response categories have been modified to accommodate the 10-year period between each census. In 1990, the category, "Don't Know," was added in an effort to minimize the response error mentioned in the paragraph above on limitation of the data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

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