

Idaho Employment

A monthly update of how Idaho's economy is doing in your area

IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Volume 22.12

December 2010 Issue, November Data

C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER, GOVERNOR

ROGER B. MADSEN, DIRECTOR

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Idaho Wages Show Early Recovery Signs, page 5
- Shift in Idaho Jobs During Recession Compared to Nation, page 8
- North Central Idaho Explores Rec-Tec Potential, page 12

ANALYSIS OF EXTENDED BENEFIT RECIPIENTS BY COUNTY

The tentative compromise reached in Washington, D.C., in early December to continue the federally financed extended benefit program would resume benefits for over 16,000 people in Idaho, who have already seen benefits stop or will over the next several months.

In addition idled workers receiving regular unemployment benefits, which provide 10 to 26 weeks of unemployment checks, would be affected. Between 500 and 600 people each week exhaust those regular benefits, and since Thanksgiving that mounting group has not had access to federal extensions.

People receiving unemployment insurance commonly make an unemployment insurance claim early in the week following the week that they experienced unemployment. With few exceptions, people who got their final regular unemployment checks during the week of Thanksgiving were the first group excluded from the extended benefit program that lapsed Dec. 1.

There are two separate extended benefit programs – Federal-State Extended Benefits and Emergency Unemployment Compensation. In its evolution since mid-2008, the emergency compensation program has developed four tiers, each giving unemployed workers an additional period of benefits up to 53 weeks. The Federal-State Extended Benefits program began in 1970 as a 50-50 partnership between the states and the federal government during times of higher-than-normal unemployment. During this most recent recession, however, the program has been funded 100 percent by the federal government.

Both extended programs expire differently. Claimants receiving Federal-State Extended Benefits, the final phase of all unemployment benefit programs, got their final payments during the week ending Dec. 11 for their unemployment the week ending Dec. 4. The Emergency Unemployment Compensation program locked people into the one of the four tiers they were in the week ending Dec. 4 until they received their final payment for that tier. The inability to move to the next tier would result in benefits ending over several months as remaining weeks in each tier are paid.

Eight Idaho counties – Ada, Camas, Canyon, Franklin, Gem, Gooding, Shoshone and Washington – have over 50 percent of total unemployment claim-

Current data on state, county and selected areas nonfarm jobs: <http://lmi.idaho.gov/EmploymentUnemployment/CurrentEmploymentStatistics/tabid/760/Default.aspx>.

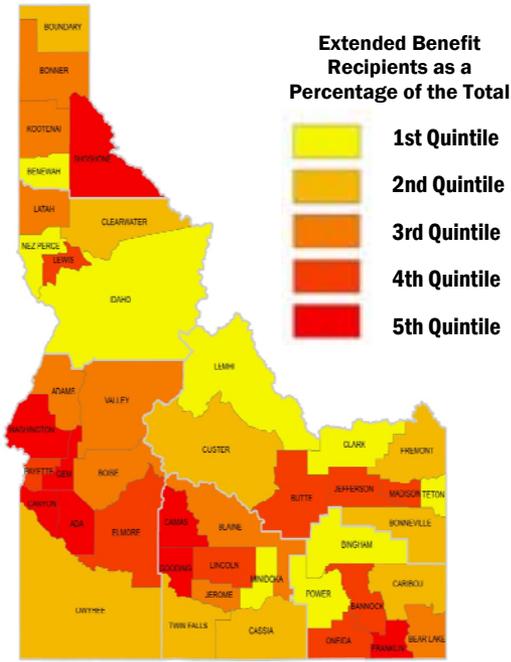
Current state, county and selected areas labor force data: <http://lmi.idaho.gov/EmploymentUnemployment/CivilianLaborForceLAUS/tabid/804/Default.aspx>.

ants receiving extended unemployment benefits. Washington will see the largest percentage drop in recipients with more than 55 percent of claimants on extended benefits.

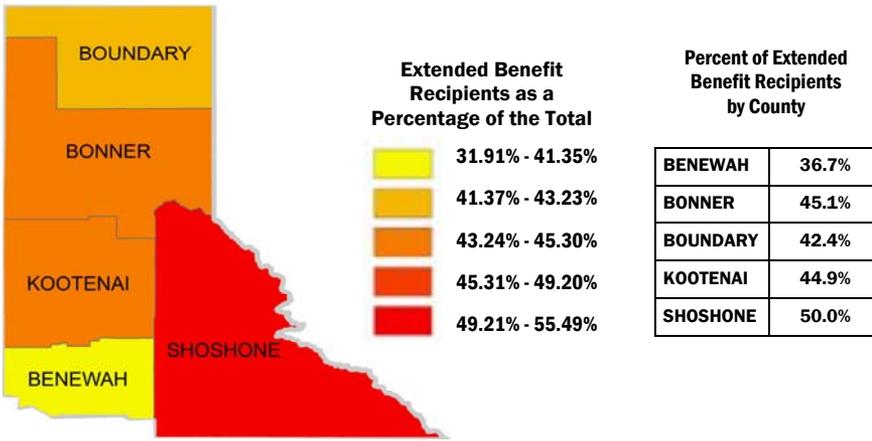
Statewide, the majority of extended benefit recipients were construction workers or people in the construction industry in supporting jobs such as truck drivers, clerks and managers. Each region listed construction with the highest number of extended benefits claimants – from 16 percent in southwestern Idaho to 26 percent in east central Idaho. Retail was another industry that ranked high at over 8 percent of all extended benefit recipients.

Concentrations of extended benefit recipients are highly correlated with freeway access because investment and population growth center on this necessary economic infrastructure.

The average weekly benefit payment for all recipients is around \$250. The weekly benefit ranges from \$72 to \$334. The maximum weekly benefit amount will increase \$2 to \$336 in 2011. There will be no change in the minimum.



REGION 1 - NORTHERN IDAHO

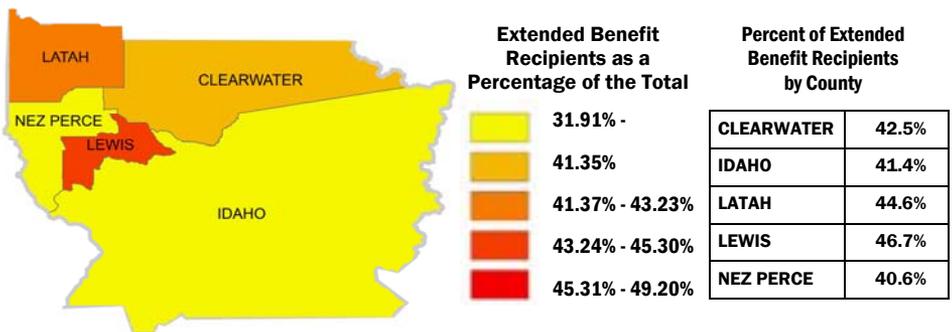


Northern Idaho maintains more than 17 percent of the extended benefit recipients in the state while the region has 12.5 percent of total covered employment. This region would be disproportionately impacted by the expiration of extended benefits compared to others around the state.

Shoshone County has the highest concentration of extended benefit recipients at 50 percent. Benewah has the third lowest percentage in the state at 36.7 percent. The lowest is maintained by Clark County in east central Idaho at 31.9 percent.

All regions have many workers on extended benefits who formerly worked in construction. Northern Idaho has nearly 25 percent of all extended benefit recipients from that sector. Many former retail and manufacturing workers are also on extended benefits – 13 percent from retail and 11 percent from manufacturing in the Panhandle.

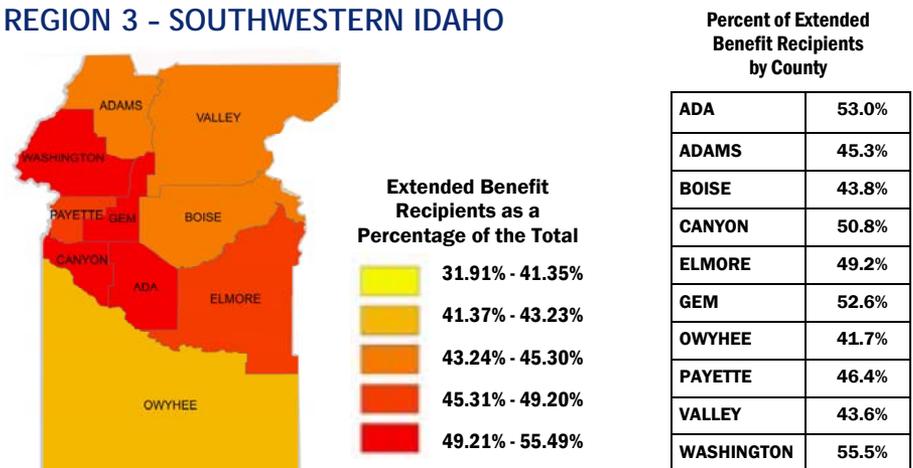
REGION 2 - NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO



North central Idaho maintains a relatively low number of extended benefit recipients at just 4.2 percent of the statewide total. This compares to 6.9 percent share of the state’s covered employment.

Besides construction, which accounts for 18 percent of the extended benefit recipients in the region, natural resource industries are responsible for the second largest number at 11 percent. Health care and retail are third and fourth at around 10 percent each.

REGION 3 - SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

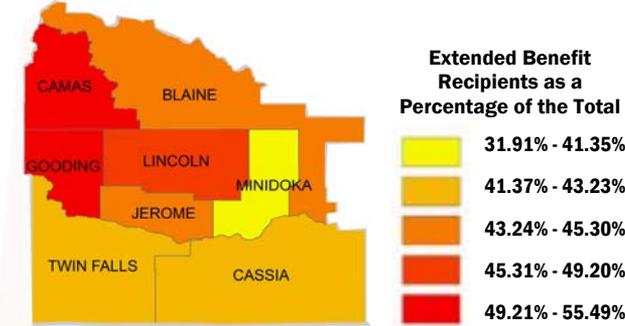


Southwestern Idaho, which accounts for over 45 percent of covered employment, maintains nearly 51 percent of all extended benefit recipients.

Washington County claims the largest percentage at 55.5 percent. Ada, Canyon and Gem counties all have relatively high concentrations of extended benefit recipients as well.

Construction again played a large role. The Boise metropolitan area was one of fastest growing metro areas in the country prior to the recession. Manufacturing accounted for 15 percent of extended benefit claimants. Major manufacturers, especially in high technology, saw employment levels decline drastically over the last several years.

REGION 4 - SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO



Percent of Extended Benefit Recipients by County

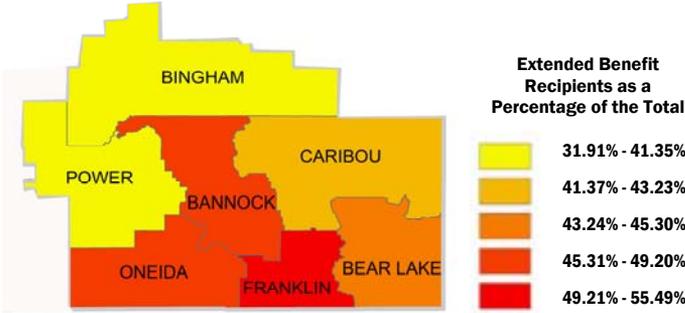
BLAINE	44.1%
CAMAS	55.1%
CASSIA	43.2%
GOODING	50.0%
JEROME	43.4%
LINCOLN	46.3%
MINIDOKA	35.2%
TWIN FALLS	42.8%

Extended benefit recipients in south central Idaho were just over 10 percent of all extended benefit recipients while the region has 12.7 percent of covered employment.

Over 50 percent of benefit recipients in Gooding and Camas counties were receiving extended benefits. Camas County had the second highest concentration in the state at just over 55 percent, four tenths of a point behind Washington County in southwestern Idaho.

Four industry sectors accounted for nearly 50 percent of the extended benefit recipients – construction, administrative and support services, retail and health care.

REGION 5 - SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO



Percent of Extended Benefit Recipients by County

BANNOCK	48.9%
BEAR LAKE	43.9%
BINGHAM	39.5%
CARIBOU	43.2%
FRANKLIN	51.2%
ONEIDA	48.0%
POWER	39.9%

Southeastern Idaho has just 8 percent of the state’s extended benefit recipients while the region has 9.5 percent of covered employment.

Franklin County had the highest concentration of extended benefit recipients in the region at 51.2 percent. Bannock and Oneida counties were close behind at 48.9 percent and 48 percent respectively.

Behind construction, health care was the second largest source of extended benefit recipients at over 11 percent. Retail was another major source right at 11 percent of total extended benefits for the region.

REGION 6 - EAST CENTRAL IDAHO

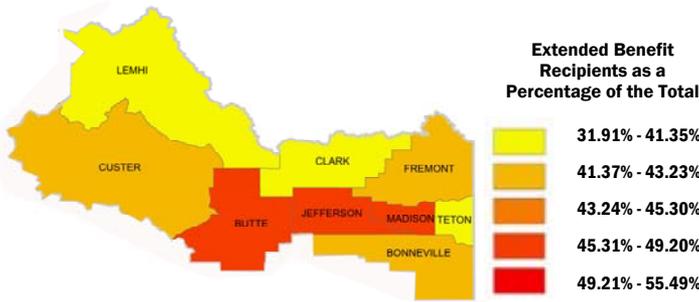
East central Idaho accounts for just 8 percent of the extended benefit recipients statewide while controlling over 13 percent of covered employment.

The ability of the region to stave off long-term unemployment compared to other regions is likely due to highly stable federal employment at the Idaho

Region 6 – East Central Idaho

Percent of Extended Benefit Recipients by County

BONNEVILLE	42.3%
BUTTE	45.8%
CLARK	31.9%
CUSTER	41.9%
FREMONT	43.2%
JEFFERSON	45.6%
LEMHI	37.8%
MADISON	46.1%
TETON	40.0%



National Laboratory and employment in education from Brigham Young University-Idaho, a private school that does not compete for increasingly scarce state tax resources. The two are the area's largest employers.

