Supplemental Instructions for Opening and Using
the "2 Giant Files" version of the 2008-2012 ACS 5-year Summary File

This document describes how to deal with two common problems users have encountered in opening and using the data files at http://www2.census.gov/acs2012_5yr/summaryfile/2008-2012_ACSSF_All_In_2_Giant_Files(Experienced-Users-Only)/. If you need additional support, please contact acso.users.support@census.gov.

Getting the Geography Files

The zipped data files do not contain the "geography" files (files with a "g" prefix) that are described in Sections 2.4 and B.1 of *The 2008-2012 ACS 5-Year Summary File Technical Documentation*.
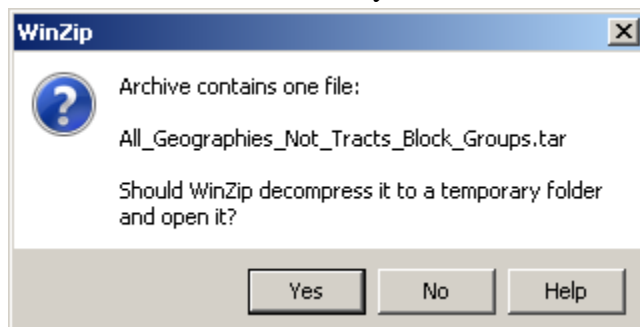
The geography files are available in the "2012_ACS_Geography_Files.zip" file in the folder http://www2.census.gov/acs2012_5yr/summaryfile/2008-2012_ACSSF_All_In_2_Giant_Files(Experienced-Users-Only)/
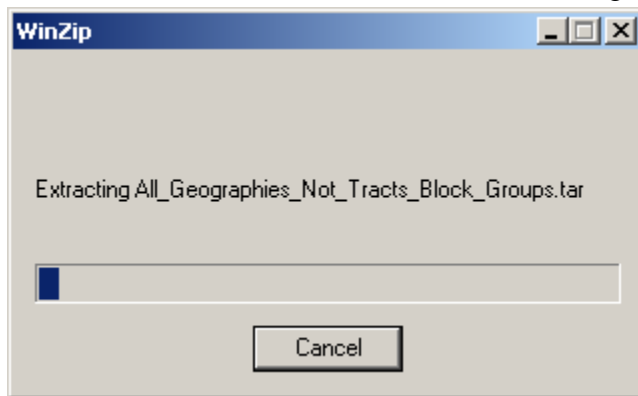
Downloading and Opening the Data Files

Instructions for Windows-based PCs

The 2 giant files are saved as ".tar.gz." If you are using a Windows-based operating system, follow the steps below to decompress the files.
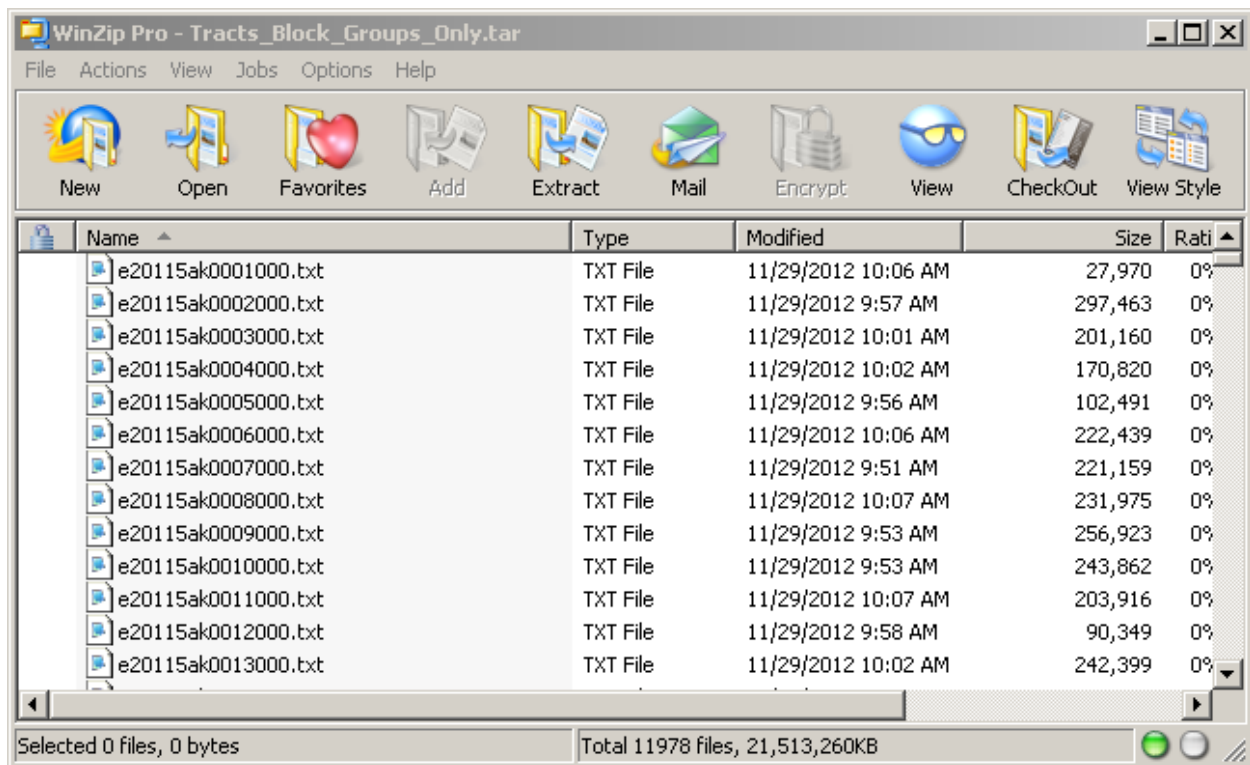
1. Download the files. The file "All_Geographies_Not_Tracts_Block_Groups.zip" may be too large to be downloaded with some versions of Internet Explorer, so an alternate browser may be needed.

2. Double click on the file and you should see the following pop-up:

3. Select "Yes". You should then see the following image:

4. WinZip will then display a list of files that can be extracted, as shown in the example below.

(Image from 2007-2011 ACS 5-year release)

5. Select the files you want to extract (or select all), click the "Extract" icon, and you will be prompted to choose a location to extract these files to.