



**Northern Border
Regional Commission**

NBRC Annual Economic & Demographic Research for Fiscal Year 2018

To Determine Categories of Distress within the NBRC Service Area

Northern Border Regional Commission
A Federal-State Partnership for Economic Development in northern
Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York

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Table 1: NBRC Counties - Levels of Distress

Acknowledgements

Data collection provided by contractor: Daniel Lee, Plymouth State University

Data organized by the Northern Border Regional Commission

1. Overview

Why collect data

By statute, the NBRC is required to annually assess the level of economic and demographic distress within its 36 county region. The reasons for this annual exercise include:

- To have reliable and timely data that can inform NBRC leadership as they create new- and perfect existing- economic and infrastructure funding programs,
- To create a benchmark in which annual compilations of economic and demographic data can be compared to the NBRC's Five Year Plan goals,
- To identify whether or not the NBRC can provide grants to projects within a county,
- What level of match is required by grant applicants for projects.
- To assist States as they develop their own economic and community development programs, and
- To provide publicly available information so local decision makers can prioritize their economic and community development strategies.

What is done with the data

The ultimate result of this work is to separate counties and municipalities within the NBRC service area into certain classifications. These classifications, defined by statute, include: Distressed Counties, Transitional Counties, and Attainment Counties.

40 U.S.C., Subtitle V states that, "distressed" counties are those that, "have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration" and "are the most severely and persistently economic distressed and underdeveloped." The NBRC is required to allocate 50% of its total appropriations to projects in counties falling within this designation. The maximum percent of a "distressed" project that can be funded by the NBRC is 80%.

"Transitional" counties "have recently suffered high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration" or "are economically distressed and underdeveloped." The maximum percent of a "transitional" project that can be funded by the NBRC is 50%.

Finally, “attainment” counties are those that are neither “distressed” nor “transitional.” The NBRC is not allowed to fund projects within an attainment county unless the project is within an “isolated area of distress,” or have been granted a waiver. Isolated areas of distress are “areas [municipalities] that have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration.”

Because poverty, unemployment, and outmigration are only parts of an economic situation, the NBRC has adopted categories above and beyond those directed by statute. These “Secondary Distress Categories” provide a more in-depth survey of the NBRC’s service area as well as greater opportunities to gauge the success of the NBRC’s programs over time. These include: Educational Attainment (bachelor’s degree or higher), Household Income, and Seasonal Home Ownership.

2. Geographies

From where was the data collected

1. NBRC Counties: These are counties that are expressly described in the statute (40 USC, Subtitle V) that directs and guides the NBRC. These include:
 - a) Maine: The counties of Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington.
 - b) New Hampshire: The counties of Carroll, Coos, Grafton, and Sullivan.
 - c) Vermont: The counties of Caledonia, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, and Orleans.
 - d) New York: The counties of Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Oswego, Seneca, and St. Lawrence.
2. NBRC Municipalities: Local municipalities and any unorganized areas that are within NBRC Counties.

3. Data Collected

What type of data was collected

1. "Primary" Distress Categories:
 - a) Percent of Population below the Poverty Level
 - b) Unemployment Rate
 - c) Percent Change in Population
2. "Secondary" Distress Categories:
 - a) Percent of Population with a Bachelors Degree or Higher
 - b) Median Household Income
 - c) Percent of Secondary and Seasonal Homes