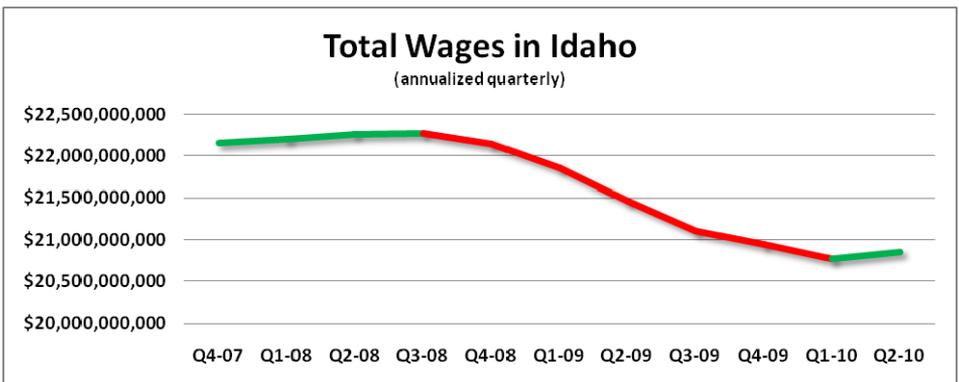
Construction showed its largest concentration in east central Idaho compared to the other regions at 26 percent of the region's extended benefit recipients. Retail produced the second largest share at 12 percent while health care accounted for 10 percent.

John.VanDyke@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 332-3570 ext. 3199

IDAHO WAGES SHOW EARLY RECOVERY SIGNS

There are early signs that Idaho's economy has finally begun to recover, albeit slowly, from the worst recession since World War II.

The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages shows that total wages in Idaho, on an annualized basis, rose from the first to second quarters this year for the first time since summer 2008 when the recession was just beginning to grip the Idaho economy.



Using a running four-quarter wage total, Idaho's total wages dropped steadily from \$22.3 billion through the July-September quarter of 2008 to \$20.8 billion through the January-March quarter 2010 before rebounding \$82 million to \$20.9 billion in the April-June quarter.

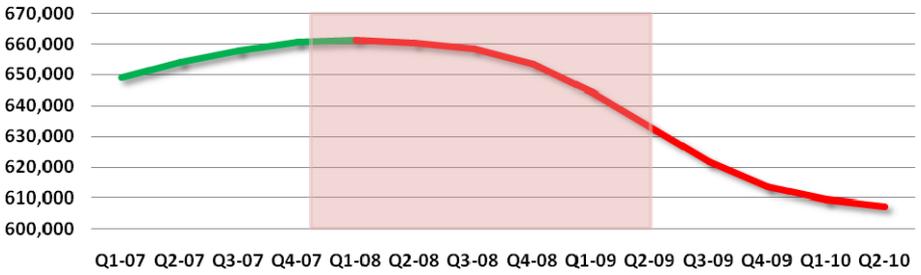
This, however, only reflected employers restoring at least some hours cut during the recession to cope with plunging consumer demand or selected wage increases to reward employees assuming additional responsibilities following staff reductions.

The annualized average number of nonfarm jobs peaked at just over 661,000 during the first three months of 2008 and persistently declined quarter by quarter to below 608,000 through the second quarter 2010.

The uptick in wages was seen across all sectors except construction and financial services, which were at the heart of the housing boom and were se-

Average Idaho Nonfarm Jobs

(annualized quarterly)



verely affected when that bubble burst. Construction wages have plummeted from a peak of nearly \$2 billion at the end of 2007 to under \$1.3 billion this past spring, and financial services began falling at the same time, dropping from just over \$1 billion at the end of 2007 to \$945 million last spring. Employment in construction was down 38 percent and in financial services 7 percent.

Health care was the only sector to continue growing through the recession both in payroll and jobs, and education – both public and private – grew through the recession until the pressure on tax receipts and government budgets finally began taking a toll on the public schools. Private school payrolls rose enough during the last quarter of 2009 and the first quarter of 2010 to more than offset reductions in public school payrolls. But the cutback in public education took over last spring.

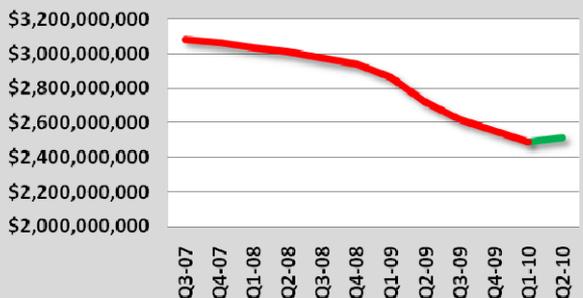
Total Wages for Private and Public Education

(annualized quarterly)

	Private Education	Dollar Chg	% Chg	Public Education	Dollar Chg	% Chg
Q4-07	\$166,232,045	\$4,455,776	2.8%	\$1,454,840,333	\$16,002	0.0%
Q1-08	\$168,756,023	\$2,523,978	1.5%	\$1,467,514,859	\$12,674,526	0.9%
Q2-08	\$171,303,629	\$2,547,606	1.5%	\$1,484,106,325	\$16,591,466	1.1%
Q3-08	\$175,511,951	\$4,208,322	2.5%	\$1,501,909,427	\$17,803,102	1.2%
Q4-08	\$179,414,171	\$3,902,220	2.2%	\$1,523,029,563	\$21,120,136	1.4%
Q1-09	\$182,839,613	\$3,425,442	1.9%	\$1,537,339,601	\$14,310,038	0.9%
Q2-09	\$187,091,157	\$4,251,544	2.3%	\$1,549,453,995	\$12,114,394	0.8%
Q3-09	\$191,112,617	\$4,021,460	2.1%	\$1,554,562,926	\$5,108,931	0.3%
Q4-09	\$195,266,960	\$4,154,343	2.2%	\$1,553,096,759	\$1,466,167	-0.1%
Q1-10	\$198,907,345	\$3,640,385	1.9%	\$1,550,026,583	\$3,070,176	-0.2%
Q2-10	\$204,024,452	\$5,117,107	2.6%	\$1,543,670,660	\$6,355,923	-0.4%

Manufacturing, the other sector leading Idaho into the recession with layoffs in high technology, showed its first increase in wages since summer 2007. The increase was only \$22 million, lifting total wages back over \$2.5 billion, but it was the first increase since wages began steadily

Manufacturing



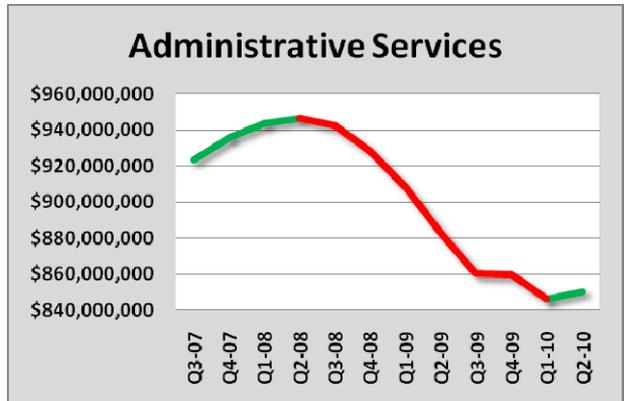
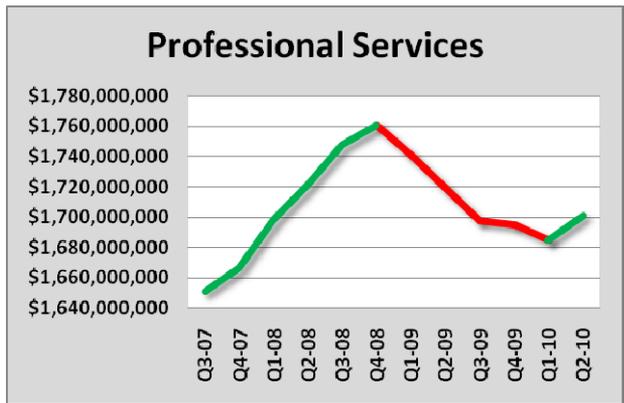
falling from \$3.1 billion during the four quarters that ended with July-September 2007.

By comparison the wage decline in professional and technical services was only about \$75 million and did not begin until the start of 2009, just six months before the recession officially ended. The decline coming as late as it did underscored the ripple effect of the slowdown as the loss of spending power by those in construction and manufacturing gradually hit other sectors.

Administrative and support services was an early victim of the ripple effect as businesses began cutting anything and everything possible to maintain their viability during the recession. Total wages began declining in mid-2008 and continued dropping until the loss of over \$100 million. The upturn this spring was a modest \$4 million.

Idaho's retail sector began feeling the pinch with the holiday season in 2007 when hiring was about half what it typically had been. Even then the housing bubble was bursting and high-tech layoffs had already been significant. The retail payroll decline over 2½ years was nearly a quarter of a billion dollars. The turnaround this spring was by just over \$ 8 million.

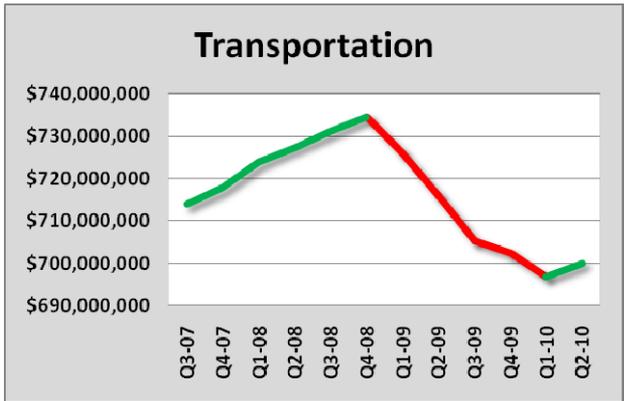
Wholesale trade began sliding about a year after the retail trade decline began. That sector dropped more than \$100 million in wages over seven quarters before posting a \$9 million gain this past spring.



Transportation wages did not begin falling until the beginning of 2009, and then the decline totaled just \$38 million over five quarters. The rebound was just \$3 million, but it ended a precipitous skid.

Hotels and restaurants – and the impact was mostly on restaurants – saw payrolls begin to slide with the holiday season in 2008. Over the course of that and five more quarters, the lost wages totaled \$46 million. The upturn this spring was \$2.5 million.

Bob.Fick@labor.idaho.gov
 Communications Manager
 (208) 332-3570, ext. 3628



Idaho Second Quarter Wages by Sector (2010 annualized)

Sector	Q2 Wage Total	Chg from Q1
All Sectors	\$20,852,696,548	0.4%
All Private Businesses	\$16,755,500,200	0.4%
Construction	\$1,248,737,918	-1.5%
Manufacturing	\$2,515,148,677	0.9%
Professional, Technical Services	\$1,701,379,782	1.0%
Administrative, Support Services	\$850,683,366	0.5%
Financial Services	\$944,997,043	-0.2%
Retail Trade	\$1,870,535,967	0.4%
Wholesale Trade	\$1,162,218,510	0.8%
Transportation, Warehousing	\$699,911,817	0.4%
Education	\$1,747,695,112	-0.1%
Health Care	\$2,915,247,081	1.1%
Hotels, Restaurants	\$652,145,815	0.4%
Government	\$1,840,267,629	0.7%

IDAHO JOB SHIFTS DURING RECESSION COMPARED WITH NATION

Many Idaho industries have dealt with the current recession by cutting back jobs. Unemployment rates have risen in recent months but are no longer showing the significant year-over-year increases that were so apparent in the past three years.

Fortunately the state unemployment rate has remained below the national rate. The November 2010 Idaho nonfarm job estimates show a 3,500 job de-

crease from a year earlier, a decline of 0.6 percent. If the state followed the 10-year average for that period, jobs would have increased by 6,400, or 1.1 percent. The nation added 842,000 nonfarm jobs over the past year – the first year-over-year November increase since 2007. Over the last decade the nation averaged a 0.1 percent decline in nonfarm jobs in November.

From 2008 to 2009 national employment fell by 4.6 percent. If the state followed the national trend it could account for 30,019 of the total 39,947 jobs lost from 2008 to 2009. The industrial mix of jobs in Idaho is different than the rest of the nation. Nationwide there was enough pressure for job increases in education, health care and government to maintain existing jobs from 2008 and add a few. In Idaho the losses from other industries were too great to show a net increase in employment in 2009. This can account for another 1,136 jobs of the total 39,947 lost.

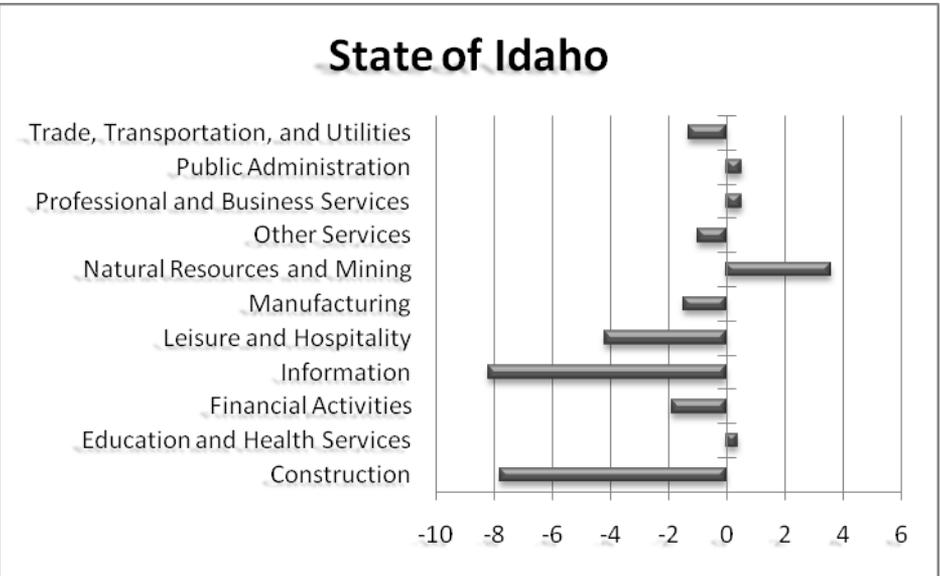
The variation in jobs not explained by national growth trends in a general sense or by Idaho’s unique industrial mix is what economists call the “competitive share.” In 2009 there was an additional loss of 8,795 jobs that falls into this category. In Idaho, four of the 11 major industry sectors had positive competitive share figures, meaning Idaho performed better in that industry than the nation did. The increase ranged from 0.4 percent to 3.6 percent. The remaining seven industries lost more jobs than what could be explained by national industrial trends. Losses ranged from 1 percent to 8.2 percent.

