

Idaho Employment

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

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER, GOVERNOR

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The January and February county, metropolitan and labor market area employment data along with benchmarked data for 2010 and 2009 are scheduled for release on March 18 and will be available on our website at <http://lmi.idaho.gov/>.

IDAHO LABOR MARKET INFORMATION "GREENS, CLEANS UP"

Businesses throughout the U.S. and Idaho not only see the environmental benefit of using green and clean technologies, it's also becoming a necessity to remain competitive.

In keeping with this movement, green developments in the monthly newsletter will be identified with a green "badge."



While "green" is not a new concept, the sustainable aspect of green is. As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the Idaho Department of Labor received a competitively awarded State Labor Market Information Improvement grant to develop data on green industries and careers that clean and improve the environment and then disseminate that information to prepare workers for careers in those occupations and industries. Data from the research will appear in future issues of Idaho Employment.



AN OVERVIEW OF WIND POWER GENERATION IN IDAHO

TURBINE MANUFACTURING

Across the nation, there are about 6,400 businesses employing over 32,000 people to make turbines, and many of them end up in wind farms, converting wind to electricity to power homes.

Idaho has a handful of wind farm companies employing 30 people, according to Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. The largest concentration is in eastern Idaho, where half the wind farm work force – 15 employees – lives in Bingham County. Both Madison County and Bannock County each have operations with fewer than 10 employees.

The primary jobs in the industry are team assemblers, first-line supervisors and managers of production and operating workers, machinists helpers for production workers and fiberglass laminators and fabricators.

Wind Farm Concentration in Eastern Idaho



Source: Economic Modeling Systems Inc., 4th Quarter 2010

Turbine manufacturing has a high job multiplier of 4.2, meaning that for every 10 jobs added in turbine manufacturing another 32 jobs are added elsewhere in the economy. High multipliers indicate a long and localized supply chain, meaning that supporting or dependent industries in Idaho are likely to contribute to the manufacturing processes or purchase the goods produced from the turbine manufacturer.

| Occupations | Average Hourly Wage in Idaho |
|---|------------------------------|
| Team assemblers | \$13.35 |
| First-line supervisors/managers of production and operating workers | \$23.13 |
| Machinists | \$17.42 |
| Helpers — production workers | \$12.59 |
| Fiberglass laminators and fabricators | \$13.17 |

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, Occupational Employment & Wages, Statewide

Surrounding states maintain the same small level of employment on wind farms that Idaho does. Utah has the highest at 66. The majority of turbine manufacturing employment is in California at 4,700, which is 59 percent above the national average percentage of total employment.

Demand for turbines is expected to increase over the next decade as the nation positions itself to produce 20 percent of its electricity from wind. It is expected that over 35,000 jobs will be created in manufacturing to meet that goal outlined by the U.S. Department of Energy last year.

IDAHO EDUCATION PROGRAMS

While manufacturers are busy creating the turbines that ultimately go to wind farms, the day-to-day maintenance is the responsibility of an emerging occupation – wind energy technician.

There are several education programs in Idaho that focus on wind turbine technicians. The College of Southern Idaho offers both a certificate, which requires 33 credits and focuses solely on application, and a two-year Associate of Applied Science degree that requires another 34 credits in core classes such as English and mathematics. Under Idaho State University’s program established in fall 2009, when students graduate they have the potential to obtain employment as a wind technician earning up to \$50,000 a year. According to wage information generated by the Idaho Department of Labor, wages in Idaho average about \$35,000 although current coding methods group wind technicians with several other occupations and may not accurately reflect the wages technicians specifically working with wind turbines actually receive.

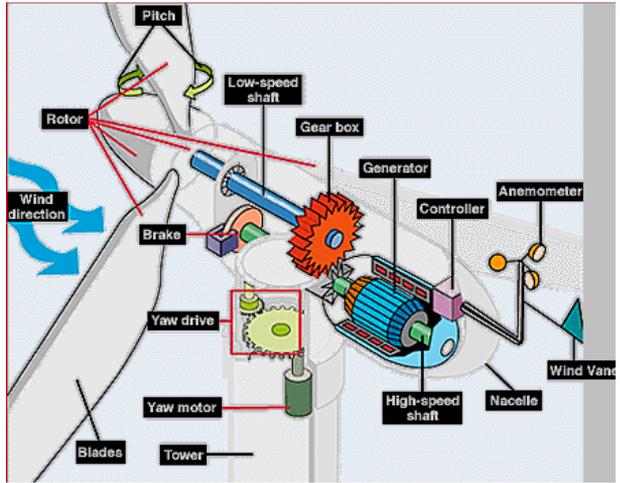
HOW WIND TURBINES WORK AND LOCAL AVAILABLE RESOURCES

As wind flows into a wind turbine the blades begin to turn at about 18 revolutions per minute – too slow to generate electricity. A gear system is used to speed the rotation internally to a level that will produce electricity from the wind turbine generator. The anemometer situated toward the rear of the wind turbine constantly measures wind direction and speed. This information is relayed to an internal motor that realigns the front of the wind turbine directly into the wind to produce the maximum amount of electricity. See illustration on page 3. More information on the operation of wind turbines is at the U.S. Department of Energy website at http://www1.eere.energy.gov/windandhydro/wind_how.html

Idaho’s wind power generating capacity is relatively low compared to other areas of the nation. The vast majority of central and northern Idaho hold a wind power classification of poor. Southern Idaho produces more wind activity, achieving the classification of marginal and in some areas fair. There are cer-

tain mountain peaks that attain the outstanding or superb classification in Idaho although these areas are likely expensive or impossible to develop and maintain.

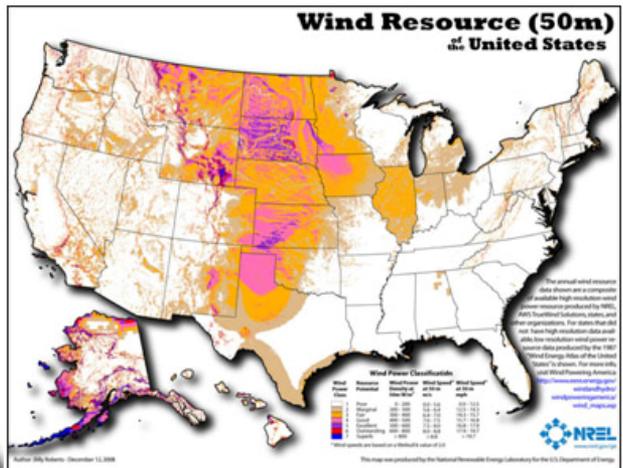
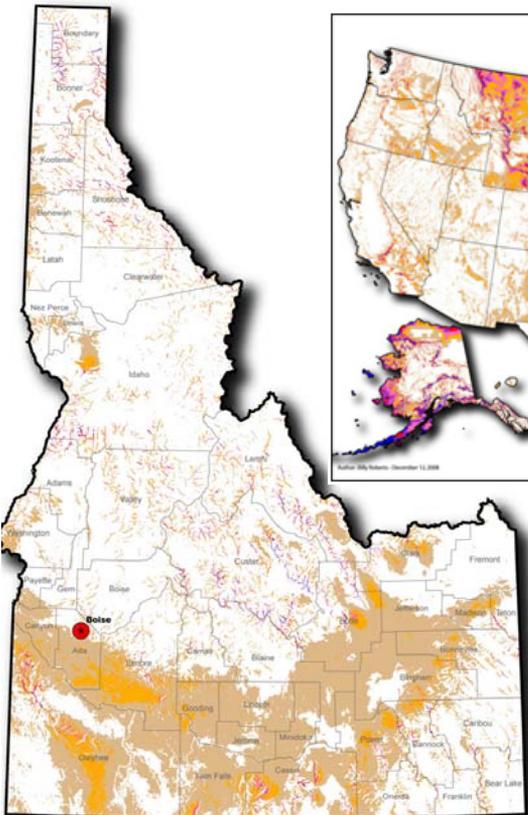
The Gem State is not as windy compared to states to the east, the Dakotas and central plains. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, these areas appear to produce the most severe winds with many areas achieving good or excellent ratings. Much of the southeast is classified as having a poor wind resource potential.