4. Assessment of Distress in Maine for FY'18

Distressed Counties

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 20%

- Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, Washington

Transitional Counties

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 50%

- Hancock, Knox

Attainment Counties

Cannot award unless the project is within an Isolated Area of Distress

- None

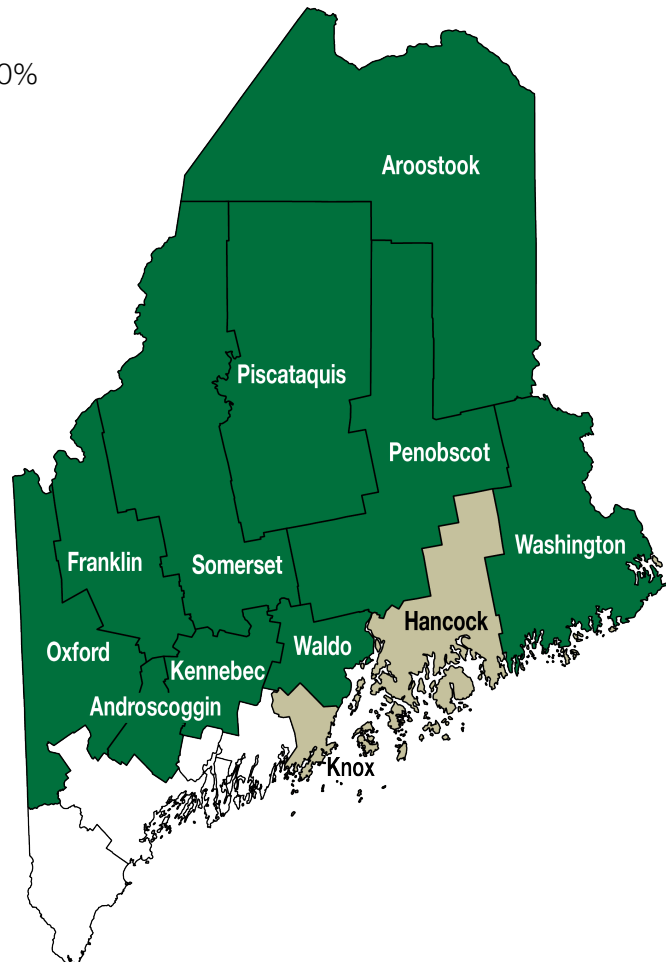
Isolated Areas of Distress (not applicable)

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 50%

- None

Classification of Distress by County in Maine

- Distressed Counties
- Transitional Counties
- Attainment Counties



5. Assessment of Distress in New Hampshire for FY'18

Distressed Counties

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 20%

- Coos, Sullivan

Transitional Counties

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 50%

- Carroll, Grafton

Attainment Counties

Cannot award unless the project is within an Isolated Area of Distress

- None

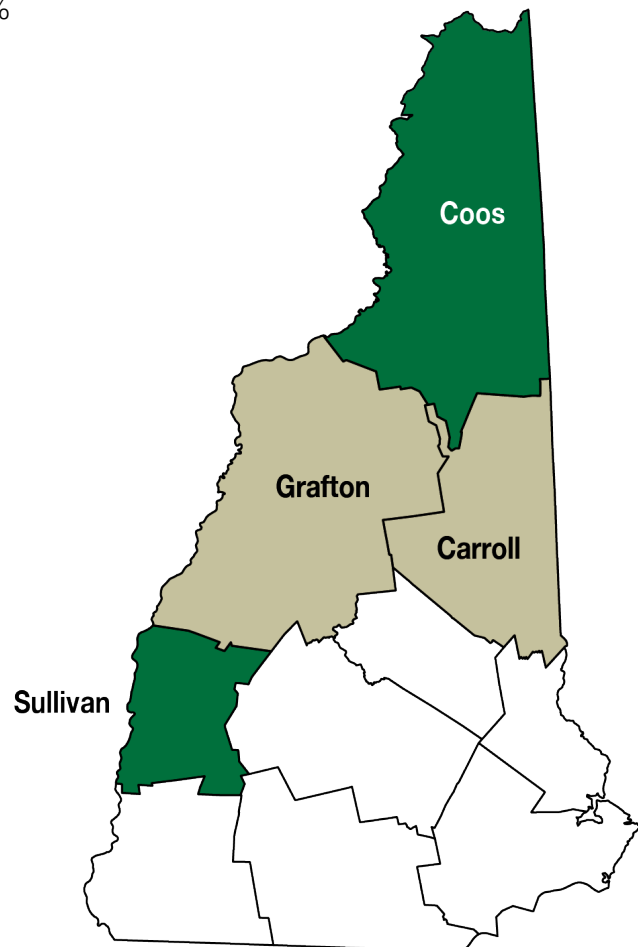
Isolated Areas of Distress (not applicable)