Individual Idaho labor markets reacted differently. Focusing on the competitive share component of job losses and gains shows how each labor market area compared to national trends. No change in the competitive share would indicate that the labor market area performance was equal to the nation’s in that industry. Negative numbers would indicate the percent job loss in excess of what happened at a national level. Positive results would show that particular industry did better than it did nationally.

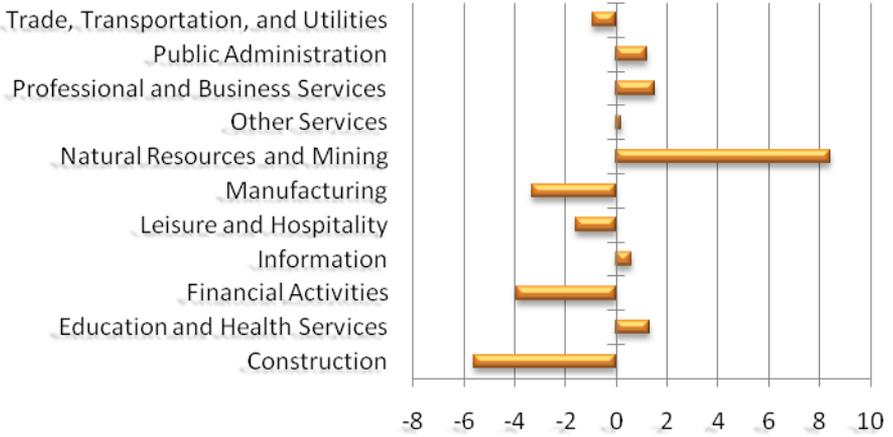
The smaller regions and industries tend to see larger fluctuation in employment when using percentage terms.

Will.Jenson@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 557-2500 ext. 3077

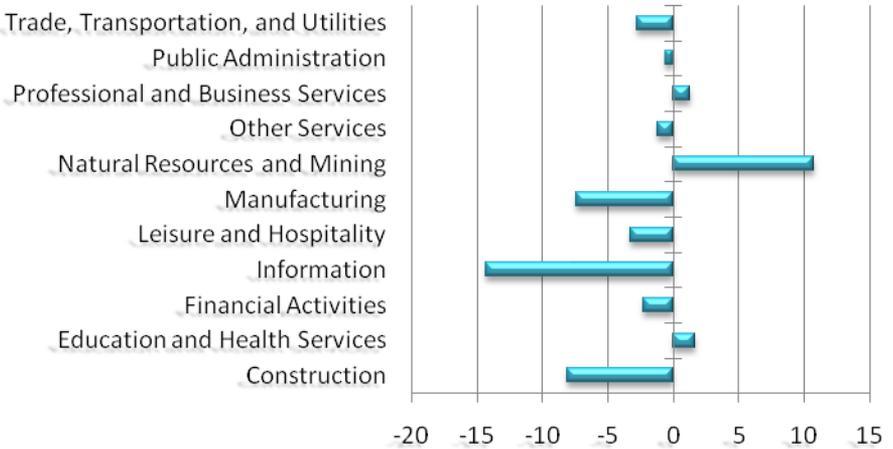
See graphs showing percentage change in competitive share jobs, 2008-2009 by metropolitan and micropolitan areas below and on the next two pages. Tables showing Industry sector share are on page 13.



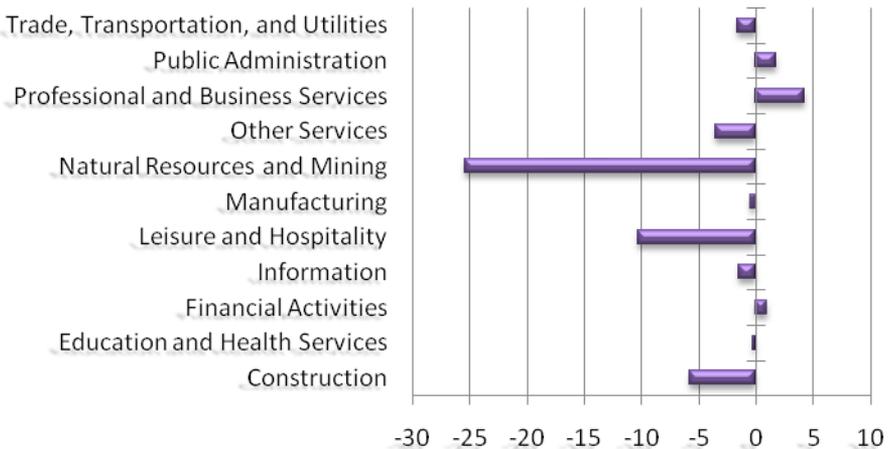
Idaho Falls MSA



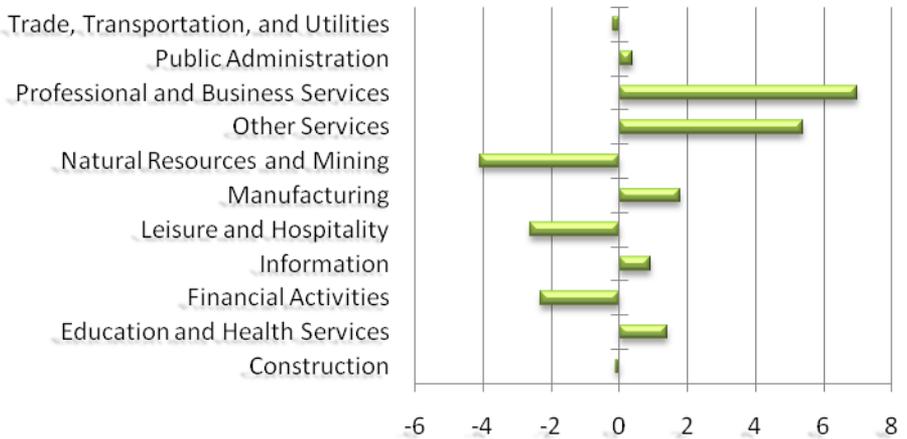
Boise City-Nampa MSA



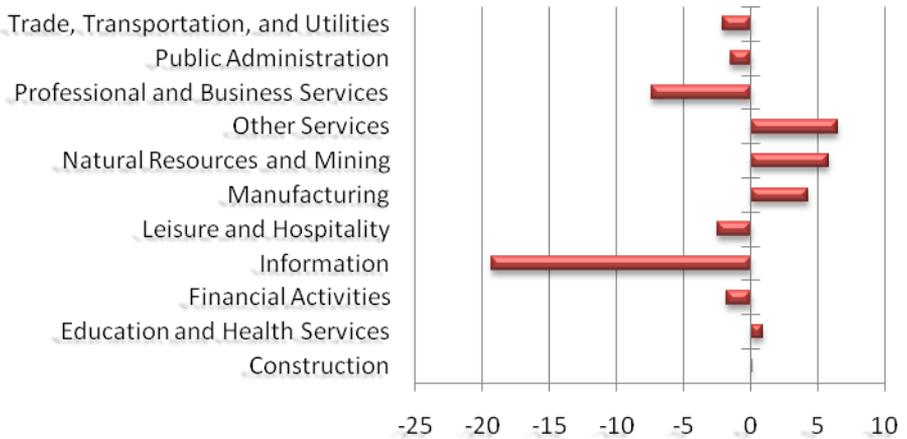
Coeur d'Alene MSA



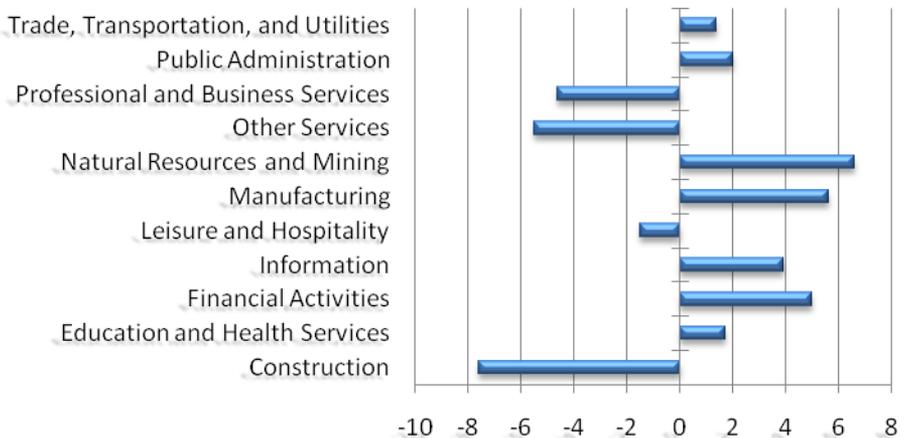
Lewiston MSA



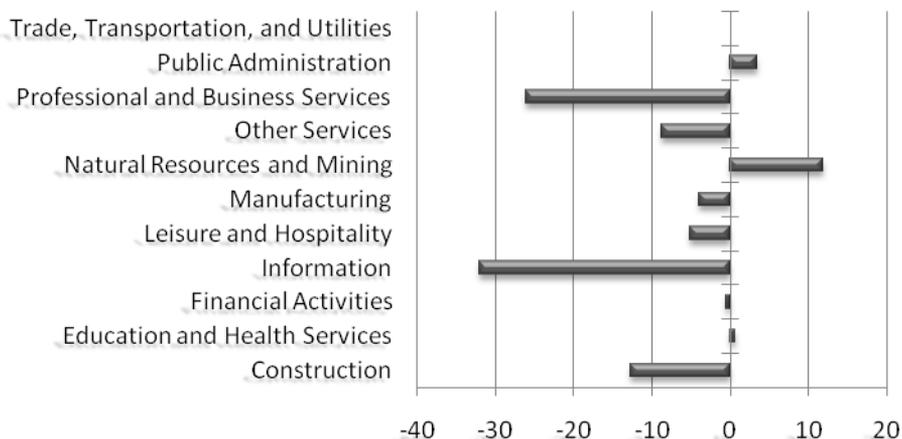
Pocatello MSA



Twin Falls MicSA



Rexburg MicSA



NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO EXPLORES REC-TECH'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Economic developers are trying to expand north central Idaho's recreational technology sector – manufacturers that produce equipment for outdoor pursuits.

The Idaho Department of Commerce and local economic development organizations throughout the state have made recreational technology firms a recruiting target. Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter has called recreational technology, or rec-tech, "an industry focused on our Idaho outdoor lifestyle and the equipment used to enjoy it. And it's a big part of our Project 60 initiative to create more career opportunities right here at home. If you fish, hunt, hike, bike, golf, ski or pursue any number of other outdoor leisure activities, you've used equipment that may have been designed or manufactured in Idaho. Those companies are finding that Idaho is a great fit for them. After all, they have a real-life laboratory to test their equipment right outside their doors."

"The outdoor recreation industry already generates about \$154 million in annual state tax revenue for Idaho while producing about \$2.2 billion a year in retail sales and services," the governor said. "About 37,000 Idahoans are employed in the rec-tech sector. And with so much rural landscape and so many smaller communities in Idaho, it's an industry that works well with our lifestyle. About 70 percent of rec-tech companies are located in Idaho's smaller cities."

At least 26 rec-tech companies operate in north central Idaho, providing about 1,600 jobs including more than one-third of the region's manufacturing jobs. Despite severe economic conditions, the sector's employment is 12.6 percent higher than 2007's 1,430. Ten years ago, 20 rec-tech companies employed about 1,040.

This fall, Idaho launched an aggressive campaign to attract gun manufacturers and other outdoor recreation companies. Selling Idaho as the best state for gun manufacturers, the Department of Commerce and economic development organizations are targeting companies in states that are growing increasingly hostile toward firearms and ammunition makers. At least 12 states have either passed or are discussing legislation that would make it more difficult for gun manufacturers to operate. Idaho has the only state constitution that protects gun makers from special taxation or registration, and Idaho law limits lawsuits against firearms and ammunition manufacturers. The Idaho Department of Commerce has sent hundreds of information packets to firearms manufacturers throughout the United States, proclaiming that Idaho has

Idaho's Competitive Share Percentage Change in Jobs by Industry, 2008-2009

Sector	National Growth Component, Percent	National Growth Component, Jobs	Industrial Mix Component, Percent	Industrial Mix Component, Jobs	Competitive Share Component, Percent	Competitive Share Component, Jobs
Construction	-4.6	-2,082	-11.5	-5,208	-7.8	-3,547
Education and Health Services	-4.6	-6,131	5.9	7,904	0.4	491
Financial Activities	-4.6	-1,393	-0.1	-28	-1.9	-587
Information	-4.6	-566	-1.2	-151	-8.2	-1,010
Leisure and Hospitality	-4.6	-3,021	1.8	1,170	-4.2	-2,765
Manufacturing	-4.6	-2,903	-7.1	-4,487	-1.5	-954
Natural Resources and Mining	-4.6	-1,144	-0.6	-157	3.6	896
Other Services	-4.6	-787	2.1	352	-1	-178
Professional and Business Services	-4.6	-3,752	-2.2	-1,777	0.5	443
Public Administration	-4.6	-2,018	5.2	2,278	0.5	227
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	-4.6	-6,219	-0.8	-1,032	-1.3	-1,811
Total		-30,016		-1,136		-8,795

Competitive Share Percentage Change in Jobs by Region, 2008-2009

Region	Construction	Education and Health Services	Financial Activities	Information	Leisure, Hospitality	Manufacturing	Natural Resources and Mining	Other Services	Professional and Business Services	Public Administration	Trade, Transportation and Utilities
State of Idaho	-8	0	-2	-8	-4	-2	4	-1	1	1	-1
Idaho Falls MSA	-6	1	-4	1	-2	-3	8	0	2	1	-1
Boise City-Nampa MSA	-8	2	-2	-14	-3	-7	11	-1	1	-1	-3
Coeur d'Alene MSA	-6	0	1	-2	-10	-1	-25	-4	4	2	-2
Lewiston MSA	0	1	-2	1	-3	2	-4	5	7	0	0
Pocatello MSA	0	1	-2	-19	-3	4	6	7	-7	-2	-2
Twin Falls MicSA	-8	2	5	4	-2	6	7	-6	-5	2	1
Rexburg MicSA	-13	1	-1	-32	-5	-4	12	-9	-26	4	0

"better protection for firearms and ammunition manufacturers." Also in its sights are hundreds of companies that supply the shooting industry with accessories. The industry is worth \$2 billion a year.