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WIND POWER CLASSIFICATION

| Wind Power Class | Resource Potential | Wind Power Density at 50m W/m ² | Wind Speed ^a at 50 m m/s | Wind Speed ^a at 50 m mph |
|------------------|--------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Poor | 0 - 200 | 0.0 - 5.6 | 0.0 - 12.5 |
| 2 | Marginal | 200 - 300 | 5.6 - 6.4 | 12.5 - 14.3 |
| 3 | Fair | 300 - 400 | 6.4 - 7.0 | 14.3 - 15.7 |
| 4 | Good | 400 - 500 | 7.0 - 7.5 | 15.7 - 16.8 |
| 5 | Excellent | 500 - 600 | 7.5 - 8.0 | 16.8 - 17.9 |
| 6 | Outstanding | 600 - 800 | 8.0 - 8.8 | 17.9 - 19.7 |
| 7 | Superb | > 800 | > 8.8 | > 19.7 |



Source: U.S. Department of Energy - National Renewable Energy Laboratory GIS Maps.



WIND TURBINES: BRIGHT FUTURE FROM OLD TECHNOLOGY

Interest in wind farms is rising in southeastern Idaho.

Proposals have recently been presented to the Bingham and Power counties' planning and zoning commissions for both for permits to build wind farms – banks of wind turbines.

The general assumption is that wind power is a relatively new technology, but like its alternative energy cousin hydroelectric power, the use of this natural resource to generate electricity dates back to the 1800s.

American inventor Charles F. Brush built the first automatically operated wind turbine to generate electricity in Cleveland in 1887. At 60 feet high and weighing 3.6 metric tons, this wind turbine dwarfed most structures nearby. Despite its size, however, the turbine produced only about 12 kilowatts of electric power, only enough power to burn a 100 watt bulb around the clock for five days.

That limited output combined with plentiful and cheap oil supplies doomed wind energy in the public marketplace more than a century ago.

Most modern commercial use wind generators produce one to five megawatts electric power – up to 400 times more than that original wind turbine. Several companies are currently working on producing a 10 megawatt turbine, which would produce 800 times more electricity.

While wind power generation adds to the power grid, it takes a lot of wind turbines to power a small city. The largest wind farm complex in Idaho in the south central part of the state has 122 General Electric 1.5 megawatt turbines on 10,000 acres near the Oregon Trail. It can produce up to 183 megawatts, which will power just under 40,000 Idaho homes.

The wind farm is a partnership between GE Energy Financial Services, a unit of GE, and Boise-based Exergy Development Group, Atlantic Power and Reunion Power. Energy produced by the wind farm is sold to Idaho Power Co.

Beyond generating electricity, the project created 300 badly needed construction jobs and 25 permanent jobs in maintenance and operations. The wind farm complex has the effect of eliminating emissions of an estimated 57,000 motor vehicles.

The wind energy industry grew nearly 2000 percent between 1996 and 2008 worldwide, according to the Global Wind Energy Council. Demand for wind power and other alternative energy is expected to increase as traditional sources of energy rise in price. Paul Gipe, a wind energy researcher, says that half the U.S. electric grid someday could be fed by wind energy.

Gipe sees wind energy as consumer based. Increasingly individual home owners are turning to home-based wind turbine systems. It is possible that many home builders may offer wind turbine systems as an option for new home buyers. Besides energy savings, home wind turbine systems provide homeowners the opportunity to sell their excess electricity back to the power company.

Wind energy offers promise to consumers, a new avenue for economic expansion and help with meeting America's growing energy demand.

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IDAHO'S "GREEN GIANT" - THE IDAHO NATIONAL LABORATORY

The Idaho National Laboratory may have gotten an early start in the "green" movement. Back in the 1950s managers started using a mass transit bus system to bring in workers from the surrounding region. Today that system has expanded to over 80 buses that move 3,250 workers each day. A renewed effort for improvement followed the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990. Since 2007 efforts have been redoubled as the laboratory developed a sustainability initiative.



Photos courtesy of Idaho National Laboratory.

Under the initiative, 25 percent of disposable items have been diverted to a local recycling center. The bus fleet has been upgraded to burn E85 and biofuel blends. Some of the busses use hybrid technology – all the while increasing capacity, cutting costs and reducing carbon footprints. Total petroleum fuel usage has decreased by 25 percent and alternative fuel usage is up 22 percent.

But sustainability goes beyond environmental concerns. True sustainability at the sprawling federal complex requires attention not just to the environment but to economic and social factors.

In their own words, site managers believe sustainability requires "simultaneous consideration for people, planet and prosperity." They find value in pursuing these interests to meet today's needs without compromising the needs of the future.



The new Center for Advanced Energy Studies at INL.

There have been many breakthroughs in sustainability. The highest level of LEED construction and design are being used at the complex. The Center for Advanced Energy Studies building carries the LEED Gold designation. A new \$48 million Research and Education Laboratory will also gain the gold designation. Green building design elements will be used in construction of the new Energy Systems Laboratory.

Finding local contractors to help with the construction of these next-generation building designs is sometimes difficult. Growing demand for LEED-designated buildings requires contractors to work with unfamiliar materials in uncommon ways. This can delay work schedules and increase costs.

The INL Materials & Fuels Complex issued a \$33 million Energy Savings Performance Contract to improve infrastructure and increase sustainability efforts. The contract is funded by the winning bidder, which guarantees the improvements will generate energy cost savings sufficient to pay for the project. The winning company is paid through those energy cost savings. Once the contract has ended all cost savings belong to the agency.