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 50%

- None

Classification of Distress by County
in New Hampshire

- Distressed Counties
- Transitional Counties
- Attainment Counties



6. Assessment of Distress in Vermont for FY'18

Distressed Counties

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 20%

- Caledonia, Essex, Orleans

Transitional Counties

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 50%

- Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille

Attainment Counties

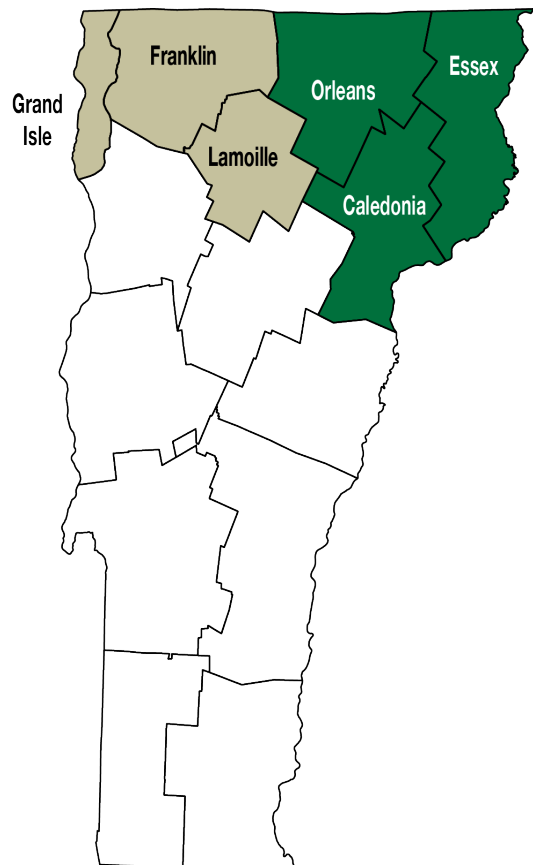
Cannot award unless the project is within an Isolated Area of Distress

- None

Isolated Areas of Distress (not applicable)

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 50%

- None



Classification of Distress by County in Vermont

- Distressed Counties
- Transitional Counties
- Attainment Counties

7. Assessment of Distress in New York for FY'18

Distressed Counties

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 20%

- Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Oswego, St. Lawrence, Seneca

Transitional Counties

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 50%

- None

Attainment Counties

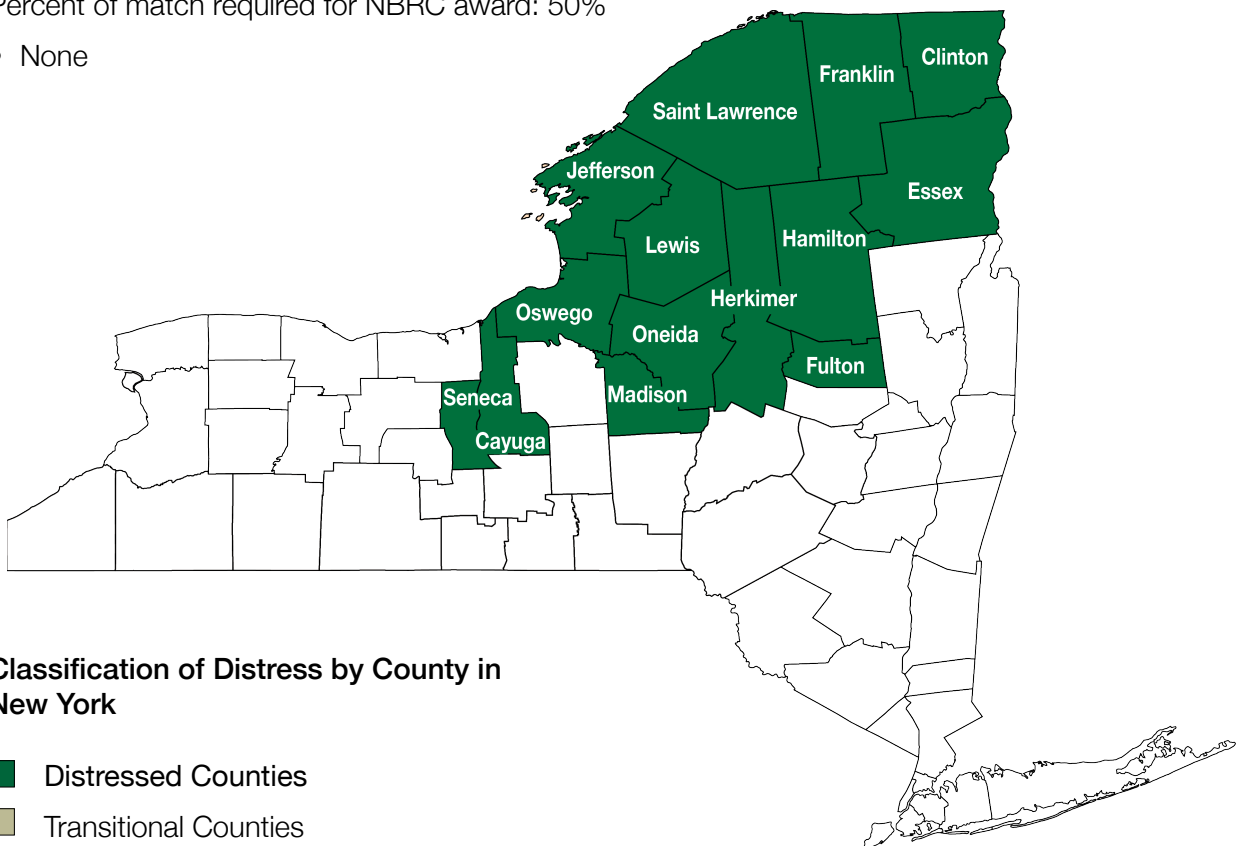
Cannot award unless the project is within an Isolated Area of Distress