North central Idaho is already home to one of the largest commercial ammunition makers in the nation and to smaller makers of firearms and shooting accessories.

ATK, the ammunition maker located in Lewiston, has expanded its work force from 675 in 2001 to 1,200 today. Martin Zacha, ATK's general manager of operations in Lewiston, told Site Selection magazine this spring that the business case for locating ATK in Idaho was simple.

"We are an ammunition and accessory products business, and Idaho is all about the outdoors," he said. "It is about hunting and fishing. It plays well to what we do. It definitely helps with our work force. Most of our employees know our products. They use them and understand them. People in Idaho grow up hunting and fishing. They appreciate the quality of our products and they know why quality is important."

Another Lewiston ammunition manufacturer, Extreme Bullets, plans to add up to 100 jobs in the next couple of years at South Port near the airport. That addition will fuel the growth of the owner David Howell's other businesses that employ nearly 50 people downtown – Howell Machine and Ammo Load Worldwide. Howell Machine makes parts for manufacturing equipment for large-scale companies such as ATK. Ammo Load produces manufacturing equipment for small- to mid-size ammunition makers.

Two growing firms in Clearwater County make guns and accessories. Meacham Tool & Hardware Co. Inc. in Peck builds customized rifles. Nightforce Optics, which moved to the Orofino area in 2000, makes high-quality rifle scopes for hunters, police and the military. Four years ago, it employed fewer than 10 people. Today, it employs more than 50. Nightforce scopes are known for their high performance and are guaranteed for life.

Bow hunters also can buy products made in north central Idaho. Stone Mountain Bow Strings in Orofino employs more than a dozen people, making a variety of bowstrings. Alpine Archery, founded in Lewiston in 1988, is known for its innovative bows. This year, it introduced the F1 Fireball, a low-cost high-performance bow at a price that people can afford in these hard times. Alpine Archery, which employs nearly 20 people, also manufactures accessories, like stabilizers, bow quivers and arrow rests. Ram Products, a Moscow manufacturer with four employees, makes bow presses and other equipment to help do-it-yourselfer archers. Its presses are sturdy enough to handle the 100 pounds of compression in play during repairs, but light enough to lug around in the woods.

Hunters also use game calls made in Kamiah. Bugling Bull Game Call LLC makes elk, deer, turkey, moose and predator calls. Owner Rockie Jacobsen, who founded the company in 1993, has won three world championship elk calling contests. Since Cabela's and several other major hunting gear retailers began carrying the calls a few years ago, the company sells more than 50,000 a year.

The confluence of the Snake and Clearwater rivers is the "jet boat capital of the world." More than a dozen companies employ about 140 people in Lewiston and Clarkston. The major boat builders in Lewiston are Riddle Marine, Bentz Boats and Custom Weld Boats. Bentz, which specializes in making large tour boats, recently completed the largest aluminum boat ever built in the region. The tour boat is 60 feet long and 18½ feet wide and will haul 103 passengers on the Missouri River. Forty miles up the Clearwater River, SJX Boats opened at the Orofino Business Park in April 2008. "Right out my backdoor I

have a river and in five minutes we are in the river testing products and taking people for demonstration rides,” said Steve Stajkowski, owner of SJX Jet Boats. Together the four jet boat builders employ about 60 people. They currently are working with boat builders in the Clarkston area to expand their sales into Germany.

Idaho’s whitewater inspired the creation of Northwest River Supply in 1974. The Moscow company makes and distributes kayaks, rafts, life jackets, wetsuits and related gear and clothing. A couple of years ago, the company expanded into the former Tidyman’s building near Alturas Technology Park. It added more than a dozen workers this year, bringing its employment up to 100.

Another Moscow company, Biketronics, is popular with motorcycle riders. In 2001, Harley-Davidson motorcycles ceased to be compatible with LED lights so electrical engineer Mike Meehan invented a product that enabled Harleys to still use LED lights. The LED lights are brighter, making the motorcycles safer, and use less energy so riders have more power available for other accessories. Since then, Meehan has developed dozens of other devices for motorcycles including audio systems. That’s allowed Biketronics to double its gross sales every year since its founding in 2008. Last year, its gross sales increased about 22 percent. Today, Biketronics employs 18 people.

Ski resorts and other sporting venues rely on padding produced by Idaho Sewing for Sports near Grangeville. For more than 20 years, it has designed and made customized padding for customers worldwide. Ski resorts are its largest customer pool, buying pads for lifts, posts, jumps and other areas and tubes for sledding. Athletic arenas use pads for pole vault pits, racing areas and seating. The company employs 16 people.

Trailers to camp in or carry boats and RVs are made by Butler Trailer Manufacturing Inc. in Orofino, Gateway Trailers in Lewiston, Idaho Tote in Juliaetta and T & C Quality Trailer LLC in Lewiston.

Golfers use Golftek products to analyze their swings, fit their clubs, practice and play golf indoors. Since Bud Blankenship invented the world’s first golf swing analyzer in 1977, Golftek has led the way in the design and development of state-of-the-art swing analysis systems and realistic indoor golf simulators. From its headquarters in Lewiston, Golftek engineers are technical advisors to many of the leading golf teachers and clubfitters worldwide.

Horses play an important role in Idaho outdoor recreation. Two sister companies in Grangeville provide products for horseback riding. Ray Holes Saddle Co. has been famous since the 1930s for its customized leather saddles while Ray Holes Leather Care Products makes saddle butter, chap wax and other products to restore and protect leather. A new Grangeville manufacturer, Rosebud Horse Bedding, makes premium horse bedding from kiln-dried pine shavings screened to remove excess dust.

*Kathryn.Tacke@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 799-5000 ext. 3984*

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO TEENS FACE TOUGH JOB MARKET

The worst labor market in 60 years has made it hard for American teenagers to find jobs and start their careers as north central Idaho teens are discovering.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the unemployment rate for teens in north central Idaho rose from 24.4 percent in 2007 to 31.7 percent in 2009. In the same period, the unemployment rate for American teens rose from 21.3 percent to 27.2 percent. The teen unemployment rate across Idaho rose from 17.3 percent to 24.7. The rates for teens were more than twice as high as the rates for all workers.

Job Applicants Registered with Idaho Labor

	North Central			State of Idaho		
	Q3 2010	Q3 2007	Growth	Q3 2010	Q3 2007	Growth
Total	6,199	4,052	53.0%	114,158	60,610	88.3%
14 to 21 years	621	506	22.7%	9,135	6,086	50.1%
22 to 30 years	1,754	1,240	41.5%	29,922	16,857	77.5%
31 to 55 years	3,012	1,911	57.6%	60,800	31,621	92.3%
55 years and over	812	395	105.6%	14,272	6,025	136.9%

The demand for work has intensified through the recession.

Teens generally have fewer skills and less work experience, and in today's job market that puts them at the end of the line behind the jobless baby boomers who are competing with new college graduates who, in turn, are trying to elbow out the undergraduates and high school students.

With so many experienced workers willing to take entry-level jobs, teens have found it much harder to find work. Teens not only are missing out on paychecks today, but they also are losing the opportunity to gain experience, which will hurt their ability to compete for jobs in the future. Many studies have shown that entering the job market during a recession has long-term negative impacts on workers' earnings.

Last year for the first time ever, workers 65 and older outnumbered teens in the American labor force. Believing there are no job opportunities for them,

Employment Covered by Unemployment Insurance by Age and Sex

North Central Idaho

	Total			Female			Male		
	Q1 2007	Q1 2010	Change	Q1 2007	Q1 2010	Change	Q1 2007	Q1 2010	Change
All Ages	42,156	40,097	-4.9%	20,896	20,421	-2.3%	21,260	19,676	-7.5%
14-18	1,482	1,102	-25.6%	827	630	-23.8%	655	472	-27.9%
19-21	2,839	2,426	-14.5%	1,525	1,339	-12.2%	1,314	1,087	-17.3%
22-24	3,276	2,855	-12.9%	1,610	1,473	-8.5%	1,666	1,382	-17.0%
25-34	8,244	8,100	-1.7%	3,899	3,929	0.8%	4,345	4,171	-4.0%
25-34	8,750	8,022	-8.3%	4,346	4,067	-6.4%	4,404	3,955	-10.2%
45-54	10,189	9,487	-6.9%	5,114	4,924	-3.7%	5,075	4,563	-10.1%
55-64	6,014	6,525	8.5%	2,952	3,297	11.7%	3,062	3,228	5.4%
Over 64	1,358	1,577	16.1%	620	759	22.4%	738	818	10.8%

State of Idaho

All Ages	632,596	595,052	-5.9%	303,570	293,525	-3.3%	329,026	301,527	-8.4%
14-18	29,812	19,285	-35.3%	15,629	10,271	-34.3%	14,183	9,014	-36.4%
19-21	41,090	33,800	-17.7%	21,720	18,552	-14.6%	19,370	15,248	-21.3%
22-24	45,673	39,511	-13.5%	22,143	20,202	-8.8%	23,530	19,309	-17.9%
25-34	138,595	133,698	-3.5%	62,092	62,623	0.9%	76,503	71,075	-7.1%
25-34	137,712	126,482	-8.2%	64,550	60,602	-6.1%	73,162	65,880	-10.0%
45-54	140,318	133,689	-4.7%	69,655	67,471	-3.1%	70,663	66,218	-6.3%
55-64	79,523	86,703	9.0%	39,098	43,861	12.2%	40,425	42,842	6.0%
Over 64	19,872	21,881	10.1%	8,680	9,941	14.5%	11,192	11,940	6.7%

many teens have given up looking for work. In addition, there is a long-term trend for teens to devote more time to school and extracurricular activities than work. Teens with jobs fell from 57 percent in 1989 to 40 percent in 2007. At the same time, seniors have remained in the labor force in greater numbers or returned to work from retirement because of the shift away from defined-benefit pension plans, rising medical costs and losses in retirement accounts, home values and other assets over the last three years. The number of teens in the American labor force fell from 7.1 million in November 2007 to 5.8 million this November, while the number of seniors rose from 6 million to 6.8 million. In addition to a declining labor force participation rate among teens and a rising rate among older workers, the numbers also were affected by the 1.5 percent decline in the teen population and the 6.7 percent surge in the senior population.

In north central Idaho, seniors also outnumber teens in the labor force. Covered employment of people 14 to 18 fell 25.6 percent from 1,482 in the first quarter of 2007 to 1,102 in the first quarter of 2010 while the number of covered workers 65 and older rose 16.1 percent from 1,358 to 1,577. More seniors than teens own their own business so there definitely would now be more seniors in the labor force than teens.

Based on data from the Census Bureau Local Employment Dynamics program, younger workers have lost proportionately more jobs than older workers and men have lost proportionately more jobs than women.

For the teens who can find a job, the money they are being paid and the number of hours they are allowed to work are lower in many cases than they were before the recession began in December 2007.

Kathryn.Tacke@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 799-5000 ext. 3984

Average Monthly Earnings of New Hires by Age

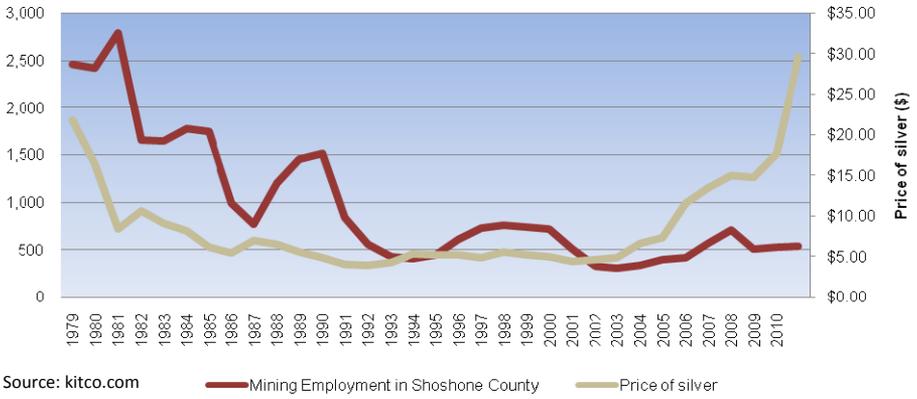
	North Central Idaho			State of Idaho		
	Q4 2007	Q4 2009	Change	Q4 2007	Q4 2009	Change
All Ages	\$1,621	\$1,676	3.4%	\$1,861	\$1,857	-0.2%
14-18	613	529	-13.7%	623	606	-2.7%
19-21	939	910	-3.1%	1,142	1,048	-8.2%
22-24	1,201	1,200	-0.1%	1,521	1,414	-7.0%
25-34	1,930	1,900	-1.6%	2,034	2,011	-1.1%
25-34	1,930	2,161	12.0%	2,034	2,362	16.1%
45-54	2,363	2,609	10.4%	2,447	2,543	3.9%
55-64	2,012	2,403	19.4%	2,516	2,495	-0.8%
Over 64	1,042	1,167	12.0%	1,462	1,681	15.0%

RISING SILVER PRICES COULD BOLSTER IDAHO MINING INDUSTRY

Precious metal prices continue to soar as global economic anxiety makes commodities, especially gold and silver, seem like the safest of investment havens.

From the first week in January to the second week of December, the price of silver increased from \$16.30 to \$29.60. Silver prices have not exceeded \$22 since 1980 when the Hunt brothers tried to corner the market and pushed prices to nearly \$50. In the first three years of this decade, silver prices hovered around \$4.50 an ounce, and mining employment fell to 290, its lowest level in more than a century.

Silver Prices and Mining Jobs, 1979-2010



Prices for lead, zinc, copper and some of the other mining byproducts also have risen although not quite as dramatically.

Higher prices make the silver mines in Shoshone County more profitable and are likely to lead to increased exploration, production and employment.

