

**News Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Campaign Underway to Ensure Northwest Michigan Communities are Counted in Last Month of Census**

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI – A new advertising campaign is underway in Northwest Lower Michigan in response to a new Census response deadline slated for September 30. Getting an accurate count is challenging under usual circumstances but it is even more difficult during all the disruptions related to COVID-19. The Northwest Counts campaign will focus on boosting responses in the parts of the region with the lowest Census response rates. The ads will drive traffic to a new web page, NorthwestCounts.com, that will help make responding to the Census easy. The campaign is being coordinated by Networks Northwest which is serving as the regional Census Hub Administrator for the statewide Be Counted Census 2020 Campaign.

“Networks Northwest is leading with northern Michigan in mind, we know the long-term impact of a low count and we are constantly working for a fair and accurate representation of our rural communities,” said Autumn Reyhl, Census Hub Administrator. “Many of the resources people across our region rely on are directed by census data. An undercount will threaten access to the resources needed by many. We are calling on our community to respond.”

The advertising campaign has three main goals:

- Engage and educate the undercounted communities about the importance of the 2020 Census.
- Familiarize communities with the 2020 Census process.
- Develop and implement effective strategies to boost Census participation and support communities beyond the life of the project.

(MORE)

The Census is scheduled to be completed on September 30. A complete and accurate count is vital for communities and it is important for everyone to fill out the Census including permanent and seasonal residents, renters, college students, and immigrants. Census data is used to distribute funding for road repairs, school improvements, and social programs. Michigan stands to lose \$1,800 per person per year of federal funding to support programs that use Census data. Without an accurate Census count of our entire community, the potential for leaving much needed resources on the table for our 10-county region is at risk. The nine question Census takes less than 10 minutes to fill out and will help ensure that our region will receive its share of resources for the next 10 years.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Dan Boss at [dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org) and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: [networksnorthwest.org/media](http://networksnorthwest.org/media)

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our web site, [networksnorthwest.org](http://networksnorthwest.org) Networks Northwest's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.