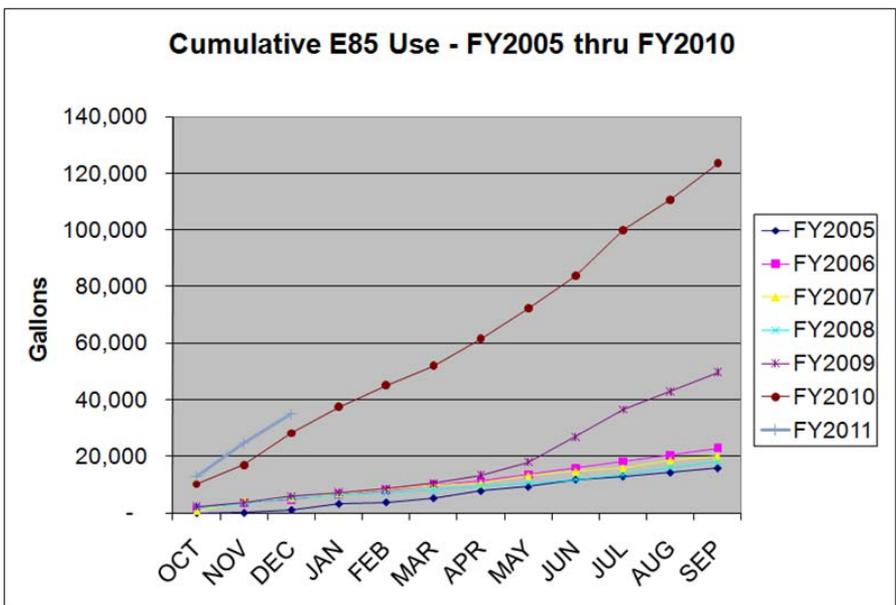
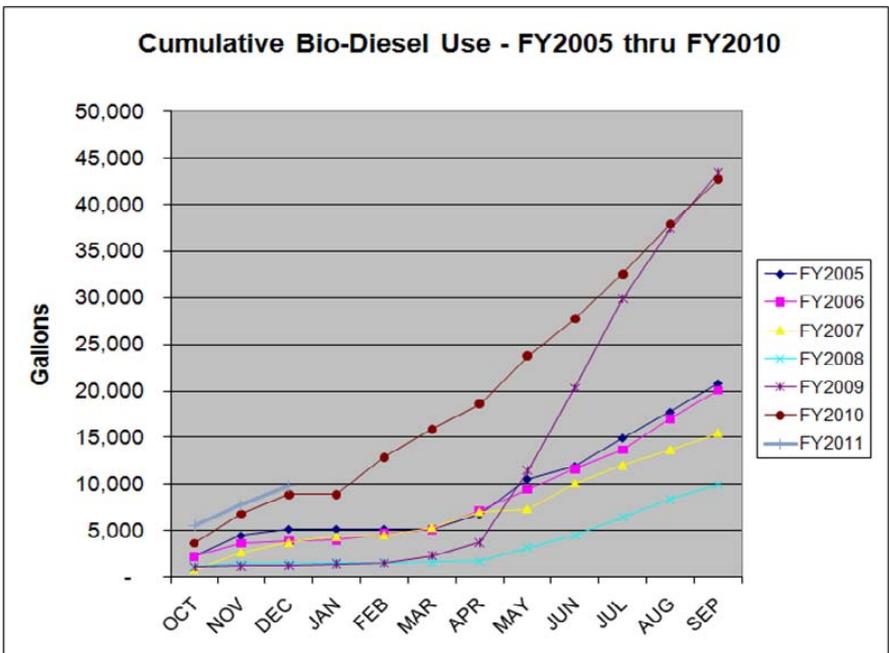
The INL found 16 companies capable of bidding on this type of project – the local contractor pool is limited. Some of the improvements include replacing 6,000 light fixtures, upgrading antiquated boilers and installing a passive-solar wall, which preheats outside air for more efficient heating. Also out for bid are improvements at the Central Facilities Area and the Advanced Test Reactor facility.

Chris Ischay, the site's sustainability program manager, says there are some potential threats to environmental, social and economic sustainability. Eastern Idaho has benefited from a good water supply and low energy costs. Although this enhances business activity in the short run, it might be difficult for industries to adapt in the long run, Ischay says. Likewise, a rapid increase in energy prices would create a difficult environment for businesses modeled on lower costs. Lower prices today also reduced incentives to change consumption behavior.

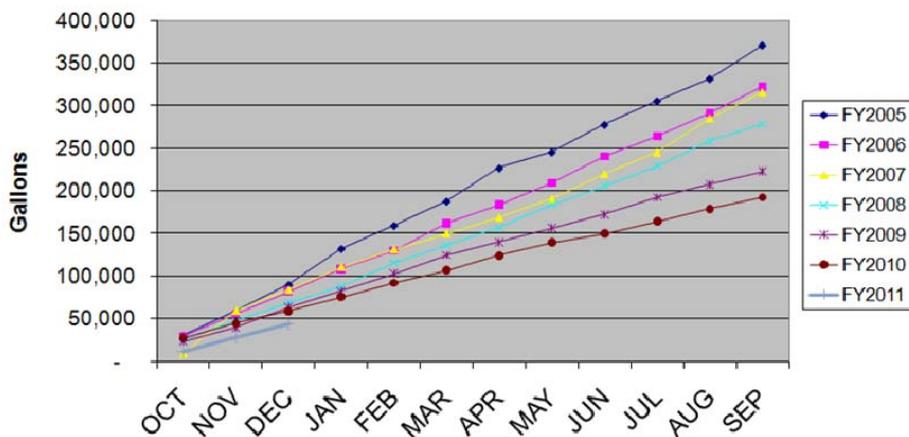
Demand for careers and industries that specialized in sustainability continues to increase, and private and public enterprises are beginning to focus on sustainability measures. There is great potential for job at various levels – from research and design to operations.

More information on the INL Sustainability Program can be found on its website at <https://inlportal.inl.gov/portal/server.pt/community/sustainability/569/sustainability>

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Cumulative Gas Use - FY2005 Thru FY2010



Graphs courtesy of Idaho National Laboratory.

MEGALoadS MOVING THROUGH NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

North central Idaho’s biggest story in 2010 was megaloads – truck shipments so immense they would close both lanes of U.S. Highway 12 from the Port of Lewiston 175 miles east to the Montana border. Megaloads already have appeared in many news stories so far this year and are likely to continue to be an issue for many months to come.

Imperial Oil and ConocoPhillips had been in talks with the Idaho Transportation Department for more than two years on how they would ship such huge loads.

ConocoPhillips wanted to move two Japanese-made coke drums to a refinery in Billings, Mont. The drums have both been cut in half, but each load still weighs 650,000 pounds making them the heaviest loads ever carried on an Idaho highway.

Imperial Oil, owned by ExxonMobil, also wants to ship megaloads – 207 modules for a processing plant at the Kearn Oil Sands in Alberta, Canada. Its biggest loads would be 586,000 pounds.

By mid-January, 38 megaloads were sitting at the Port of Lewiston waiting for Idaho Transportation Department permits, which were blocked by megaload opponents. Imperial and ConocoPhillips received permits for two loads in January, and the first began moving over Highway 12 on Feb. 1. Now other companies plan to seek permits for additional shipments through Lewiston’s port to the oil-rich tar sands.

A Korean firm already has expressed interest in using the route for dozens of oversized loads of oil equipment bound for Alberta starting next spring. Shipping by barge to the Port of Lewiston would be less expensive and faster than shipping through the Panama Canal up the Mississippi River to Houston or New Orleans and then trucking the cargo north.

Opponents argue the shipments threaten tourism, public safety and convenience and could harm the Clearwater and Lochsa rivers flowing along High-



The Conoco-Phillips megaload stands more than three stories high and the truck and trailer are as long as a football field. Photo: KRFP in Moscow.

way 12. After opponents of the ConocoPhillips loads sued to stop them, the state Supreme Court ruled it had no jurisdiction over the case. The Transportation Department, however, held further hearings after which Hearing Officer Merlyn Clark, a respected Boise attorney, recommended that the permits be granted to ConocoPhillips.

In his Dec. 28 recommendation, Clark expressed confidence that the 700-page transportation plan developed for the four loads adequately addresses public safety. He said opponents of the shipments provided no “reliable evidence” to support their claims that the loads would damage tourism, hurt the highway’s scenic values or hamper businesses. Transportation Director Brian Ness made the final decision granting permits for the two ConocoPhillips loads.