Hecla Mining Co. expects to make a decision by mid-2011 on a \$150 million to \$200 million plan for a new internal shaft that could double production at the Lucky Friday Mine near Mullan.

U.S. Silver Corp. is raising money to try to reopen the shuttered Coeur mine next to its Galena mine near Wallace.

Rising prices already have increased mining employment from 523 last November to an estimated 560 this November.

Expanded employment and rising take-home pay will benefit not just miners and their families but the entire Shoshone County economy.

Higher metal prices mean miners will receive even higher wages, bonuses and profit-sharing than they did last year. The average worker in Shoshone County's mining industry earned \$60,536 last year, while the average worker in all other sectors there earned \$28,028.

In 2009, the mining industry paid more than one-fifth of all wages in Shoshone County. Rising wages and bonuses should translate into increased profits and employment at retail stores and service providers.

Kathryn.Tacke@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 799-5000 ext. 3984

REQUIREMENTS REVEAL INSIGHTS INTO CURRENT JOB MARKET

In a knowledge-based economy, higher-paying wages often go with jobs that have higher educational and training requirements.

But northern Idaho's share of job vacancies by type of requirements shows a higher percentage of job openings in sectors requiring less education and training, a partial contributor to the region's lower per capita income compared to the state as a whole.

The list of open positions in northern Idaho can be broken down into five categories that span the spectrum from formal training and academic degrees to experience to no training or education necessary.

The relative share of jobs in these categories offers a current reading of the skills demanded by the local labor market.

Most recent data show that 68 percent of vacancies involve jobs that either have no training/educational requirement or the requirements were not specified. A long second at 24 percent were jobs requiring a high school diploma or GED. Barely 8 percent of the job opening required education or training be-

yond high school – 4.3 percent required at least a bachelor’s degree while 3.7 percent required some college, an associate degree or vocational certificate.

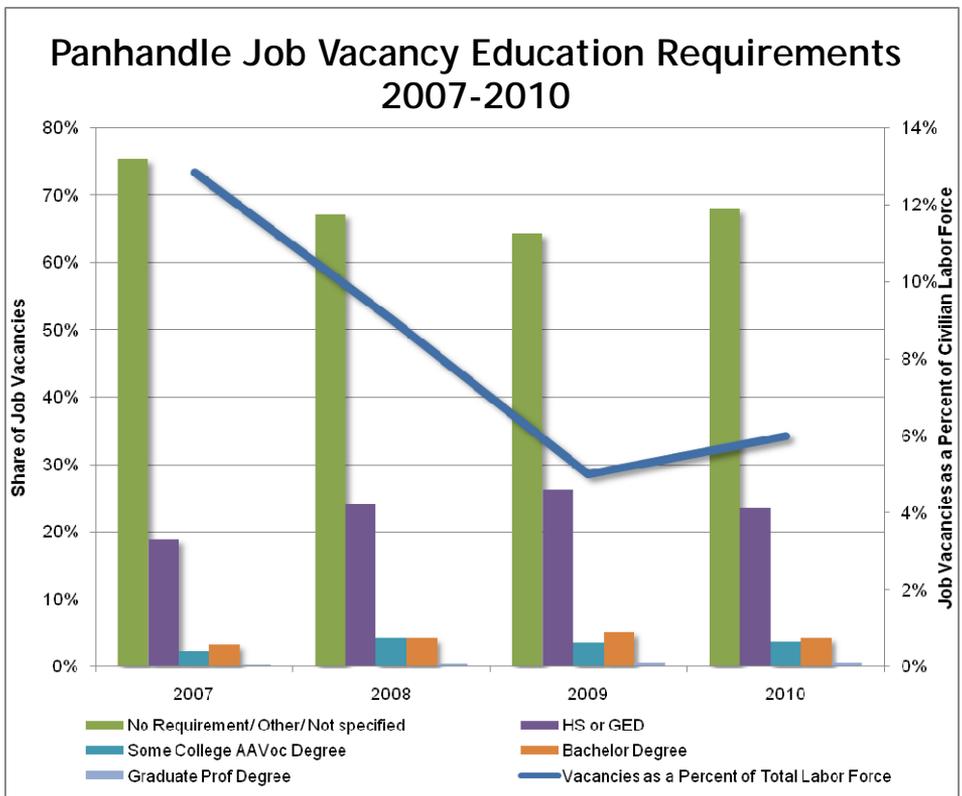
So the majority of the job vacancies in northern Idaho require little to no education or training.

Historically, northern Idaho’s job vacancies requiring a college degree have been relatively low. But the share has increased 1.3 percentage points since 2007. Vacancies with no requirement or high school diploma/GED requirement have held the highest shares consistently since 2007. Vacancies requiring some college or a bachelor’s degree have fluctuated over the last three years but have not been higher than 5 percent.

Total job vacancies in northern Idaho equaled 6 percent of the civilian labor force in 2010. This was slightly higher than a year earlier when total vacancies equaled 5 percent of the civilian labor force but less than half the vacancy percentage in 2007 at the peak of the economic expansion. While representative of the poor economy and its weak labor market, the slight increase over the last 12 months is encouraging.

The absolute and relative sizes of job vacancies can signal to education and training providers how well their programs fit the local market. This indicator can also show progress towards a stronger economy through higher-paying wages. Although northern Idaho has a diversified job market, offering solid jobs in manufacturing, health care and retail trade, its annual per capita income of \$29,858 is significantly lower than the state’s at \$32,994. While some of the differential can be attributed to lower cost of living, most is the result of lower skill requirements for northern Idaho jobs.

Alivia.Body@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 769-1558 ext. 3486



WAGE INFO CAN BE MISLEADING IN SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO

The lack of detailed information on the actual hours individuals work for the pay they receive distorts basic wage information by treating part-time employment and overtime no differently than traditional 40-hour-a-week full-time work.

This has been especially true in south central Idaho, particularly in the administrative support sector where staffing agencies typically show large employment numbers during the summer and the harvest without showing the temporary nature or overtime aspects of that kind of work. Staffing agencies in the region do not typically employ people steadily through an entire quarter so when total wages are allocated to each worker and then divided by 520 – the working hours in a quarter – the hourly rate can come out below the minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour. This is particularly the case with employment services. A typical period of employment might be three weeks full time and then nothing for a month or two.

While this does not significantly distort average earnings in most industries, it has an impact in statistics for retail, hotels, restaurants and agriculture, where seasonal, temporary and part-time jobs comprise a major portion of payrolls. These sectors have a larger concentration of jobs in south central Idaho since most employers can afford to hire more when the worker is paid minimum wage and benefits are not provided.

South Central Idaho Jobs, Earnings and Sales

Sector	Jobs	Earnings	Sales	Annual Earnings
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	13,332	\$518,856,000	\$2,106,628,000	\$39,000
Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas Extraction	437	\$17,154,000	\$78,887,000	\$39,000
Utilities	383	\$26,833,000	\$159,051,000	\$70,000
Construction	7,456	\$295,551,000	\$625,206,000	\$40,000
Manufacturing	8,775	\$408,893,000	\$3,033,085,000	\$47,000
Wholesale Trade	3,794	\$185,477,000	\$469,767,000	\$49,000
Retail Trade	12,495	\$327,692,000	\$797,141,000	\$26,000
Transportation and Warehousing	5,394	\$237,615,000	\$574,198,000	\$44,000
Information	1,554	\$57,017,000	\$314,617,000	\$37,000
Finance and Insurance	3,891	\$213,827,000	\$573,846,000	\$55,000
Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	6,530	\$109,477,000	\$998,008,000	\$17,000
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	5,293	\$230,603,000	\$443,879,000	\$44,000
Management of Companies and Enterprises	338	\$28,873,000	\$61,112,000	\$85,000
Administrative, Support, Waste Management, Remediation Services	5,880	\$115,514,000	\$229,786,000	\$20,000
Educational Services	819	\$14,637,000	\$26,231,000	\$18,000
Health Care, Social Assistance	10,670	\$385,440,000	\$710,934,000	\$36,000
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	2,171	\$39,256,000	\$87,751,000	\$18,000
Accommodation, Food Services	7,234	\$128,203,000	\$372,391,000	\$18,000
Other Services	5,386	\$141,500,000	\$305,599,000	\$26,000
Government	12,895	\$549,607,000	\$980,870,000	\$43,000
All Sectors	114,729	\$4,032,023,000	\$12,948,989,000	\$35,000

Source: EMSI Complete Employment - 3rd Quarter 2010

During economic expansions, wages are used to attract workers and usually rise above the minimum threshold. The Idaho Workforce Development Training Fund is an example of an incentive for new or expanding employers who offer at least \$12 an hour plus employer subsidized health care.

Jan.Roeser@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 735-2500 ext. 3639

INVESTMENTS MAKE IMPACT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic activity in south central Idaho is running proportionately higher than in any other region of the state except southwestern Idaho and the Boise metropolitan area.

Based on data from Economic Modeling Specialists Inc., nearly \$50 billion was spent in 2009 statewide. That spending was divided into long-term investments in infrastructure and spending on personal goods and services that are immediately consumed. Both contribute to the economic activity but long-term investments can attract capital from outside the region as well.

Southwestern Idaho’s high level of building and investment results from its high population that drives spending throughout the region, and as a center for finance, government and many businesses it attracts spending from outside the state. The Tamarack resort, until its bankruptcy two years ago was a solid example of that. While the region has 55 percent of the population, it commanded 57 percent of all expenditures.

South central Idaho was the only other region where the share of spending exceeded the share of the population. Many projects in the region were started prior to the recession and are still finishing up – the new St. Luke’s Magic Valley Regional Medical Center, the Twin Falls Alternative Route, Gem State Processing in Heyburn and the new office building for the Magic Valley Arts Council to name a few. South central Idaho continues to see substantial interest in the area from out-of-state companies looking for low operating costs and quality recreational opportunities.

Northern Idaho continues to draw a high level of interest due to its innate beauty and tourism opportunities. East central Idaho has the Idaho National Laboratory that provides the kind of economic certainty that fosters both commercial and residential investments.

Jan.Roeser@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 735-2500 ext. 3639

2009 Regional Expenditures (in thousands)						
	Northern	North Central	South-western	South Central	East Central	South-eastern
Consumption	\$5,048,062	\$2,570,708	\$17,767,575	\$4,682,582	\$4,675,858	\$3,562,298
Investment	\$1,706,091	\$651,046	\$4,804,285	\$1,445,649	\$1,522,699	\$1,053,346
Total	\$6,754,153	\$3,221,754	\$22,571,860	\$6,128,231	\$6,198,557	\$4,615,644
Percent of Total	17.1%	8.2%	57.1%	15.5%	15.7%	11.7%
Population	213,662	104,496	680,660	179,994	202,463	164,526
Percent of Total Pop	17.4%	8.5%	55.4%	14.7%	16.5%	13.4%

ELECTRIC & HYBRID CARS – OLD TECHNOLOGY FINDS NEW LIFE

American industry is creating many new jobs and employment opportunities in the emerging “green” sector of the economy. Green careers focus on renewable energy or support efforts to protect the environment.

The automotive industry has been one of the leading creators of green jobs in the past few years. Due to the high cost of petroleum and consumer environmental concerns, there has been greater demand and interest in hybrid and electric vehicles. It can be seen every day on the roads of Idaho as increasingly more individuals purchase these vehicles.

The greening of the auto industry is producing a new breed of mechanics. According to Wayne Kellogg of Raytheon Professional Services, “hybrid and electric vehicles are becoming more advanced technologically, and as technology develops mechanics will need many new skills.”

Mechanic Bob Stout believes he and other mechanics “are limited in regards to the repair maintenance services we can provide on hybrid and electric cars.” In a few years when most of these cars are off warranty, he predicted, the need for quality mechanics trained on these types of vehicles will increase.

The history of the electric car and hybrid did not begin a few years ago as many would suspect. In fact one would have to travel back to the mid-1800s to find the first road-worthy electric car. Almost simultaneously in 1842 America inventor Thomas Davenport and Scottish inventor Robert Davidson both developed drivable electric cars. By the 1880’s advances in battery technology made the electric car a practical device for consumers.

In the early days of the automotive industry, electric cars were not an exception but rather the norm. In 1900 most cars sold in the United States were electric and were considered the sports cars of their day. In 1899, a Belgian built electric race car called "LaJamais Contente" set a world record for land speed – at a peppy 68 miles per hour.

Beyond speed, electric cars were considered more convenient than steam powered cars – which could take as much as 45 minutes to “warm up” and be ready for operation – or gasoline-powered cars – which were often smelly, noisy and required frequent shifting from gear to gear while driving. Additionally, early gas-powered vehicles needed to be manually cranked to start. In contrast, electric cars, which by 1900 offered rechargeable batteries, allowed drivers easy and instant operation with little noise, odor, shifting or vibration.

By 1912 production of electric vehicles had peaked in America. The practicality and performance were so great that even Clara Ford, the wife of Ford Motor Co. founder Henry Ford, drove an electric Detroit Motors sedan. Ford was so impressed with his wife’s car that his company produced two prototype electric cars in 1913.

A 1914 Detroit Electric sedan could be driven 80 miles on a single charge compared to the 2011 Nissan LEAF electric car, which travels about 100 miles on a single charge.

Like its battery powered sibling, the hybrid vehicle was first developed in the 1800s. Ferdinand Porsche in 1898 developed a hybrid



THEN: 1915 Detroit Electric Brougham...one year newer than the car driven by Clara Ford, wife of Henry Ford. *Photo: Petersen Automotive Museum, Los Angeles, Calif.*



NOW: 2011 Nissan LEAF 100 percent electric car. *Photo: Nissanusa.com.*

car that could run 40 miles on a battery charge. By 1916 the hybrid sedan offered by Baker Motors boasted 48 miles per gallon – about the same as today’s hybrid vehicles.

While the early hybrid and electric cars had many positive qualities and benefits, they eventually lost out to their gasoline counterparts, helped along by Charles Kettering’s invention of the electric starter in 1912, eliminating the crank method.

The final death blow to hybrid and electric cars early in the 20th Century was Ford’s development of the assembly line. Gas-powered cars could be produced for a fraction of the cost and time of an electric vehicle. Since gasoline was cheap and plentiful, there was no economic incentive to support the electric car market.

