



July 15, 2026

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Legal and Administrative Area Boundaries Branch
Geography Division
U.S. Census Bureau
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SUBJECT: Boundary Quality Project (BQP) to improve the to improve the spatial accuracy of the county boundaries delineated from the 1:24,000-scale USGS topographic maps.

Dear Mike:

Per our meeting conversation with the U.S. Census Bureau on December 18, we are formally requesting that the spatial accuracy of the county boundaries be delineated from the 1:24,000-scale USGS topographic maps, the officially recognized county boundary in accordance with W.Va. Code §7-2-6.

Under [West Virginia Code § 7-2-6](#), official county boundary lines in West Virginia are established using 1:24,000 topographic quadrangle maps prepared by the United States Geological Survey and the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey.

A [GIS file](#) of the official county boundaries can be downloaded from the WV State GIS Data Clearinghouse. This official statewide county boundary GIS file includes county line changes submitted to the Census Bureau during the past decade via court orders.

CHAPTER 7. COUNTY COMMISSIONS AND OFFICERS.

ARTICLE 2. COUNTY AND DISTRICT BOUNDARIES; CHANGE OF COUNTY SEAT AND NAMES OF UNINCORPORATED TOWNS AND OF DISTRICTS.

§7-2-6. Establishment of county boundary lines; filing of maps; changes.

The boundary lines between the several counties of the state shall be established in the following manner: Topographic quadrangle maps prepared by the United States geological survey and the West Virginia geological and economic survey in conformance with prior acts of the general assembly of Virginia, acts of the Legislature of West Virginia and other applicable provisions of law, shall be filed by the state geologist with the Secretary of State of West Virginia and shall thereafter constitute the official boundary lines between the said counties: Provided, however, That said boundary lines shall be located, plotted and delineated upon said maps together with any other pertinent information with reference thereto and each of said maps shall be certified as correct by the director and state geologist of the West Virginia geological and economic survey prior to such filing. Certified copies of all such maps shall be filed with the Legislative Auditor for use in the legislative library and a certified copy of each county map shall be filed in the office of the clerk of the county court of that county and recorded in an appropriate deed book or plat book.

All county boundary lines which are or may be established by metes and bounds (by bearings and distances between monuments) by the Legislature or pursuant to section one of this article shall constitute an official change in such boundary line or lines and the director and state geologist of the West Virginia geological and economic survey shall promptly locate, plat and delineate such change upon the applicable map or maps and certify and file such change as aforesaid
<https://code.wvlegislature.gov/7-2-6/>

Table 1. Results of a 2026 statewide spatial audit reveal structures not mapped in the correct county because of spatial approximations of the U.S. Census Bureau’s county boundary in West Virginia compared to the official county boundary from the 1:24,000 scale USGS topographic maps recognized in W.Va. state code. These results can be viewed on the Online BAS Comparison Viewer (<https://www.mapwv.gov/BAS>). Yellow highlighted records indicate county boundary line corrections to date submitted to the U.S. Census Bureau for BQP 2026.

Counties combined	Address Count	BQP Submission	Submission Date
Brooke - Hancock	34	YES	5/29/2026
Cabell - Wayne	20	YES	7/15/2026
Kanawha - Putnam	19	YES	7/15/2026
McDowell - Mingo	12	YES	7/15/2026
Raleigh - Summers	12	YES	7/15/2026
Braxton - Clay	9	YES	7/15/2026
Braxton - Gilmer	9	YES	7/15/2026
Harrison - Lewis	9	YES	7/15/2026
Monroe - Summers	9	YES	7/15/2026
Tyler - Wetzel	9	YES	7/15/2026
Marion - Monongalia	7		
Berkeley - Jefferson	6		
Boone - Logan	5		
Pleasants - Ritchie	5		
Calhoun - Gilmer	4		
Clay - Nicholas	4		
Lewis - Upshur	4		
Lincoln - Logan	4		
Ritchie - Wirt	4		
Barbour - Harrison	3		
Fayette - Kanawha	3		
Harrison - Taylor	3		
Lincoln - Wayne	3		
Mason - Putnam	3		
McDowell - Wyoming	3		
Mercer - Raleigh	3		
Raleigh - Wyoming	3		
Randolph - Tucker	3		
Randolph - Upshur	3		
Barbour - Taylor	2		
Grant - Hardy	2		
Greenbrier - Monroe	2		
Greenbrier - Pocahontas	2		
Hampshire - Mineral	2		