- None

Isolated Areas of Distress (not applicable)

Percent of match required for NBRC award: 50%

- None



8. About The NBRC

Created by the US Congress in 2008 and funded since 2010, the NBRC is a Federal-State partnership whose mission is to help alleviate economic distress in thirty-six northern counties of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. Unlike other areas of America's northeast, the northern counties of these States have higher levels of unemployment, outmigration, and lower income.

The NBRC partnership is led of the governors of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York as well as a Federal Co-chair, who is appointed by the President. Local participation is provided through multi-county local development districts.

While Congress allowed the NBRC considerable flexibility in the types of areas in which to focus, the NBRC has created a Five Year Strategic Plan that emphasizes three goals related to Infrastructure; Business and Entrepreneurial growth; and Leadership and Community Capacity.

Thanks to annual Congressional appropriations, the NBRC has awarded, in its short seven-year history, almost \$31 million to 155 public and non profit recipients. Historically, for every \$1 in NBRC funds, recipients have averaged \$2.69 in matching funds for critical infrastructure or services that encourage private sector investment in their communities and regions. By statute, NBRC investments are considered non-federal match and can provide funding for up to 80% of a project; making them attractive for leveraging other federal funds.

More information on the NBRC can be found at www.nbrc.gov. The NBRC's enabling statute can be found at 40 USC, Subtitle V ("Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development").

9. Legal References

The NBRC has certain planning and research mandates that it needs to meet through its enabling legislation (40 U.S.C. Subtitle V)

These include:

40 U.S.C. §15303

A Commission shall-

- (1) assess the needs and assets of its region based on available research, demonstration projects, investigations, assessments, and evaluations of the region prepared by Federal, State, and local agencies, universities, local development districts, and other nonprofit groups;
- (2) develop, on a continuing basis, comprehensive and coordinated economic and infrastructure development strategies to establish priorities and approve grants for the economic development of its region, giving due consideration to other Federal, State, and local planning and development activities in the region;
- (3) not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section, and after taking into account State plans developed under section 15502, establish priorities in an economic and infrastructure development plan for its region, including 5-year regional outcome targets; ...
- (6) cooperate with and assist State governments with the preparation of economic and infrastructure development plans and programs for participating States;

as well as...

40 U.S.C. §15308

Annual Report

- (a) In General.-Not later than 90 days after the last day of each fiscal year, each Commission shall submit to the President and Congress a report on the activities carried out by the Commission under this subtitle in the fiscal year.
- (b) Contents.-The report shall include-
 - (1) a description of the criteria used by the Commission to designate counties under section 15702 and a list of the counties designated in each category;

- (2) an evaluation of the progress of the Commission in meeting the goals identified in the Commission's economic and infrastructure development plan under section 15303 and State economic and infrastructure development plans under section 15502; and
- (3) any policy recommendations approved by the Commission.

and finally...

40 U.S.C. §15702

Distressed Counties and Areas

- (a) Designations.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, each Commission shall make the following designations:
 - (1) Distressed counties.—The Commission shall designate as distressed counties those counties in its region that are the most severely and persistently economically distressed and underdeveloped and have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration.
 - (2) Transitional counties.—The Commission shall designate as transitional counties those counties in its region that are economically distressed and underdeveloped or have recently suffered high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration.
 - (3) Attainment counties.—The Commission shall designate as attainment counties, those counties in its region that are not designated as distressed or transitional counties under this subsection.
 - (4) Isolated areas of distress.—The Commission shall designate as isolated areas of distress, areas located in counties designated as attainment counties under paragraph (3) that have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration.