But with changes in the oil industry and oil’s effect on the global economy, today’s hybrids and electric cars are back and may someday become part of the automotive mainstream.

*Dan.Cravens@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 236-6710 ext. 3713*

ISU, IDAHO LABOR TO CREATE HIGH PAYING “GREEN” JOBS

Idaho State University in Pocatello recently announced that its College of Technology is offering a new certificate program in renewable energy technology. The program is funded by a \$1.5 million grant from the Idaho Department of Labor through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009.

Coursework for the renewable energy technology program will be offered online and evenings with weekend and summer laboratory exercises held on the Idaho State campus. A unique feature of this program is its access to students across Idaho via distance learning, which allows many working individuals to pursue this valuable credential without giving up their jobs.

The renewable energy program certificate provides students an opportunity to climb a career ladder to other energy related opportunities. Scott Rasmussen, director of the university’s Energy Systems Technology and Education Center, said students successfully completing the certificate program may apply their coursework to an associate’s degree program in the College of Technology.

The new certificate program introduced students to the gamut of renewable energy technologies and power generation sources including wind, solar, hydro and geothermal. The entire program will last nine months, and students will complete 33 semester hours of coursework.

Tuition is expected to be about \$5,500. However, the university will offer students a wide range of financial aid packages including grants and scholarships to help defray tuition costs.

Graduates should be able to find employment in the energy industry at a starting wage of about \$17 per hour with the prospect for future earnings growth. The program represents an example of efforts by the Idaho Department of Labor and Idaho State University to provide training that leads to quality employment opportunities.

*Dan.Cravens@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 236-6710 ext. 3713*

SUGAR BEETS AND FEDERAL JUDGE COLLIDE – LOST FARM JOBS COULD ENSUE

There are few things in this world more humble or less likely to draw national media attention than a sugar beet. The rather homely tuber spends its

life underground, waiting for harvest and a truck to carry it to some location where it can reach its full potential as a candy bar or maybe a soft drink.

U.S. District Judge Jeffery S. White in San Francisco has the humble sugar beet on his mind these days. Recently White ordered that 256 acres of baby beet plants intended to make seeds for future sugar beet crops be pulled from the ground.

The beet plants in question have been genetically modified so their seeds are “Round Up Ready.” That means they allow better weed control to produce larger yields. Round Up Ready seeds have been used by farmers in many different crops across the United States for years with good success.

However, White expressed his environmental concerns over use of these genetically modified plants. In rather harsh language the judge said the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the seed industry were trying to skirt an order preventing the planting of genetically modified sugar beets.

What happens to 256 acres may seem trivial to American agriculture, but Stan Grotsema, a retired agriculture educator with the University of Idaho extension, said 95 percent of beet seed for the 2012 growing season will come from seeds produced on that 256 acres. Grotsema said White’s order would be devastating because “nearly all beet farmers have switched to Round-Up Ready beet seed.”

Jim Chapman, a seed dealer and certified crop consultant, says, “Fields planted with Round-Up Ready seeds require less tending by farm machinery. These seeds save work and save fuel while increasing yields for farmers.”

Chapman said that 39,000 acres in the upper Snake River Valley are dedicated to sugar beet production, representing about 60 separate beet producers in the region. Some of these farms are small family run operations while others employ up to 200 workers. Without seeds these farms will have no reason to keep their work forces, and places like Power and Bingham counties, where many sugar beets are produced, will suffer major job losses. Chapman and Grotsema agree that the sugar beet industry could be very badly hurt if the court order stands.

Chapman said the court’s intervention came as Idaho sugar beets were becoming a more popular source of sugar. Last summer Pepsi announced its plan to produce “throwback” versions of Pepsi and Mountain Dew using beet sugar from Idaho-based Amalgamated Sugar Co. instead of the usual corn syrup.

White’s ruling is now under appeal, and the beet seed crop is safe until the appeal is heard. While the beet may be a humble looking crop, it is important to the jobs of many in Idaho.

*Dan.Cravens@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 236-6710 ext. 3713*

IDAHO HISPANIC-OWNED BUSINESSES INCREASE MORE THAN DOUBLE NATIONAL RATE

The number of Hispanic-owned businesses in Idaho increased by 39.6 percent to 3,874 between 2002 and 2007, more than twice the national expansion of 18 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. About 71 percent of all Idaho Hispanic-owned businesses were owned by people of Mexican origin compared to 45 percent nationally.

Idaho Hispanic-owned businesses generated \$450 million in sales in 2007, up 28 percent compared with 2002. The number of Hispanic-owned businesses with receipts of \$1 million or more was 86 in 2007.

The new statistics come from the Survey of Business Owners: Hispanic-Owned Businesses: 2007, which provides detailed information every five years

for Hispanic-owned businesses such as the number, sales and receipts, number of paid employees and annual payroll.

The Census Bureau also provides information on non-Hispanic businesses and businesses that are owned half by Hispanics and half by non-Hispanics. It breaks down the Hispanic-owned business statistics into businesses owned by people of Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican or other Hispanic origin.

Idaho data includes statewide and 14 counties by industry and size of business.

Hispanic-owned businesses comprised 23.6 percent of all businesses in New Mexico, highest among all states, followed by Florida at 22.4 percent, Texas at 20.7 percent, California at 16.5 percent and Arizona at 10.7 percent. Idaho's Hispanic-owned businesses comprise only 2.6 percent of all businesses, ranking 25th nationally.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

- The number of businesses owned by people of Mexican origin increased by 57.2 percent between 2002 and 2007. This ranked Idaho 25th in the nation.
- Of the 3,874 Hispanic-owned businesses, 757 had paid employees, an increase of 26 percent from 2002. They employed 4,317 people, an increase of 37.1 percent from 2002, and their payrolls totaled \$106.8 million, an increase of 63.1 percent. Receipts of Hispanic-owned employer businesses totaled \$502.2 million, an increase of 42.7 percent.
- The increase in Idaho Hispanic-owned businesses without paid employees was 42.7 percent. These businesses had receipts of \$90.4 million, an increase of 37.2 percent.
- Idaho had 14 Hispanic-owned businesses with 50 or more employees in 2007. These businesses generated \$84.9 million in revenues.
- Nearly one-fourth of Hispanic-owned businesses were involved in construction. Other major industries were services to buildings and dwellings; retail trade; professional, scientific and technical services; truck transportation; real estate; ambulatory health care services; personal care services and food services and bars and lounges. These eight additional sectors account for 50 percent of the Hispanic-owned businesses in Idaho.

The Survey of Business Owners defines Hispanic-owned business as one in which Hispanics own 51 percent or more of the equity, interest or stock.

Idaho's labor market information website, lmi.idaho.gov, provides a link to the Hispanic-owned business data for the Idaho, the United States, all other states, selected counties and metropolitan statistical areas.

*Janell.Hyer@labor.idaho.gov, State Economist
(208) 332-3570 ext. 3220*

Census *Of the Holiday Season* **Facts**

\$30 billion — Value of retail sales by electronic shopping and mail-order houses in December 2009 — the highest total for any month last year. *Source: Service Sector Statistics* <<http://www.census.gov/retail>>

21,895 — The number of electronic shopping and mail-order houses in business in 2008. These businesses, which employed 332,405 workers, are a popular source of holiday gifts.

If you're not sure where to do your shopping, choices of retail establishments abound: In 2008, there were 155,578 clothing and clothing accessories stores; 8,813 department stores; 9,211 hobby, toy and game shops; 29,390 gift, novelty and souvenir shops; 22,116 sporting goods stores; 26,683 jewelry stores; and 9,708 book stores across the nation. The figures shown are for locations with paid employees.

Source: County Business Patterns <<http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/index.html>>



Area and County Developments

Nonfarm jobs data for the state and labor market areas are posted on the department's labor marketing information website at <http://lmi.idaho.gov/EmploymentUnemployment/CurrentEmploymentStatistics/tabid/760/Default.aspx>.

Current labor force statistics for Idaho, counties and selected areas are posted online at <http://lmi.idaho.gov/EmploymentUnemployment/CivilianLaborForceLAUS/tabid/804/Default.aspx>.

NORTHERN IDAHO

Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

BENEWAH COUNTY

- Benewah Community Hospital in St. Maries broke ground on a \$28.5 million expansion in November. The existing hospital, built in 1957, will be replaced by a state-of-the-art facility slated to open in February 2012. The new 60,000-square-foot building will include larger private patient rooms with baths, a new clinic, expanded emergency and physical therapy departments, upgrades in medical equipment and parking.
- Jack Buell Trucking received Timber Harvesting magazine's 2010 Logging Business of the Year Award – the first logging business from Idaho to win the award. In the late 1950s, Jack Buell started the company with a single fifth wheel. As the business grew so did the demand for more trucks. In the 1970s, he began offering log-loading services and log processing. In the last couple of years he moved into biomass production, turning what was previously leftover waste into fuel. Today, the company has more than 200 employees and nearly as many trucks. Each year, it transports 50 million board feet of logs, 50,000 tons of pulpwood and countless tons of chips, lumber and wood fuel. The award also recognized Jack Buell's service to his community including his 36 years as a Benewah County commissioner.

BONNER COUNTY

- Quest Aircraft Co. announced in November that it would lay off 26 full-time employees. It was the fourth round of layoffs for the Sandpoint aircraft manufacturer this year. Quest now has 120 employees, down from 345 in 2008. The economy has prevented many businesses and nonprofit organizations from ordering planes they had been able to afford in better times.
- Schweitzer Mountain Resort near Sandpoint opened for the ski season the Friday after Thanksgiving, offering skiers and skiboarders 2,900 acres of lift-serviced terrain in a La Niña year expected to bring plenty of snow. The resort will offer even smoother rides this year since it recently purchased two new grooming vehicles. Schweitzer employs more than 600 people at its peak around Christmas holidays.
- The Priest River Chamber of Commerce recently celebrated the completion of a 1,000-foot-long mural honoring 100 years of logging in Priest River. The mural along U.S. Highway 2 is composed of 152 panels and was made possible by a \$4,000 grant and nearly \$70,000 in donations.

KOOTENAI COUNTY

- Accurate Molded Plastics recently completed a \$2 million expansion at its Coeur d'Alene injection molding and tooling plant. A 20,000-square-foot addition to its 40,000-square-foot plant on five acres gives the company space for growth. Annual sales have held steady during the last few years at \$20 million and are expected to expand considerably to the medical equipment and aerospace industries in the next few years. The company currently employs 150.
- The Idaho Department of Labor has moved its office from a rented space in Coeur d'Alene to its own new building north of Interstate 90 and west of Highway 41 in Post Falls. The new office provides more room including larger conference rooms and more parking spaces. About 48 people work at the new Kootenai County office. Companies that are hiring will have after-hour access to an interview area.
- The Federal Highway Administration has approved a new Interstate 90 interchange to serve the west end of Post Falls, including Cabela's and the new Walmart store. The diamond-shape interchange at Beck Road will be built by Foursquare Properties Inc., the developer of The Pointe, the shopping center that began with the Cabela's as the anchor store. The \$28 million project is expected to begin next year.
- Kootenai County, using \$1.3 million in federal stimulus funds, purchased 13 new buses for Citylink. The bus system, largely funded by the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and headquartered in Plummer, serves western Benewah County, the Coeur d'Alene-Hayden metro area, and Post Falls. It carries more than 600,000 passengers each year – all for free. Its aging buses, most purchased five years ago, now have been replaced with seven buses that hold 33 riders and six that hold 16. The system's hub is at Riverstone, where plans are under way to build a permanent transit center with parking for 160 vehicles.

SHOSHONE COUNTY

- Lookout Pass ski hill opened the Friday before Thanksgiving along with Silver Mountain Resort. Lookout, along Interstate 90 at the Idaho-Montana border, employs more than 100 during the ski season. Skiers at Lookout will find enhanced glade skiing this year after the U.S. Forest Service removed a million and a half board feet of timber that was infested by bark beetles. The ski area operates on land leased from the U.S. Forest Service. Lookout has requested that the Forest Service allow it to open a second peak on the western edge of the existing ski area. If it receives permission, it will add more runs and chairlifts. Silver Mountain Resort, located in Kellogg, recently replaced the steel cable that holds its 3.1-mile, 20-year-old gondola – the longest gondola in North America. The resort, which employs up to 300 in the winter, sold a record number of season passes this year.

OPENINGS

- Miller's Country Store featuring locally produced goods including freshly baked goods and offering handyman services in Sandpoint.
- Paul Bunyan, a burger chain, in Ponderay with 20 employees. It is the fourth restaurant for the Coeur d'Alene-based chain that began in 1952.
- K2 Inn reopened near downtown Sandpoint after being closed for a major renovation.
- Tequila Joe's, a Mexican restaurant, in Hayden.
- Bounce & Party offering six inflatable play structures and two party areas in Post Falls.

- Northwest Pet Resort and Certified K-9 Training Center in Coeur d'Alene. It also trains dogs for military and police narcotics and explosives detection.
- Critical Care Dental Clinic providing urgent and emergency dental care without appointments in Dalton Gardens.
- A Lane Bryant Closet store featuring plus-size clothing for women in Coeur d'Alene.

[Link to state and regional nonfarm job data.](#)

[Link to state and regional labor force data.](#)

Kathryn.Tacke@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 769-1558 ext. 3486

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis and Nez Perce counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- University of Idaho President Dwayne Nellis brought economic development, work force and education leaders from Moscow, Pullman, Lewiston and Clarkston together in early November to strengthen education, commerce and workers. The group, initially known as the Quad Cities, decided to rebrand itself the “Palouse Confluence” as more descriptive of the region. It also explored the possibility of bringing together students from the four cities for a service project.