Counties combined	Address Count	BQP Submission	Submission Date
Harrison - Marion	2		
Jackson - Mason	2		
Jackson - Putnam	2		
Kanawha - Roane	2		
Mercer - Summers	2		
Pocahontas - Randolph	2		
Roane - Wirt	2		
Wirt - Wood	2		
Barbour - Upshur	1		
Berkeley - Morgan	1		
Boone - Lincoln	1		
Boone - Wyoming	1		
Braxton - Calhoun	1		
Braxton - Nicholas	1		
Cabell - Lincoln	1		
Calhoun - Ritchie	1		
Doddridge - Harrison	1		
Fayette - Nicholas	1		
Gilmer - Lewis	1		
Gilmer - Ritchie	1		
Grant - Mineral	1		
Grant - Pendleton	1		
Greenbrier - Nicholas	1		
Hampshire - Morgan	1		
Jackson - Roane	1		
Kanawha - Raleigh	1		
Logan - Mingo	1		
Marshall - Wetzel	1		
Mingo - Wyoming	1		
Monongalia - Preston	1		
Monongalia - Wetzel	1		
Nicholas - Webster	1		

Figure 1. This BQP county boundary correction submission will improve the spatial accuracy along the county boundary line of Hancock and Brooke Counties where 34 structures are not mapped in the correct county.