**TABLE 1:
NBRC Counties -
Levels of Distress**

	Primary Distress Categories (1)		Secondary Distress Categories		Distressed County? At least THREE factors AND at least ONE from each category?	Transitional County? At least ONE factor from EITHER of the criteria categories?	Attainment County? (no measures of distress)
	Percent below poverty level (2)	Unemploy. Rate (2)	Percent Change in Population (3)	Percent bachelor's degree or higher (2)			
United States	15.5	8.3	4.7	29.8	\$53,889	3.5	
NBRC Region	15.3	8.3	-0.02	23.3		16.5	
Criteria compared to is	> US	> US	< 0%	< US	< US	< NBRC Region	
Maine							
Androscoggin County, Maine	15.7	7.2	-0.4	20.3	\$47,537	2.9	✓
Aroostook County, Maine	18.5	7.5	-5.4	17.2	\$36,923	13.7	✓
Franklin County, Maine	14.8	7.7	-2.5	25.6	\$42,811	33.1	✓
Hancock County, Maine	13.5	7.7	0.0	32.7	\$47,030	32.7	✓
Kennebec County, Maine	13.8	7.7	-1.3	25.0	\$46,917	10.1	✓
Knox County, Maine	11.2	5.7	0.0	31.2	\$50,693	20.3	✓
Oxford County, Maine	17.5	9.2	-1.1	18.1	\$40,630	25.3	✓
Penobscot County, Maine	17.0	7.8	-1.4	24.5	\$44,271	8.4	✓
Piscataquis County, Maine	20.9	10.5	-3.9	17.4	\$37,495	41.7	✓
Somerset County, Maine	17.6	9.5	-2.5	15.4	\$40,066	21.4	✓
Waldo County, Maine	16.4	7.5	1.5	30.3	\$44,082	17.0	✓
Washington County, Maine	19.1	9.8	-4.3	20.1	\$38,083	27.5	✓
New Hampshire							
Carroll County, New Hampshire	9.5	5.8	-1.1	32.1	\$53,306	42.2	✓
Coos County, New Hampshire	14.1	6.9	-3.1	17.8	\$42,312	25.7	✓
Grafton County, New Hampshire	11.6	5.0	-0.3	38.1	\$55,762	24.2	✓
Sullivan County, New Hampshire	9.7	5.8	-1.7	26.5	\$56,032	12.8	✓

Vermont

Caledonia County, Vermont	12.5	7.2	-2.9	27.0	\$45,323	14.9	✓
Essex County, Vermont	15.0	9.4	-2.1	16.0	\$36,599	38.4	✓
Franklin County, Vermont	8.7	4.9	2.4	23.6	\$58,199	9.4	✓
Grand Isle County, Vermont	8.6	7.4	-0.7	35.1	\$62,608	36.4	✓
Lamoille County, Vermont	11.8	4.3	3.5	36.2	\$50,939	17.3	✓
Orleans County, Vermont	15.5	5.6	-1.4	22.1	\$42,831	24.4	✓

New York

Cayuga County, New York	12.0	7.3	-2.7	21.4	\$52,082	7.9	✓		
Clinton County, New York	16.5	6.9	-1.3	22.1	\$49,930	6.2	✓		
Essex County, New York	10.7	7.9	-3.2	24.2	\$52,758	29.9	✓		
Franklin County, New York	20.3	8.8	-2.3	17.7	\$47,923	17.5	✓		
Fulton County, New York	17.1	9.3	-3.1	16.2	\$46,969	13.7	✓		
Hamilton County, New York	12.9	9.7	-6.1	24.5	\$48,243	71.1	✓		
Herkimer County, New York	14.6	8.7	-3.0	22.4	\$46,229	14.1	✓		
Jefferson County, New York	15.1	10.6	-1.9	20.7	\$49,505	18.7	✓		
Lewis County, New York	12.1	8.3	-0.8	15.2	\$49,819	25.2	✓		
Madison County, New York	12.2	5.1	-2.9	26.2	\$54,145	6.8	✓		
Oneida County, New York	17.1	7.4	-1.6	23.2	\$48,246	3.3	✓		
Oswego County, New York	18.6	9.7	-2.6	17.6	\$47,860	7.0	✓		
St. Lawrence County, New York	19.4	10.0	-1.7	22.3	\$44,705	14.5	✓		
Seneca County, New York	12.7	5.5	-1.3	20.2	\$49,292	9.9	✓		
36	17	21	31	29	30	21	29	7	0

(1) These categories are required under 40 U.S.C., Subtitle V
 (2) Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (5 Year Average, 2010-2015)
 (3) Source: US Census Bureau, 2016 Population Estimate
 (4) Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census