



Total Population [Census Tract]

This EnviroAtlas national demographic map layer displays the total population estimated from 2008–2012 American Community Survey Derived Summary Tables and displayed by census tract.

Why is total population data important?

Total population is a baseline measure that also serves as the denominator when calculating proportional population metrics such as impervious cover per capita and percent population below poverty level. Population represents demand for ecosystem services, with larger populations requiring more clean drinking water, natural hazard buffering, recreational open space, and other amenities.

From a planning perspective, the risks of adverse health conditions in the total population could be reduced by increasing the extent and distribution of urban [green infrastructure](#). Physical exercise and engagement with nature, facilitated by conserved green space, have been linked in numerous studies to health and well-being in all age groups. Tree cover also reduces heat and provides cleaner air by reducing concentrations of airborne particles and gaseous pollutants. Addressing inequalities in the distribution of ecosystem services by income group or by rural-urban differences may improve the health and well-being of the entire population.

How can I use this information?

This demographic information can be used in conjunction with EnviroAtlas data on ecosystem services and environmental hazards. Areas with significant disparities can be identified, and planners can consider additional investments to provide services to meet existing or projected demand.

Other pertinent EnviroAtlas data layers may be found in the table of contents under the People and Built Spaces icon. This group of metrics covers community and national population metrics, measures of housing, employment, commuting, and job accessibility.

How were the data for this map created?

This map layer for Total Population was created by combining the U.S. Census 2010 TIGER/Shapefile boundary data for census tracts with the population data found in the 2008–2012 American Community Survey Derived Summary Tables. Census tracts are geographic units of variable size



depending on population density; they have a population size that varies between 1200 and 8,000 people. Census tracts are maintained over the long term to facilitate statistical comparisons between census counts, though they may be split or merged with population growth or decline.

What are the limitations of these data?

Population data are supplied by census tracts to preserve the privacy of individuals. It is important to remember that residents are not distributed evenly throughout the area of a census tract. The data are estimates from a five year time period. Summary File estimates and margins of error for each release are available via the [Summary File Data](#) page.

How can I access these data?

EnviroAtlas data can be viewed in the interactive map, accessed through web services, or downloaded. American Community Survey (ACS) summary file data may be downloaded from the ACS [website](#). [Summary file documentation](#) is also available online offering technical user manuals and tools.

Where can I get more information?

Access the metadata for the data layer from the drop down menu on the interactive map table of contents. To ask specific questions about this data layer, please contact the [EnviroAtlas Team](#).

Acknowledgments

The data for this map were prepared by Timothy Wade, EPA. The fact sheet was created by Sandra Bryce, Innovate!, Inc.