Under the plan, each shipment travels with five pilot car escorts, four state police escorts, two signboards and an ambulance manned by paramedics. ConocoPhillips is providing \$10 million in insurance coverage to compensate the state or private individuals for any loss associated with the loads.

Each load will take at least four nights to travel the 173 miles between Lewiston and the Montana border. The Transportation Department is allowing seven and a half hours to the shipments to make each leg of the trip. The department limited the maximum delay for any cars that encounter these loads to 10 minutes except in 12 specific areas where 15-minute delays were allowed because there are not enough turnouts on the highway. The Transportation Department has said it will not allow megaloads to roll if road or weather conditions are unsafe.

In fact, the first load was delayed for six days by weather. It took over 10 days for it to reach Montana. The longest delay was 59 minutes on a curve near Kamiah, prompting the Transportation Department to require ConocoPhillips to come up with a better strategy for handling the highway’s tight curves.

The decision on the four ConocoPhillips shipments does not apply to the 207 megaloads Imperial Oil wants to move loads along U.S. Highway 12. Opponents continue to make efforts to block those large shipments.

David Doeringsfeld, manager of the Port of Lewiston, says megaloads have the potential to create jobs at the port as well as at restaurants and motels along the route. In the future, other Port of Lewiston customers with oversized loads might need to fabricate equipment once their loads reach Idaho, creating opportunities for welders, electricians and other technicians in high-paying fields.

The national attention the megaloads have drawn is making other shippers aware of the possibilities of transporting through the Port of Lewiston.

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GREEN JOBS PREVALENT IN NEZ PERCE TRIBE

The Nez Perce Tribe is the second largest provider of green jobs in north central Idaho, and it surpasses the largest, the Forest Service, in the variety of green jobs that it offers in energy, fish hatchery operations, air quality, agricultural land management in addition to the jobs in forestry, fisheries and wildlife that the Forest Service also provides.

The other three tribes in Idaho also have a considerable number of green jobs, but not as many or in the variety offered by the Nez Perce. More than 300 people work directly for the tribe in green occupations, and the tribe contracts out additional work that involves green jobs.

The Nez Perce Tribe has lived off the land for thousands of years, believing that animals and nature have greater power than man since man depends on

them, but they do not depend on him. That respect for nature animates the tribe's policies today as does its tradition of looking seven generations into the future. Looking back seven generations honored the decisions their ancestors made with thought of today's generation, and looking forward demands that same sensitivity.

The Treaty of 1855 is the tribe's legal foundation as a sovereign entity with special rights to the natural resources of the original 7.5 million-acre reservation that was carved down to 32,000 acres by the Dawes Act of 1893. Its Article 3 acknowledged the tribe's "exclusive right of taking fish in all the streams" running through the reservation and "of taking fish at all usual and accustomed places ... together with the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries." Almost every word of Article 3 has been litigated, according to tribal Executive Director Rebecca Miles, and every court to the Supreme Court have confirmed those treaty rights. The tribe's natural resources and fisheries programs directly address the rights reserved by the Treaty of 1855, which is the reason the tribe is involved with natural resource management not only on today's reservation but throughout the original treaty territory.



Nez Perce tribal flag. Image from nezperce.org

At the Hanford nuclear reservation in southeastern Washington, the tribe's Environmental Restoration and Waste Management program employs more than 20 people. As a trustee in Hanford's remediation and restoration process, the tribe assesses the damages to natural resources and then estimates the cost of restoring them. Its environmental specialists, hydrologists and chemists focus on air and water quality.

FORESTRY

The tribe's forestry program not only employs two dozen people directly but also has created dozens of jobs at Indian-owned businesses that contract with the tribe. Forest management includes a large fire fighting and prevention component. For thinning and other fire load reduction efforts alone, the tribe's fire section lets about \$500,000 in contracts every year. Currently, the tribe contracts with five certified Indian businesses – each with about half a dozen workers – for hazardous fuel reduction and thinning projects. Most of those jobs are seasonal. Many of the fire load reduction jobs are entry level, and those workers could use more training in the work itself and in identifying certain tree species, insects and diseases. The program manages 40,203 acres of tribally owned timberland. In past years, it harvested about 7 billion board feet per year on a sustained yield basis and replanted after each harvest. But the last two years, timber prices have been so low that there have been no timber sales.

The lack of a market for biomass is limiting thinning activity which produces significant amounts of biomass. A market would likely result in more thinning, which is critical to maintaining forest health.

To reduce the danger of forest fires, the tribe has recently been doing more underburning, which requires a higher level of training than entry-level technicians have. Federal standards require several credentials for anyone dealing with fires so there is potential for upper mobility in those jobs, many of which require college degrees. The tribe is helping more workers earn certifications and pursue degrees.

With its contractors, the tribe plants thousands of trees each year, reforesting former agricultural lands that haven't been forested for a long time, and

selling carbon credits on the market as an offset for companies burning fossil fuels. Selling carbon sequestration credits early in the growth of a forest lets the tribe realize money more quickly than waiting for decades to harvest the trees. Over a decade ago, the Nez Perce recognized the value of carbon sequestration on forested lands as a means to preserving natural resources while generating jobs and income and simultaneously reducing greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. The tribe can reinvest revenue from the sale of carbon to acquire previously forested lands, plant new trees on them and replicate the process. Some carbon offset projects also have included rehabilitation of forests damaged by wildfire and reforestation of land where past forest regeneration practices failed.

Entry-level workers in forestry include field crews that cruise timber and mark property lines. In addition to doing inventories in the forest, they help set up timber sales and do administrative work related to planting. The minimum qualification for field technicians is a high school diploma, and then the tribe provides training. The tribe can only train the technicians up to a certain point. What limits them in moving up the career ladder to professional positions is the need for further education.

For the forestry division, the hardest workers to find are fire management officers. Under the decade-old national fire plan, they must have credentials and a degree. Experience was all that was needed before. They typically get their credentials in the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management or some other agency because experience is still a necessity. The tribe has a hard time competing against the federal agencies that pay much higher wages.

The tribe hopes to bring back native plants it traditionally used for food and medicine. A specialist with extensive training in botany is helping restore wetlands. The Land Services Program is writing conservation plans for all agriculture leases, based on owner input and providing landowners with field and boundary maps, field inventories and compliance investigations. A tribal specialist runs a direct seed program, encouraging farmers not to till steeper land so soil erosion is reduced and water quality improved. To destroy invasive weeds, the biocontrol center raises, distributes and monitors insects that consume noxious weeds. The tribe wants to expand insect production beyond established field nursery sites to controlled nurseries.

ENDANGERED SPECIES, FISHERIES

As the original inhabitants of the region, the tribe speaks on behalf of endangered species. It runs several programs for fish and wildlife, investing up to \$1.8 million a year in endangered species on top of its multimillion-dollar fisheries program. The tribe has worked with the Forest Service on bighorn sheep recovery in the Riggins area; salmon and steelhead restoration and protection for endangered snails, wolves, butterflies and bats.

"The Nez Perce Tribe does more for endangered species in this state than the United States and the state of Idaho put together," Miles, the tribal executive director, told Lewiston's business community in December. "It's not just for our benefit. It's for everyone's benefit to restore those endangered species and fisheries." Many do not own or operate businesses; they work for businesses or related government and nonprofit agencies.