CLEARWATER COUNTY

- The fiber optic broadband Nez Perce Information Systems headquartered in Lapwai is ever expanding. The network uses microwave towers to transmit broadband connectivity. With a staff of nine, the tribe has established a partnership with Inland Cellular of Lewiston, First Step Internet of Moscow and the Idaho Regional Optic Network. The network will serve as a major data storage and backup facility for other businesses and provide some services to Clearwater County for emergency backup. The network infrastructure centers on libraries, hospitals and fire districts throughout the reservation and neighboring communities. It will connect with the giant Internet pipelines known as “gigapops,” which run across the country to link universities, industry and government. The tribe landed a federal grant of nearly \$1.6 million this summer to improve Internet and cell phone service in parts of Clearwater, Idaho, Lewis and Nez Perce counties. Orofino and Ahsahka are among the communities benefitting from the improved telecommunications.
- Wind gusts of up to 70 miles per hour caused severe damage throughout the region on Nov. 16. Twenty mobile homes were destroyed or damaged in Orofino. Over 45,000 Clearwater Power and Avista Utilities customers were without power for a period, some for more than two days. The Dworshak fish hatchery lost a roof on one of its buildings, destroying two raceways and approximately 60,000 fish. Work project crews from the state prison in Orofino spent several days clearing roadways, cleaning up storm damage and removing fallen trees around State Hospital North, Dworshak State Park and other public facilities. Clearwater County Commissioners declared a state of disaster, opening the door for potential state and federal help to protect, repair and replace public property.

LATAH COUNTY

- GoNano Technologies in Moscow has signed an agreement with Massachusetts-based Strem Chemicals. GoNano develops and manufactures environmentally friendly high surface area nanomaterials for pollution control, catalysis, composites and sensory technologies. Strem manufactures

specialty chemicals for academic, industrial and government research and development laboratories as well as businesses in the pharmaceutical, chemical and micro-electronic industries. The agreement gives Strem the right to sell GoNano's Nanospring products. GoNano expects that eventually it will be running a manufacturing plant in the Moscow area making nanosprings for a variety of commercial applications.

- The University of Idaho opened four offices in China to recruit students this spring. It also launched a Chinese-language website. This fall, the university signed memoranda of understanding with seven Chinese universities, paving the way for future collaboration and faculty and student exchanges. The Chinese universities have research interests relevant to the university - water, sustainability, agriculture, transportation, civil engineering and business. With China's growing prominence in the global community, reaching out to potential Chinese students made sense. Having more Chinese students on campus will enrich the learning environment for other students, faculty and staff. International students pay \$16,000 in out-of-state tuition, considerably less than the \$30,000 to \$40,000 charged by many public universities.
- A consortium of faculty researchers and educators from the University of Idaho and Washington State University received a \$700,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for interdisciplinary undergraduate training in mathematics and biology. The group will show students how to use mathematics to solve biological issues in authentic, long-term research experiences. It is also designing courses to help students understand the connections between math and biology.

NEZ PERCE AND WHITMAN, WASH., COUNTIES

- With a record return of fall chinook to the Snake River basin this year, the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery has been busy spawning returning adult fish and producing the next generation of fall-run salmon. This is the second straight year that the hatchery, built in 2002, is at full production. The surge in fall chinook reflects successful management by the hatchery and some improvements in migration conditions. The hatchery goal is to produce fish to both return to the hatchery and spawn in the river to supplement wild populations. The program's success also is reflected in the Clearwater, Snake and Salmon rivers, which were full of fall chinook. The increasing returns have allowed fall fishing seasons the last three years. This season from Sept. 1 to Oct. 31 anglers caught about 5,900 fall chinook and kept 985 on the Snake River and a short section of the lower Clearwater River.
- Heath Barnes and Tish Ghigleri started a small food processing plant at the Port of Wilma just west of Clarkston this spring. Bronzestone, a name reflecting the color and texture of the locally grown garbanzo beans, sells three varieties of hummus through the Moscow Food Co-op, Rosauers and Yokes Fresh Market. After developing the recipe, Bronzestone won a \$10,000 prize in a business plan competition last year sponsored by the Port of Whitman County and Washington State University. That convinced the couple to begin production. Less than a decade ago hummus was a \$2 million-a-year industry in the United States. Now it has grown to hundreds of millions, and Bronzestone is hoping its all-natural product will capture a share of that growing market.
- The Port of Lewiston has stockpiled 300 containers for a container-rail operation that will serve shippers during the coming temporary suspension of barging on the Snake and Columbia rivers. Barges will not run for about 14 weeks between Dec. 10 and mid-March while the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers rehabilitates locks at three of the eight dams between Lewiston and Portland. Peas, lentils, wheat and perhaps paperboard or pulp from Clearwater Paper will be taken by the Great Northwest Railroad to Burlington Northern lines in eastern Washington. It will be the first time in eight years cargo has left the port by train. Many shippers made arrangements to send shipments early or to store products until the barges are running again.

- Inland Northwest Partners, a consortium of economic development organizations in northern Idaho and eastern Washington, has recognized Bob Tippet, the recently retired executive director of Valley Vision, with its Hometown Hero award for his key role in the economic development efforts of the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley. Mike Thomason, the Avista regional business manager in Lewiston, received a Hall of Fame award for supporting business growth on both sides of the border, and the Snake River Boat Builders Consortium won the partnership award for its work creating European markets for its products.

OPENINGS

- Harebrained and Happy selling handmade furniture, candles, beauty care products, quilts, jewelry, handbags and other items in Potlatch next to the post office.
- K9 Campground in Moscow, offering dog boarding, day care and obedience and agility classes.
- Deadbeat Records selling used CDs and records in Moscow.

[Link to state and regional nonfarm job data.](#)

[Link to state and regional labor force data.](#)

Kathryn.Tacke@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 799-5000 ext. 3984

SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

Ada, Adams, Boise, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley & Washington counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

ADA COUNTY

- Walmart will open another store in southwestern Idaho, this one in Meridian. Walmart is one of the Boise metropolitan area's largest employers with payroll ranging up to 3,000. Each store employs about 300 full- and part-time workers.
- Hewlett-Packard has lifted the pay freeze it has maintained for the past two years and began providing pay increases in November, the beginning of its fiscal year. Micron just recently provided its employees with bonuses, a bright light in Idaho's high-technology sector.

ADAMS COUNTY

- A biomass plant in Adams County is one step closer to reality. Many local timber owners and managers say they can supply enough material for the plant. Representatives for the Boise and Payette national forests, Idaho Department of Lands and Potlatch Corp provided promising reports on the supply of timber.

CANYON COUNTY

- Regal Entertainment Group has opened a second Edwards Cinema in Nampa. The theater will sport 12 screens with a capacity of over 2,200 people. Employment is expected at about 90, the majority part time.

- Lloyd Lumber in downtown Nampa for over 90 years is closing at the end of the year. Only a few months ago, the company was planning to move to a new location, but the company subsequently decided to liquidate. It employs 35.

ELMORE COUNTY

- Construction on Canyon Creek Bridge has begun and will continue through January. The \$493,000 overhaul is creating seven jobs over the next few months.

OWYHEE COUNTY

- The Owyhee County Planning and Zoning Commission is reviewing a \$130 million solar power generating plant proposal. The plant would be divided into two sections with a one-mile gap of farm land in between.
- Over \$115,000 in wages will reach the pockets of teachers in Owyhee County from the federal jobs bill. The Homedale School District is using the cash to replace roughly half of the wages lost when budgets were cut earlier in the year.

PAYETTE COUNTY

- The cities of Payette and Fruitland now share the costs associated with maintaining a chamber of commerce. Both city chambers recently merged to form the Payette County Chamber of Commerce.
- ROSE Advocates, an organization that assists victims of domestic and other forms of violence, is applying for a \$500,000 grant from the Idaho Department of Commerce. The organization currently operates in Payette, Washington, Adams and Valley counties and plans to build its offices in Payette County if the grant is approved.
- Payette County is getting its first golf retail store, Flagstick, in May. Located in Fruitland, the store will include a driving range and putting green. The staff of three could be expanded once construction is completed next spring.

VALLEY COUNTY

- Tamarack Resort plans to open its ski area Dec. 20, following approval from U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Terry Myers. The approval allows the homeowners group to use lifts and other equipment needed to open, though the equipment is collateral for the \$300 million owed to Credit Suisse, the creditor for the troubled resort. Sixty-five jobs are tied to the ski operation, and there is the economic benefit associated with recreational tourism.
- Payette Lakes Middle School will be replacing the grass at the Rich Sabala Athletic Complex with turf at a cost of \$795,000. The school district hopes to generate revenue by renting the complex for sports tournaments and camps. That money would finance replacing the turf in about 10 years.
- Federal stimulus money continues to have an impact. The city of McCall received \$500,000 towards rebuilding Deinhard Lane and chip sealing several other streets. The work begins next summer and will create eight jobs. Another \$500,000 is scheduled to be spent in 2012 on other road repairs.

[Link to state and regional nonfarm job data.](#)

[Link to state and regional labor force data.](#)

John.VanDyke@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 332-3570, ext. 3199

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO

Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka and Twin Falls counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

BLAINE COUNTY

- Sun Valley Resort opened both Dollar and Baldy mountains for the Thanksgiving holiday, but the snow level at Baldy was 18 inches at the base this year compared to 26 inches in 2009. Dollar Mountain was closed during the week after Thanksgiving to make more snow, but Baldy had a number of runs available during the week. Sun Valley is no longer providing skier counts during the season.
- Apple Computers' holiday advertising campaign used Baldy in the background, the Round House, the gondola and the Sun Valley Village.
- The Congregational Church is one of the oldest buildings in Ketchum, dating to 1884. It was home to Louie's, a popular Italian restaurant and pizzeria, for 32 years and has recently been restored to maintain the integrity of the building and its former appearance as much as possibly with the evolution of construction materials. The church is now occupied by The Picket Fence Bedding Showroom.
- Ketchum local option tax receipts year-over-year are up for the third straight month. September saw an 8.4 percent year-over-year increase while August was up 9.5 percent. July ran 1.2 percent ahead of a year ago. Albeit 2009 was a down year, three straight months of substantial growth suggests a turnaround. The city reported that in the last two years, it has had a net gain of one business. It lost 37 in 2008-2009 and gained 38 in 2009-2010. The hangover from the previous expansion appears to have ended and consumers feel like spending again.

JEROME AND LINCOLN COUNTIES

- Jerome Cheese Co., a division of Davisco Foods International Inc., is expanding to include a line of mozzarella cheese called Pasta Filata Mozzarella. The company was producing 520,000 pounds of American cheese daily at its 320,000-square-foot plant and will have capacity to add the additional line, which is expected to create 20 jobs. Jerome's location on I-84 is a perfect launch pad to West Coast markets and to shipping ports for export. China's continuing growth in population and affluence is boosting demand for dairy products such as cheese.
- AgPower Jerome LLC clinched its deal with Idaho Power Co. and is now providing electricity from its anaerobic digester at Double A Dairy in Lincoln County. The digester uses cattle waste in a manner less offensive to neighbors and travelers. The company guarantees 1.6 megawatts monthly to Idaho Power. The revenue potential is at least \$1.5 million. The system is engineered to provide 4.5 megawatts. The agreement under federal law caps production at 10 megawatts.

MINI-CASSIA

- The Samuel L. Skaggs Event Center in Burley has formally opened with a commemoration of the substantial donation from ALSAM Foundation, one of the larger Skaggs foundations named after Skaggs' son L.S. Jr. and his wife Alene. ALSAM donated \$1.2 million to the center.
- South central Idaho's last publicly-owned hospital, Minidoka Memorial, will take advantage of a new amendment to the state constitution that allows hospitals to incur long-term debt for certain equipment, technology and

property improvements. The hospital hopes to start the two-year \$6 million renovation with the bonds being repaid with fees and revenue from operations.

- McCain Foods received the 2009 Energy Star award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for its level of energy efficiency compared to other food processing companies.

TWIN FALLS COUNTY

- The Southern Idaho Economic Development Organization partnered with the Idaho National Laboratory and the College of Southern Idaho on a two-day Sustainable Energy Conference, which included tours of an anaerobic digester at a Bettencourt Dairy in Hansen that uses methane to generate electricity, Idaho's only commercial geothermal operation in Raft River and a wind farm in Glens Ferry. Renewable energy is a growing part of south central Idaho's economy with considerable federal investment and other grants being directed toward the industry. The region already has hydroelectric, wind, geothermal and biomass operations. Renewable energy jobs requiring greater skill levels command higher wages although the labor force is smaller than traditional manufacturing. Food processing in particular is a major employer in many rural areas, but it requires less skill, pays less and involves shift work.
- Assistant Twin Falls City Manager Travis Rothweiler is replacing Tom Courtney, who is retiring as city manager after 43 years. The city did not interview other candidates based on the succession plan drafted two years ago when Rothweiler was hired away from the city of Jerome, where he was manager. Rothweiler graduated from Montana State University with a master's degree and was an aide to the Montana House of Representatives majority leader.
- The Twin Falls Urban Renewal Agency has voted to raze the former Red's Trading Post building. The agency bought the building for \$200,000 two years ago as part of a four-block renovation purposed by Portland-based Leland Consultants, which was paid \$350,000 by the agency and city. The lot will be left vacant for the time being.
- Elevation 486 is scheduled to open before the end of the year. The Twin Falls restaurant on the canyon rim will have a payroll of 45. It is owned by Wood River Valley legend, Tom Nickel, who also operates the Roosevelt Grille, the Sawtooth Club and other eateries throughout the valley. The new Pinnacle West building will also house the Magic Valley Arts Council, the Gravity Bar and a number of professional offices.

OPENINGS:

- Toy Town in Twin Falls with a policy allowing big and little kids to play with the products.
- Kiwi Loco in Burley offering a wide variety of soft-serve yogurt and toppings. The Heyburn owners have two other stores in Idaho.
- FitWorks studio in space leased for \$500,000 from the Community Campus in Hailey.
- Flores Electronics in Buhl.

CLOSINGS:

- Banner Furniture after 55 years of serving the greater Twin Falls area. At its peak, the store employed about 10 and all but two having found employment elsewhere. The company paid a small portion of health care benefits to its workers.

- Imagination Station, a toy store in Twin Falls, due to a combination of retirement, an outdated business model and the economy. The company was one of a handful of small retailers that provided health care benefit to its full-time employees.

