Rural Population Change

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The BIG Picture: Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Population Change since 1790

- Metropolitan Growth
- Nonmetropolitan Stagnation
Rural Population Change in a Rapidly Urbanizing Society

The 3 D’s . . .

- **Depopulation**: Rural Population Decline
- **Deaths**: Natural Decrease (excess of deaths over births)
- **Diversity**: Growth of Racial Minorities and Immigrants
Depopulation: Unprecedented Population Decline of Rural America
Population change by metro/nonmetro status, 1976-2015

Depopulation in South Dakota: An Example

- 8 of South Dakota counties – all metro – accounted for 96.9% of growth 2000-2010
- 58 nonmetro counties accounted for an additional 1,848 people between 2000-2010
Deaths: From Cradles to Caskets . . . or From Baptisms to Funerals
Figure 1. Counties with more deaths than births, 1950 to 2012

Source: U.S. Census FSCPE Estimates and National Center for Health Statistics
Analysis: K.M. Johnson, Carsey Institute, University of New Hampshire
Source: SDSU’s Rural Life and Census Data Center, based on 2010 U.S. Decennial Census
Diversity: Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanic Growth
Rural Minority Populations are Geographically Concentrated
Widespread Dispersion in Minority Population across U.S. County, Percentage Change, 2000 to 2010

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File, Tables P1 and P2; and 2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File, Tables P1 and P2.
Shares of Nonmetropolitan Growth Due to White and Minority Population Growth, 2000-2010

Source: Lichter 2012, based on U.S. decennial census
Implications . . . and Big Demographic Challenges

- Rural America is facing depopulation, deaths, and diversity – the 3 D’s of rural population change

- Older, poorer, and more diverse populations have different needs for medical, legal, and social services

- Rural areas of chronic outmigration and population decline are not likely to attract highly-educated professionals (lacking urban amenities, marriage partners, good schools, health care, etc.)
Thank you . . .

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