About a dozen tribal employees including biologists, botanists and ecologists run the wildlife management program for the reservation and the Nez Perce aboriginal lands, conducting research and planning and operating two major wildlife mitigation projects on 5,000 acres at Dworshak and 15,000 acres at Hete wits' Wetes.

The tribe is doing its best to restore salmon, steelhead, and other traditional fisheries that collapsed with the advent of dams and other 20th Century

environmental changes. Horace Axtel, a tribal elder noted for his storytelling, says that decades ago salmon were so numerous that people could hear the salmon coming into the small streams in the Kooskia area, and it looked like a person could walk across a stream on the backs of the salmon. Today, people looking at the same stream would be lucky to see one.

That’s why the Nez Perce fisheries department is the largest run by any tribe. Its annual budget exceeds \$17 million, focused on restoring the runs and having a harvest. In 2010, the tribal fisheries department released over 8 million fish in streams and rivers where they will return to spawn.

"Of all the fish produced in the Columbia basin, we produce 30 percent of the fish," tribal Chairman McCoy Oatman told the Lewiston business gathering late last year.

The fisheries department employs about 170 people from Powell in a remote area of Idaho County to Joseph in the Wallowa Mountains of Oregon. Over half are members of the Nez Perce or other tribes. More than 120 work year-round in the fisheries department while the other 50 are seasonal employees working between March and December. Half the staff are professionals, and most of the rest are technicians.

| Tribal Fisheries Program Employment | |
|--|------------|
| Cherrylane hatchery | 16 |
| Grangeville | 3 |
| Joseph | 18 |
| Lapwai | 26 |
| McCall | 29 |
| Orofino & Dworshak & Kooskia hatcheries | 32 |
| Powell | 21 |
| Sweetwater | 28 |
| Total | 173 |

In addition to its own payroll, the tribe spends about a quarter of its fisheries budget on contracts for everything from building bridges, replacing culverts and planting trees to helicopter flights into remote mountain streams, backhoe work for watershed restoration and trucking hatchlings to acclimation sites.

Management of salmon is “gravel-to-gravel” – from the time they are spawned in stream gravel to the time they return to that gravel to spawn – conduction research on stream conditions and enforcing harvest regulations. Professionals and technicians assess the salmon and steelhead runs, using traps, weirs, video weirs and tagging, providing recommendations for restoration and protection of critical watershed habitat.

Watershed protection runs from ridge-top to ridge-top, encompassing everything affecting a stream. To improve salmon and steelhead habitat, the Watershed Restoration Division stabilizes streambeds, repairs riparian areas, reconfigures streams, plants trees, replaces culverts that inhibit fish passage and decommissions no-longer-functional roads. These old forest roads produce large amounts of sediment that damage streams and hamper spawning. Watershed restoration is performed throughout the treaty territory from northeastern Oregon and southeastern Washington to the Idaho-Montana border and down to the Salmon River and its southern-most tributary – the South Fork. The nationally recognized watershed restoration staff work in partnership with

private landowners and county, state and federal governments. Federal agencies often use tribal employees as inspectors.

Most fisheries department jobs are at its 20 hatcheries and 16 satellite facilities that collect broodstock, produce, rear and then acclimate and release approximately 6.6 million juvenile spring chinook, fall chinook, coho, steelhead and lamprey in the Snake River Basin annually. The new hatchery in Cherry Lane is among the tribe's largest along with the Kooskia Hatchery and the Dworshak National Hatchery, which the Nez Perce co-manage. The tribe plans to build a hatchery on the Lostine River in Oregon's Wallowa Mountains, an area it considers sacred. At acclimation sites on many streams throughout the treaty territory, hatchlings are put in ponds on the side of streams where they can become accustomed to that environment.



For the last two years, tribal hatcheries have been operating at full production, effectively restoring the fall chinook salmon run that fell to endangered levels after 1975. In 1992, only 78 chinook were counted at the Lower Granite Dam. In 2010, 50,000 came over the dam.

RENEWABLE, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

To promote renewable and sustainable energy development, the tribe recently hired a coordinator for its new energy program to emphasize conservation in tribal operations. Weatherization and conservation education programs are the initial focus while the tribe's energy committee develops an overall energy plan including the feasibility of alternative energy and the potential for green jobs.

The tribe is planning a community scale solar and wind project. Finding people with the design and technical skills for the project could be an issue, but the tribe hopes training through the education and training center it plans to build next to its headquarters in Lapwai is the answer.

Under consideration is training some tribal members to be residential energy auditors under the weatherization program. They could earn national certification although an engineering degree is required for commercial and industrial energy auditing.

JOBS

About half of the tribe's green jobs require bachelor's and master's degrees and in some cases extensive experience. But professionals hired by the tribe tend to stay. The rest are technician jobs that increasingly require some certification beyond the traditional high school diploma and driver's license.

The Nez Perce have tried to fill their green jobs with tribal members, advertising them internally for at least two weeks before the openings are publicized outside the tribe. The supervisor can direct job opening advertisements regionally or beyond if no tribal members are interested or qualified. Job announcements are published month on the tribe's Website www.nezperce.org under the "employment" section.



In the last year, the sluggish economy has made filling job openings relatively easy. Even entry-level technician openings draw applicants with bachelor's, master's and even doctoral degrees.

Some highly skilled jobs are harder to fill because the tribe must compete against high-paying federal agencies and regions of the country that offer much higher

wages than Idaho. Safety standard trainers have been especially difficult to find as has a coordinator for its nitrate reducing bacteria project, which is a very competitive area nationally.

Increasing the professional corps of tribal members is a high priority. The tribe offers all its employees opportunities for further study through the Northwest Indian College satellite office in Lapwai. The college offers a range of degrees and certifications but cannot provide training for all the jobs the tribe offers. The tribe hopes to build an education center that can offer expanded professional-technical and academic programs so technicians do not have to choose between sticking to their current jobs or quitting to go away to school for the education they need to move into professional occupations.

The tribe's reputation for its natural resource work, especially the nationally recognized accomplishments of the fisheries department, helps attract professionals. Job applicants often cite the tribe's reputation as a reason for wanting to join the team.

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GEOTHERMAL ENERGY TECHNICIAN – NEXT HOT JOB?

The geothermal energy job outlook is considered high by those in the energy sector, and particularly those involved in the green economy.

The last growth spurt for geothermal was in the 1970s and 1980s when a lot of exploratory operations were financed. The industry pays high wages and has had a stable work force over the decades, but with turnover, the time has come for many workers to retire. In south central Idaho, 67 percent of the workers in this industry are 45 or older.

The recession and the beating retirement accounts took over the past three years staved off some of those retirements, but as the recovery takes, those retirements will occur and openings will appear for a new generation of geothermal workers.

In addition to replacing retirees, tax incentives and the push through tax incentives and other policies for environmentally favorable, clean energy production – green energy – are turning geothermal energy into a growth industry that will demand more manpower. Returning the water to earth through injection pumps and monitoring its chemical composition contribute to its sustainability and green definition.

A geothermal technician's duties are closely related to those of an operations and maintenance technician. It is a process job requiring varied abilities from chemical testing to troubleshooting equipment and documenting safety and maintenance issues. Many industries have similar processes that facilitate worker transitions – food processing, drilling, mining and exploration and public, private or defense utility operations, for example.

Employers tend to lean toward a strong background or experience because it typically takes three years for workers without the background or experience to develop the required knowledge to do the job.

Most regions of the state have institutions offering the level of training needed to meet geothermal employer demands. But that may be the result of limited hiring in the industry due to its past stability and could change if demand for workers jumps.