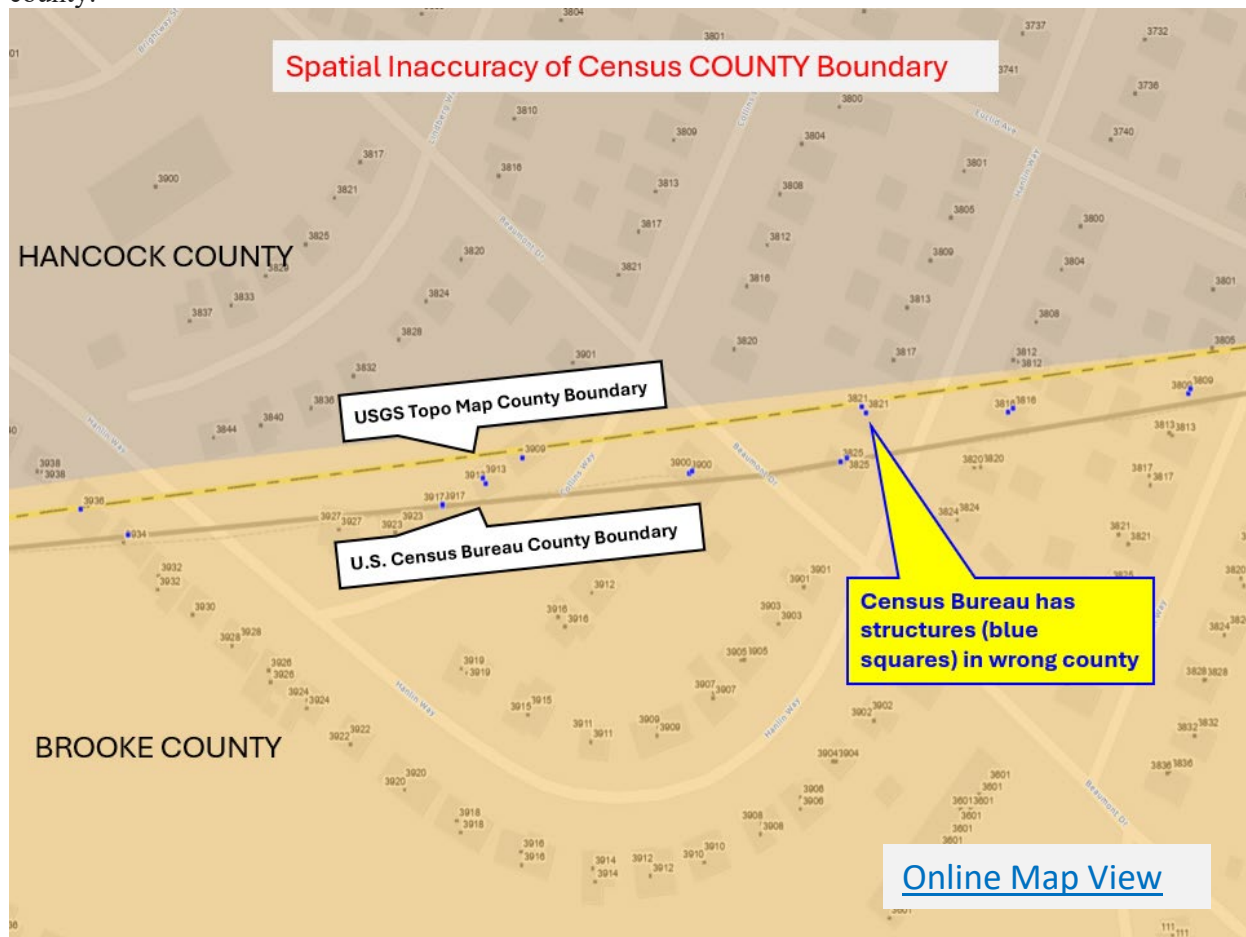


Figure 2. This BQP county boundary correction submission will improve the spatial accuracy along the county boundary line of Cabell and Wayne Counties where 20 structures are not mapped in the correct county. The distance between Census and USGS topographic boundaries is more than 1,200 feet at the location below.

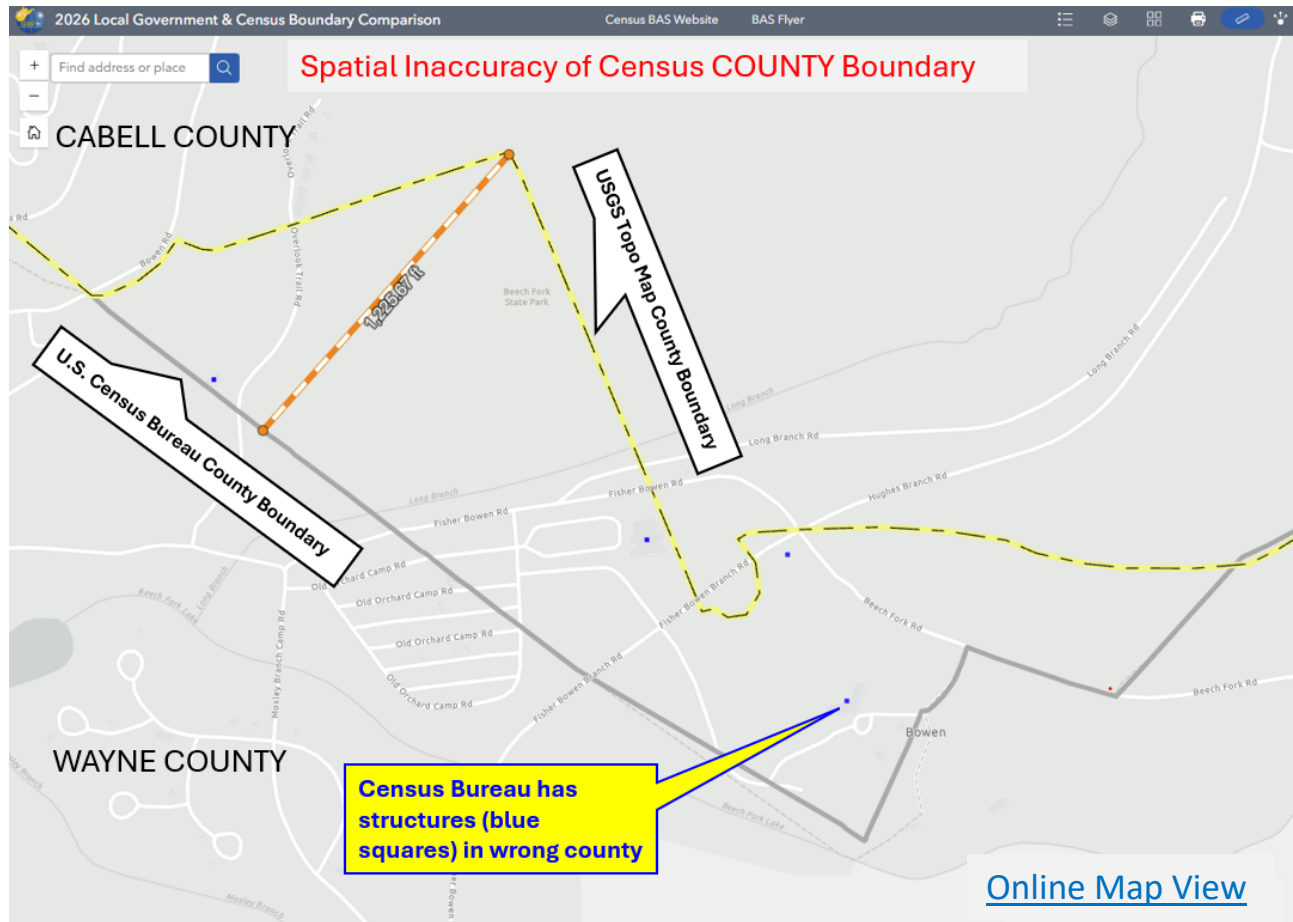
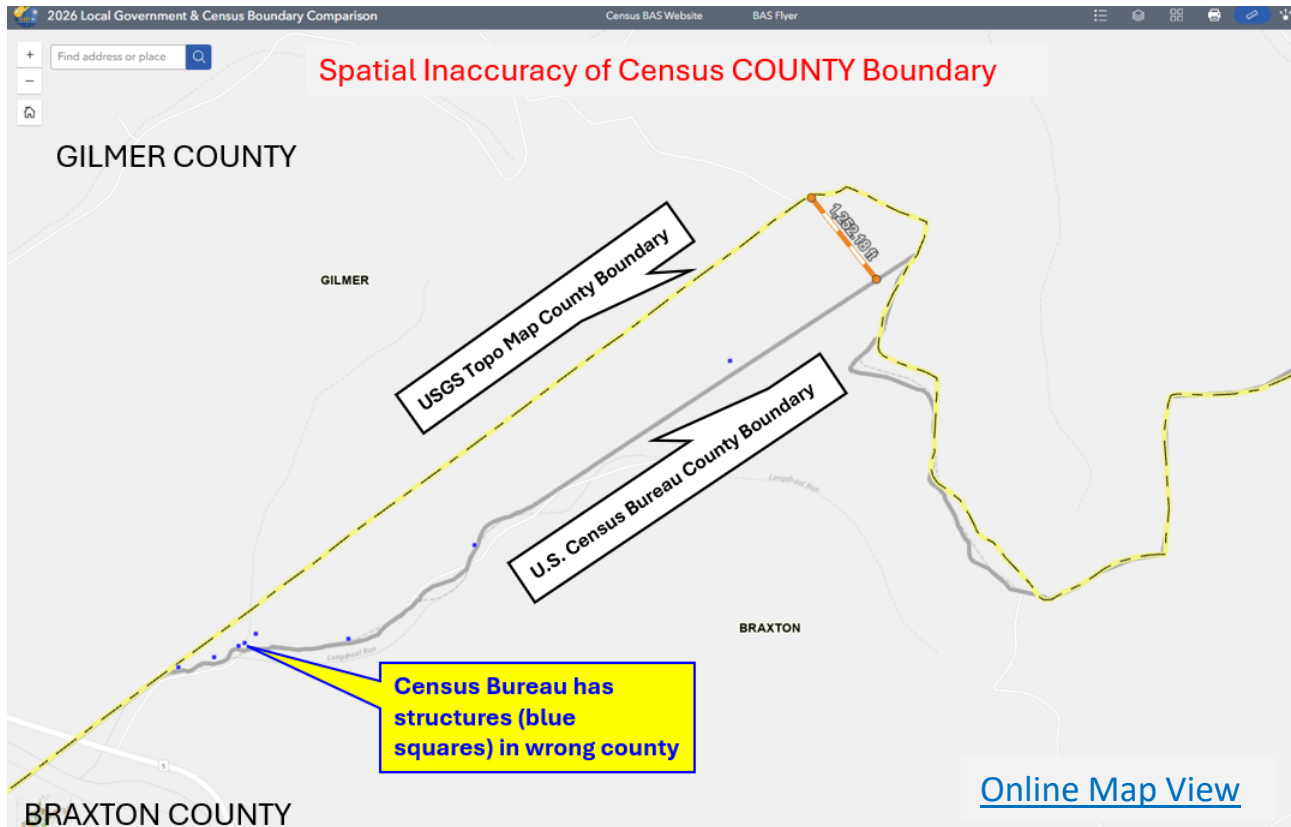


Figure 3. This BQP county boundary correction submission will improve the spatial accuracy along the county boundary line of Braxton and Gilmer Counties where 9 structures are not mapped in the correct county. The distance between Census and USGS topographic boundaries is more than 1,200 feet at the location below.



The mapping discrepancies stem from differences between official state code—which mandates the use of 1:24,000 USGS topographic maps—and generalized U.S. Census boundaries. It is important that the county boundary files maintained by the State and Census are the SAME so census block and electoral boundaries align with the spatially accurate legal county boundaries. Therefore, we are requesting that the U.S. Census Bureau improve the spatial accuracy of its county boundaries in its geographic database for West Virginia by using the official 1:24,000-scale USGS topographic county boundaries recognized by W.Va. Code §7-2-6.

Sincerely,

Kurt Donaldson

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cc: Office of the West Virginia Secretary of State (Adair Burgess)