[Link to state and regional nonfarm job data.](#)

[Link to state and regional labor force data.](#)

Jan.Roeser@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 735-2500 ext. 3639

SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida & Power counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- Southeastern Idaho residents will have an opportunity Dec. 14 and 15 to express their opinion on the proposed \$27.7 million rate increase by Rocky Mountain Power. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission will take testimony on the proposal:
 - Dec. 14, 1:30 p.m., Shelley Senior Citizens Center
 - Dec. 14, 7 p.m., Mountain View Conference Center in Rexburg
 - Dec. 15, 1:30 p.m., Grace American Legion Hall
 - Dec. 15, 7 p.m., Robinson Building in Preston

BANNOCK COUNTY

- Forbes.com has listed Pocatello as one of the “Best Small Places for Business and Careers” for a sixth year in a row. Overall, Pocatello ranked 68th in a list of 184 cities based on four key factors – cost of doing business, job growth projections, educational attainment and metro area population. According to Mayor Brian Blad, Pocatello ranked second in the cost of doing business, which involves the cost of labor, energy, taxes and office space rental rates. Pocatello also gained praise from Kiplinger.com, who recommended Pocatello as one of its “10 Great Cities for Raising Families.” The criteria included job growth, economy, local culture, family life, crime rates, quality of schools, and available recreation. The city was honored this past summer as second in Outdoor Life magazine’s “Top 200 Towns for Outdoorsmen.”
- After being closed for months for renovation, the Idaho Museum of Natural History in Pocatello reopened Dec. 4, featuring an exhibit on ice age mammals. The Ice Age mammal displays along with displays on plants and other animals demonstrate the past 15,000 years of climate change on the Snake River Plain. The museum now has a free admission policy where patrons have the option to make donations.

BEAR LAKE COUNTY

- More than 38 families – 191 individuals – in the Bear Lake Valley enjoyed a full Thanksgiving dinner compliments of a group of cross-dressing senior boys, the Bear Lake High School Student Council and residents of the valley who donated money and referred the families. This was the 14th year the students have sponsored the turkey dinner project and each successive year it served more families the community. The project began in October when senior boys dressed as “beauty queens” visited businesses in Montpelier and Paris to raise over \$1,600. The high school students, in addition to their own efforts, coordinated activities of local churches and community groups to support the effort.

BINGHAM COUNTY

- The Blackfoot Chamber of Commerce began a by local campaign this fall to aid local merchants. According to Rebecca Price, chamber executive

director they want to remind people there are great stores there for shopping. David Miller, manager of Blackfoot Motor Sports, said “people have to realize that if they don’t support local merchants, they won’t have local merchants. People need to be encouraged to shop in the community before they shop on the Internet” or in another town.

- The Bingham County Historical Society is moving its headquarters in Blackfoot and will reopen before Christmas.

CARIBOU COUNTY

- Sen. Bob Geddes, a Soda Springs Republican and the longest serving President Pro Tem of the state Senate, did not seek re-election to his leadership post. He served as the Pro Tem for 10 years. He is being replaced by Rexburg Republican Brent Hill.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

- Franklin County residents got a lesson on the Constitution and its history from an expert, U.S. District Judge Ted Stewart of Utah. Stewart returned to the area where he attended school to speak to West Side School District students about his life as a federal judge. He also discussed his new book co-authored with his brother Chris Stewart, “Seven Miracles That Saved America: Why It Mattered and Why We Should Have Hope.” Stewart’s presentation focused on the history of the Constitution and how it is a divinely inspired document. A second high-ranking member of the judiciary came to Franklin County in November. Idaho Supreme Court Chief Justice Daniel T. Eismann addressed issues related to Franklin County’s efforts to maintain a drug court. Eismann also spoke to county leaders about the issues facing the state judiciary during the economic slowdown and the need for a special veterans court to deal with legal problems related to returned veterans.

POWER COUNTY

- Residents in downtown American Falls noticed a disturbing sight – thick black smoke and flames shooting 20 to 30 feet in the air out of two buildings. The American Falls Fire Department responded quickly to the fire, and the quick action prevented other buildings from becoming engulfed in flames. No one was injured as a result of the fire. Property damage was estimated at over \$100,000.

[Link to state and regional nonfarm job data.](#)

[Link to state and regional labor force data.](#)

Dan.Cravens@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 236-6710 ext. 3713

EAST CENTRAL IDAHO

Bonneville, Butte, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison & Teton counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- Pre-Thanksgiving winter storms not only closed most state highways and Interstate 15 north of Idaho Falls but also the area’s largest employer – Idaho National Laboratory – and many other area businesses. Wind gusts reached 50 miles an hour in some areas and lasted from Saturday through Thanksgiving eve.
- For the first time in the ski resort’s history, Jackson Hole Mountain Resort in Wyoming had an opening day with 100 percent of terrain available. Under normal conditions snowmaking equipment is used to make as much

terrain available as possible for early season skiers and boarders. The resort recently invested \$1 million in snowmaking equipment upgrades. Grand Targhee, also in Wyoming, opened with 100 percent of terrain available. Snow King Resort in Jackson, Wyo., and Kelly Canyon near Idaho Falls expect to open well before Christmas.

BONNEVILLE COUNTY

- The Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership broke ground on a new building that will bring all its services under one roof. The new building in Idaho Falls should be completed in June. The partnership does not expect any change in staffing.
- Over 20 city mayors along with state legislators were in Idaho Falls for the 2010 Eastern Idaho Legislative Forum, which allows local government leaders to collaborate on issues and concerns. Idaho Division of Financial Management Administrator Wayne Hammon detailed the state's budget outlook and indicated further funding cuts may be necessary.
- After 11 years the BP Energy and Ridgeline Energy Goshen North Wind farm project has been completed. Eighty-three wind turbines are up and spinning. The 124.5 megawatt wind farm will generate enough power for over 37,000 homes. Construction employed 250, but the farm operates with a staff of 10. At least two other wind farms are currently awaiting approval. Some proposals have been met with opposition, mainly because of the aesthetics. Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems wants to build 67 wind turbines east of Idaho Falls. Ridgeline hopes to construct another 75 at the site of its Meadow Creek wind project.
- Areva held a Supplier Day in Idaho Falls to identify companies that will supply materials and services to build a nuclear enrichment plant. Over 200 representatives from local and national companies attended the event to learn more about Areva's expectations for the five- to seven-year \$3 billion project.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

- Rigby teacher Stephani Cook has been recognized as the state's teacher of the year. State Schools Superintendent Tom Luna presented Cook with a \$1,000 check and a gift certificate to a local salon. Cook, who has been teaching in Rigby for 19 years, will use the award to upgrade technology in her classroom.

MADISON COUNTY

- With growing concern over water availability, the Henry's Fork Watershed Council discussed options with community leaders in Rexburg. One is rebuilding the Teton Dam, which collapsed over 34 years ago, flooding the area, and that option leaves planners a little uneasy. Others include storing water in underground aquifers, stream storage, man-made lakes and smaller dams.
- Brigham Young University-Idaho's Board of Trustees approved an increase in full-time student equivalent enrollment from 12,500 to 15,000 per semester. The actual headcount is over 17,000. Enrollment has grown rapidly over the last decade since the school became a four-year university. The enrollment increase will allow 28,000 or more students a year to study at the university. This increase comes a year earlier than originally planned. The next hurdle will be finding enough beds for them. This increase comes a year earlier than originally planned.

[Link to state and regional nonfarm job data.](#)

[Link to state and regional labor force data.](#)

Will.Jenson@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 557-2500 ext. 3077

State of Idaho Data – State Economic Indicators

	Nov 2010**	Oct 2010*	Nov 2009	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
IDAHO LABOR FORCE ⁽¹⁾					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	756,600	755,900	750,900	0.1	0.8
Unemployment	70,900	69,100	67,500	2.6	5.0
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	9.4	9.1	9.0		
Total Employment	685,700	686,800	683,400	-0.2	0.3
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	754,900	757,800	750,300	-0.4	0.6
Unemployment	71,300	65,900	65,600	8.2	8.7
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	9.5	8.7	8.7		
Total Employment	683,600	691,900	684,700	-1.2	-0.2

U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE⁽²⁾

9.8 9.6 10.0

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Claims Activities

Initial Claims ⁽³⁾	20,451	12,904	20,604	58.5	-0.7
Weeks Claimed ⁽⁴⁾	107,475	69,090	134,885	55.6	-20.3

Benefit Payment Activities⁽⁵⁾

Weeks Compensated	87,349	57,358	89,532	52.3	-2.4
Total Benefit \$ Paid	\$20,365,460.37	\$13,203,335	\$22,406,559	54.2	-9.1
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$233.15	\$230.19	\$250.26	1.3	-6.8
Covered Employers	48,112	48,299	49,300	-0.4	-2.4
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months ⁽⁴⁾	\$326,462,107	\$328,503,205	\$361,795,470	-0.6	-9.8

U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX⁽²⁾

	Oct 2010	Sep 2010	Oct 2009	% Change Month	% Change Year
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI- W)	214.6	214.3	211.5	0.1	1.5
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	218.7	218.4	216.2	0.1	1.2

**Forecast data

* Preliminary estimate

(2) Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – CPI Index is released the 14th of each month.

(3) Includes all entitlements on intrastate and interstate agent, new and additional claims.

(4) Includes all entitlements, intrastate and interstate agent.

(5) Includes all entitlements, total liable activities.

Glossary of Labor Market Terms

Agriculture Employment: Persons on agriculture payrolls who work or receive pay for any period during the survey week. This includes owners, operators, unpaid family members who work at least 15 hours a week, and hired laborers.

Average Hourly Earnings/Average Weekly Hours: The average total money earnings earned by production or non-supervisory workers for selected industries. The average number of hours worked by production or non-supervisory workers including overtime, paid vacation, and sick leave. The data is collected for the week including the 12th of the month.

Average Weekly Earnings: Average Hourly Earnings multiplied by Average Weekly Hours.

Civilian Labor Force: A count of non-institutional persons 16 years of age and over residing within a specific geographic area, excluding members of armed forces, who are classified as employed, unemployed and seeking employment, or involved in a labor dispute.

Consumer Price Index (CPI): A national index measuring changes over time in the price of a fixed market basket of goods and services. There are two indexes—the All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) represents the buying habits of about 80 percent of the non-institutional population of the United States, and the Urban Wage & Clerical Workers (CPI-W) represents 40 percent of the population.

Covered Employers: Employers who are subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance laws.

Durable Goods: Also known as “hard goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers with a normal life expectancy of three years or more.

Employed: Individuals, 16 years of age or older, who worked at least 1 hour for pay or profit or worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family business during the week including the 12th day of the month. Individuals are also counted as employed if they had a job but did not work because they were: ill, on vacation, in a labor dispute, prevented from working because of bad weather, or temporarily absent for similar reasons.

Initial Claim: Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a second or subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA): A county or a combination of counties in which at least half the residents live in an urban center of 50,000 or more and the rest have significant commuting ties to that central county. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MSAs. Idaho has five MSAs: Boise MSA including Ada, Canyon, Boise, Gem and Owyhee counties; Bonneville MSA including Bonneville and Jefferson counties; Pocatello MSA including Bannock and Power counties; Lewiston MSA including Nez Perce County and Asotin County, Wash.; Coeur d’Alene MSA including Kootenai County.

Micropolitan Statistical Area (MicSA): Combinations of counties in which at least half the residents live in urban centers totaling at least 10,000—or 5,000 living in a single urban center—and the rest have significant commuting ties to that central county. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MicSAs. Idaho has three MicSAs: Burley MicSA including Cassia and Minidoka counties; Rexburg MicSA including Madison and Fremont counties; Twin Falls MicSA including Twin Falls and Jerome counties.

Glossary of Labor Market Terms (cont.)

Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment: Persons on nonfarm establishment payrolls (including employees on paid sick leave, paid holiday, or paid vacation) who work or receive pay for any part of the week including the 12th of the month. It is a count of jobs by place of work. It does not include self-employed, unpaid volunteer or family workers, domestic workers in households, military personnel and persons who are laid off, on leave without pay, or on strike for the entire reference period.

Nondurable Goods: Also known as “soft goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers that generally last for only a short period of time (three years or less).

Seasonally Adjusted: Data is seasonally adjusted to remove the impact of regular events that occur at the same time every year such as the effect of cold weather on outdoor activities, the Christmas holiday, or the summer influx of youth into the labor market.

Small Labor Market Areas (SLMA): Combinations of counties with significant ties through commuting patterns but no urban centers with populations of 10,000 or more. The Office of Management and Budget designates the SLMAs. Idaho has two SLMAs: Hailey SLMA including Blaine and Camas counties; Grangeville SLMA including Lewis and Idaho counties.

Unemployed: Those individuals, 16 years of age or older, who do not have a job but are available for work and actively seeking work during the week including the 12th of the month. The only exceptions to these criteria are individuals who are waiting to be recalled from a layoff and individuals waiting to report to a new job within 30 days—these, too, are considered unemployed.

Unemployment Insurance: Unemployment Insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers, to be used for the payment of Unemployment Insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond their control.

Unemployment Rate: The number of persons unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

Weekly Benefit Amount: The amount payable to a claimant for a compensable week of total unemployment.

Weeks Claimed: The number of weeks that unemployed workers claimed Unemployment Insurance benefits.

Weeks Compensated: The number of weeks for which compensation was actually paid.

IDAHO EMPLOYMENT is published online monthly by the Idaho Department of Labor. All information is in the public domain and may be duplicated without permission; however, the Idaho Department of Labor should be cited as the source.

The source for all data tables and graphs is the Idaho Department of Labor, Communications & Research, except where noted.

IDAHO EMPLOYMENT is produced by the Idaho Department of Labor which is funded at least in part by federal grants from the U.S. Department of Labor. Costs associated with this online publication are available by contacting the Idaho Department of Labor. Questions and comments can be directed to Public Affairs by phoning (208) 332-3570, ext. 3220, or by e-mail to janell.hyer@labor.idaho.gov or to the Regional Economists noted in each area news section.

Editor: Bob Fick (bob.fick@labor.idaho.gov)

Layout/Design: Jean Cullen
(jean.cullen@labor.idaho.gov)

IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
C.L. “BUTCH” OTTER, GOVERNOR
ROGER B. MADSEN, DIRECTOR