Weather, equipment, the maintenance schedule and the resource itself all dictate the job. Flexibility is vital, adaptability necessary. While teamwork is common, the teams depend on the individual members completing their assignments independently to make every operation safe and successful.

The wages are high, but the competition from other high-paying industries like mining, drilling and utilities make it difficult to find the right workers at the geothermal locations around the state. Several are near northern Nevada mines and western Wyoming oil fields, putting the mining and petroleum industries in direct competition with geothermal for workers from an already shallow labor pool.

For example, welders were in strong demand three years ago when Wyoming job offers were posted at \$100,000 a year entry level. Demand has waned as supply expanded during the recession, but the welding job market will likely rebound with the economy.

Workers skilled in the crafts are among those valued by utilities and consequently geothermal operators, opening up another avenue that high school counselors can use in encouraging students to consider these careers. Geothermal employers, based on the U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators, offer stability and high earning potential.

| | Utility Industry | | All Industries | |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| | Average Yearly Pay | Average Turnover | Average Yearly Pay | Average Turnover |
| South Central Idaho | \$41,088 | 4.0% | \$30,516 | 8.9% |
| State | \$54,864 | 3.6% | \$35,268 | 9.0% |

Industry officials say that with on-the-job training, a technician is typically paid about \$40,000 a year. Increases are often based on tenure. The high costs of training and the three-year learning curve for inexperienced workers creates a higher wage structure to at least avoid incurring excessive training costs due to high turnover.

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ISU'S NEW PROGRAM MAY PROVIDE "GREEN" JOBS IN IDAHO

Idaho State University's College of Technology is adding a new program in March that will provide students a certificate in renewable energy technology.

The Renewable Energy Technology program is funded with \$1.5 million from the Idaho Department of Labor under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009.

Classes will be flexible to meet the needs of working students and will be offered online and evenings with weekend and summer laboratory exercises on the Idaho State campus. Online delivery of theory courses make the program accessible to students statewide, and credits obtained during the nine-month program to secure the technical certificate can be used toward degree programs offered at the College of Technology.

"This certificate program will provide an education in several renewable energy areas including wind, solar, geothermal and hydro," Program Director Scott Rasmussen said. "Graduates will be prepared for entry level jobs in any of these areas. With the increased focus on renewable energy from President Obama, we will definitely see growing opportunities for graduates of this program to participate in building and maintaining additional renewable power operations in Idaho, the region and the country."

Rasmussen believes program students can expect good-paying career opportunities on completing the program. With additional education, training and experience, he said graduates will become highly skilled professionals in a field with a growing employment need.

Enrollment for the initial session of the program is under way. Applicants can contact the College of Technology at (208) 282-3085.

The college provides over 40 programs offering certificates and associate, bachelor's and master's degrees. Currently about 2,000 students attend the college, which offers vocational education in careers identified as high demand. Ninety percent of the school's students find employment upon graduation.

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STARTUP AMERICA

During his State of the Union address, President Obama announced a new program to foster development of high technology businesses and jobs. The Startup America Partnership is part of the Obama administration's two-year-old National Innovation Strategy.

Two key players in the Startup America Partnership are the Kauffman and Case foundations. Both private non-profit foundations are dedicated to entrepreneurship and economic development. Startup America, headed by Steve Case of the Case Foundation and Carl Schramm of the Kauffman Foundation, will focus on:

- Ensuring access to capital for high-growth startups throughout the country.
- Expanding entrepreneurship education and mentorship programs that empower more Americans not just to get jobs, but to create jobs.
- Strengthening commercialization of the \$147 billion in annual, federally funded research and development, which can generate innovative startups and entirely new industries.
- Identifying and removing unnecessary barriers to high-growth startups both within government and large corporations.

Encouraging startup ventures is critical to job growth. According to the Kauffman Foundation, young high-growth firms, so-called "gazelle" firms, are less than 1 percent of all American companies, yet they generate about 10 percent of the new jobs annually. The Kauffman Foundation's research also found that net job growth in United States over the last three decades has been entirely driven by startup companies.

The number of startup firms has declined in recent months. Last year was the weakest in over 18 years for the creation of new business ventures. There were 336,000 fewer self-employed Americans than there was a year ago according to the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council.

The Idaho Secretary of State reported that overall business filings were essentially flat in 2010 at 21,917, up just 55 from 2009. But the number of filings for assumed business names, the most common business registration, was down 3 percent from 2009 and 30 percent from the peak in 2005. That was offset by a 7.5 percent increase in filings for limited liability companies, which is competing with assumed business names in popularity.

In support of the Startup America initiative, private business is investing a substantial amount of venture capital. Business giant IBM alone is putting up \$150 million in business monitoring programs related to Startup America. Intel has committed to \$200 million to assist new firms. The Small Business Administration will be offering \$2 billion in low-interest business loans to entrepreneurs in support of Startup America.

More information on the Startup America Partnership is at <http://www.startupamericapartnership.org/home>.

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GREEN HAS LONG HISTORY IN NORTHERN IDAHO

There are many occupations and industries in northern Idaho that are inherently green dating back to the 1890s. Timber and wood products stand out with numerous occupations that meet the Idaho Department of Labor's definition of green. Foresters by practice and product are greener than most.

They manage the development and use of forests, rangeland and other natural resources that supply wood products, livestock forage, minerals and water. These lands offer recreational activities and habitat for wildlife.

Some workers advise private landowners on land management and design and implement programs that improve land health and productivity. Others focus on conserving or restoring public and private lands. Foresters often specialize in areas such as soil conservation, urban forestry, pest management, native species or forest economics.

What separates a private forester from a public forester is the breadth of knowledge a private forester has to have. Public foresters working for agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service or the Idaho Department of Lands are more specialized, focusing on ecology, biology, hydrology and other sciences, while a private forester is expected to be knowledgeable in all scientific areas.

Private foresters work with landowners, promoting healthy, diverse forests. They provide information and advice on the proper species for a specific site, what management options are available and how to tailor activities to suit a landowner's personal goals.

Private foresters are either consultants to landowners or work for wood product manufacturers.

Natural resource consultants offer a wide range of independent management services, working for individual landowners on a fee basis. They provide more in-depth and comprehensive services than their public agency counterparts.

According to Idaho Department of Labor 2010 Occupational Employment and Wage Survey, there are 70 foresters working in northern Idaho at a median wage of \$29.15 an hour, more than twice the median wage for all occupations in northern Idaho.

The outlook for foresters is limited. Statewide the number is expected to be the same in 2018 as in 2008 – about 225. In the Panhandle the projection is only slightly better, a growth of maybe 10 in that period. But people in the field have a different view. Their perception is that the industry has declined but is stabilizing and that the aging work force will mean the need for replacements in the near future.

With the development of carbon markets through international agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol, which places emissions targets on the six main greenhouse gases, the emerging field of carbon sequestration could generate new demand for foresters as well as geologists, geochemists, reservoir engineers and others trained in key sciences.

Terrestrial carbon sequestration is the process through which carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is absorbed by trees, plants and crops through photosynthesis and stored as carbon in the tree trunks, branches, foliage, roots and other biomass or in the soil. Forests, croplands and grazing lands are referred to as "sinks" for their ability to sequester carbon. Agriculture and forestry activities can also release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere so a carbon sink occurs when carbon sequestration is greater than carbon releases over time.

SKILLS

A private forester must be trained in key areas and draw on that knowledge. Some skills are simply modifications of existing ones. The changing

needs and goals of landowners have required completely new ideas and training for foresters. Today foresters not only need to know how to grow a productive forest but also how to manage various wildlife species, maintain aesthetics, preserve old growth or mitigate water quality concerns. This type of training is available through continuing education programs.

Much of the field experience could be obtained from the public sector through agencies like the U.S. Forest Service or the Idaho Department of Lands. But the ability to communicate, a strong work ethic and love of the forest are all desirable skills that make applicants competitive candidates in the private sector labor market.

Critical assets to the job of forester:

- Computational science and engineering.
- Knowledge of geographic information systems, or GIS, which can make companies more competitive.
- Background in firefighting.
- Strong connection to the land and forests.

CERTIFICATIONS/ACCREDITATIONS

Many companies are moving toward obtaining the Sustainable Forest Initiative certification, an independent third-party certification that assures products are the result of sustainable forest management. In addition to meeting management practices and product standards, the certification requires continuing education.

Among the Idaho companies with certification are:

- Three Rivers Timber Inc.
- Stimson Lumber Co.
- Bennett Lumber Products Inc.
- Ponderay Newsprint Co.
- Weyerhaeuser Co.
- Forest Capital Partners LLC
- Moyie Springs Lumber Co.
- Chilco Lake Lumber Co.
- Bennett Forest Industries
- Riley Creek Lumber Co.
- Idaho Cedar Sales Inc.
- Idaho Timber Corp.
- Boise Cascade Holdings LLC

Idaho Forest Group is currently working toward certification.

EDUCATION

Three colleges in the region provide forestry education.

North Idaho College offers classes in forestry and an Associate of Science degree through the Department of Natural Sciences. There is a two-year program in forestry, wildlife and range management.

The University of Idaho offers several bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in forestry, forest products and other segments of the industry through its Department of Forest Products in the College of Natural Resources. The University of Idaho Extension office in Coeur d'Alene also offers continuing education courses and courses for private landowners.

The University of Montana also offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees with hands-on experience through its College of Forestry and Conservation.

Occupations relying on skills and education similar to those required of a private forester include:

- Forest Inventory Specialist
- Certified Auditor
- Forest Engineer
- Forest Manager
- Forest Roads Designer
- Design Estimator
- Manufacturing Operation Manager
- Procurement Manager
- Construction Business Owner/Manager
- Truss Designer

More on page 18

- Logging Crew Supervisor
- Timber Sales Coordinator
- Logging Equipment Operator
- Production Manager
- Log home Builder
- Construction Supervisor
- Building Designer
- Building Contractor

Though the number of Idaho sawmills has declined over the past 20 years, demand for their products remains. The mills now operating tend to be larger with more production capacity. As government timber sales have declined in response to public and political concerns, more emphasis has been placed on privately owned timber. That is why there remains demand for field foresters with the right temperament, personality and training to interrelate with land-owners.

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USDA MODIFIES RULES FOR ROUNDUP READY™ SUGAR BEET SEEDS

The Agriculture Department has cleared the way for Idaho farmers to plant Monsanto's genetically modified Roundup Ready™ sugar beets this spring.

The decision on Feb. 4 followed a San Francisco federal court ruling that government approval of the beets violated environmental law.

If the court order had been followed, Idaho's sugar beet industry and most sugar beet growers nationwide would have been severely affected since 95 percent of the beet seeds planted in the United States were Roundup Ready™ beet seeds. In southeastern Idaho, Power and Bingham counties have substantial sugar beet crops with up to 300 jobs depending on the crop.

Paige Tomaselli, attorney for the Center for Food Safety said, "There is clear evidence of harm to the environment from GE sugar beets." The Center for Food safety is organization which originally filed suit to block the modified sugar beet seeds.

The Center for Food Safety, which challenged Roundup Ready™ beet seeds, pledged to continue its court battle against the crop it claimed clearly harms the environment.

Roundup Ready™ beet seeds, produced by Monsanto, contain a patented genetic technology, which allows them to tolerate the primary active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup and other herbicides.

Roundup Ready™ soybeans and corn have been sold by Monsanto commercially for well over a decade. Sales of Roundup and Roundup Ready™ seeds represent about half the company's annual revenue.

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ENROLLMENTS RISE AT MOST IDAHO COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES

The Idaho economy has yet to respond to the recovery that appears to be slowly taking hold in other parts of the nation, keeping Idaho's postsecondary classrooms full.

Every public university, college and community college in Idaho saw spring enrollments rise – some to new records – except for the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls, which has seen rapid growth in the past.

Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston registered over 4,200 students, the first time there have been more than 4,000 students on campus for the spring semester. This spring also marked the sixth straight semester the school has recorded year-over-year growth of at least 6.6 percent.

Spring Enrollment for Idaho Public Postsecondary Institutions

| | 2011 | 2010 | % Change |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Boise State University | 19,129 | 18,520 | 3.29% |
| Idaho State University | 15,575 | 14,486 | 7.52% |
| University of Idaho | 11,710 | 10,409 | 12.50% |
| Lewis-Clark State College | 4,213 | 3,601 | 17.00% |
| Eastern Idaho Technical College | 867 | 862 | 0.58% |
| College of Southern Idaho | 8,273 | 8,501 | -2.68% |
| College of Western Idaho | 6,244 | 3,500 | 78.40% |
| North Idaho College | 6,426 | 5,852 | 9.81% |
| Total | 72,437 | 65,731 | 10.20% |

Boise State University crossed a similar milestone in registering over 19,000 students for the first time in a spring semester.

And the enrollment at the College of Western Idaho nearly doubled to over 6,200 just two years after opening with 1,200 students in January 2009.

The dramatic growth of the College of Western Idaho in the face of continued growth at Boise State underscored not only the need for a community college in the state's population center but also the demand for education during and in the aftermath of the worst recession in a generation.

The student counts at all the Idaho schools were expected to rise during the recession as laid off workers looked for programs to upgrade their existing skills or acquire new skills that will make them more employable during the recovery and the subsequent expansion.

Idaho Department of Labor research shows that a worker with a college degree on average will make more than twice as much as a worker with only a high school diploma and some short-term on-the-job training.

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FIRST QUARTER 2010 REVIEW SHOWS SOME RECOVERY

EMPLOYMENT

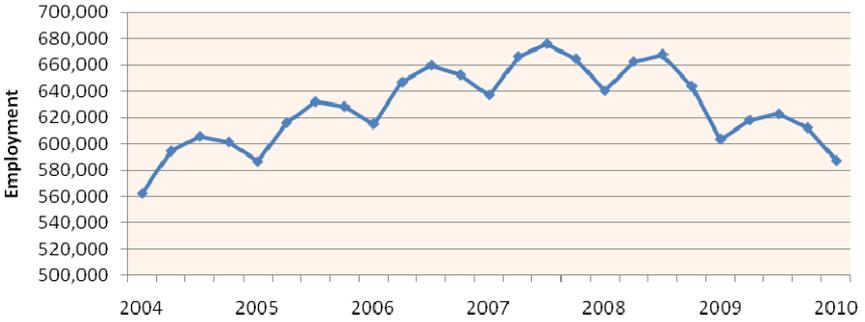
The Idaho economy continued to show signs of slow improvement in the first quarter of 2010. Total covered employment reported through the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages averaged 587,198 in the January-March quarter – down from 612,118 in the fourth quarter. This decrease in jobs came from seasonal losses across industry sectors and left first quarter 2010 employment 16,296 jobs below year-earlier levels.

Although the first quarter 2010 year-over-year difference was significant, it was the smallest year-over-year deficit since the third quarter of 2008. The narrowing gap was evident on both the production side of the economy, where the year-over-year gap shrank from 12.7 percent to 8.1 percent, and services, where the gap shrank from 3.0 to 1.5 percent.

Total wages dropped significantly from the fourth quarter, falling nearly \$800 million or 14.2 percent. This more than offset the \$400 million wage increase from the third to fourth quarters. But again, this was primarily due to seasonal factors as evidenced by the fact that the year-over-year gap in total wages at \$172 million was essentially unchanged from the fourth quarter.

Private-sector jobs totaled 473,767 in the first quarter. Although down 3.5 percent, or 17,000, from the fourth quarter, the loss was within normal seasonal patterns, and the over-the-year deficit at 23,900, or 4.8 percent, was less than in the previous quarter.

Idaho Average Quarterly Employment 1Q 2004-1Q 2010



Government including education averaged 113,430 jobs in the first quarter, a decrease of just over 1,000 jobs, or 0.9 percent, from the fourth. Much of this loss reflects regular seasonal declines in administration of environmental quality programs, which includes the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Federal employment in Idaho was notably affected by seasonal losses and was down nearly 500 from the previous quarter, or 3.6. However, the loss was mitigated by 2010 Census employment, which began rising in the first quarter and brought total federal employment 6.3 percent above the first quarter of 2009. Meanwhile, state government job totals remained static, and local government job loss was just under 500.

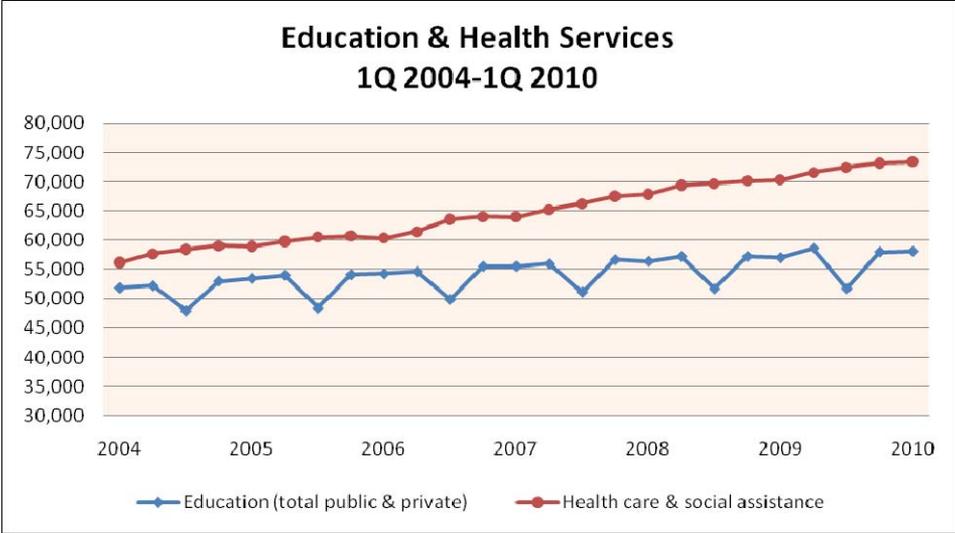
The January-March quarter brought an expected drop in retail jobs of over 3,500, or 4.6 percent, from the fourth quarter of 2009, reflecting well-established business patterns. Total retail employment fell to 73,010, off 2,840 from a year earlier, but that loss rate was much lower than the 7.9 percent decline in the first quarter of 2009 from the fourth quarter of 2008.

Year-over-year, total retail employment was off 3.7 percent, just half the first-quarter decline from 2008 to 2009. Loss was spread throughout the sector with department stores hit hardest with a quarter-to-quarter loss of 10.5 percent. Bucking the trend were furniture and home furnishings stores, which posted quarterly job growth of 1.8 percent, and gasoline retailers, who saw payrolls rise 3.3 percent. Combined the two subsectors combined to add just over 200 jobs from the fourth to first quarters. As for the other trade sectors, transportation and warehousing was down 4.2 percent, and wholesale trade was down 1.4 percent.

Trade & Transportation 1Q 2004-1Q 2010



Health care continued its steady climb, gaining 236 jobs, or 0.3 percent, in the first quarter. That left health care 4.4 percent above the year-earlier level.

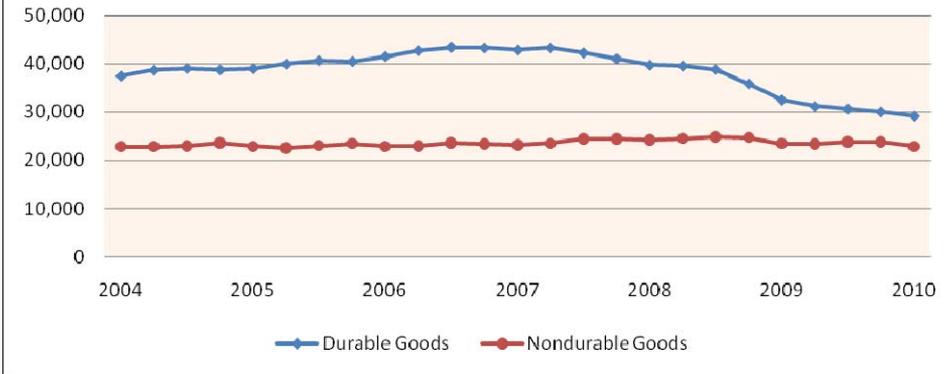


Construction experienced a seasonal first quarter loss of over 5,500 jobs, or 16.5 percent, from the fourth quarter. This was a considerably smaller than the 23.4 percent loss a year earlier, allowing the year-over-year deficit to continue to diminish. It dropped from 21.1 percent from the first three months of 2008 to the first quarter of 2009 to 14 percent in the first quarter of 2010. Over-the-quarter loss was spread across all construction subsectors although heavy and civil engineering posted a 2 percent gain. While slight, this was the only year-over-year gain in any construction subsector since the fourth quarter of 2007.



Manufacturing employment continued its moderate decline in the first quarter, experiencing a 3.3 percent loss from fourth quarter. That 1,770-job decline left the sector 7 percent below the year-earlier level, well below the 11.1 percent deficit in the first quarter of 2009. This shrinking gap was evident in both durable and nondurable goods. The over-the-year deficit was 10.2 percent in durable goods, down from 16.2 percent in the fourth quarter, and 2.5 percent in nondurable goods compared to 3.7 percent in the prior quarter. The quarter-to-quarter loss in nondurable goods production of 3.9 percent exceeded the 2.8 percent decline in durable goods. Five manufacturing subsectors posted gains from the previous year or quarter – three in food manufacturing subsectors. Dairy product manufacturing was the only subsector to make gains both year-over-year and quarter-to-quarter.

Manufacturing 1Q 2004-1Q 2010



WAGES

During the first quarter of 2010, Idaho's average weekly wage for all industries was \$633, down \$75 from the previous quarter. The lowest wages were reported in accommodations and food services at \$246, a \$7 decrease from the fourth quarter, and leisure activities at \$294, a \$28 decrease. Company management continued to pay the highest wage at \$1,674 a week. Utilities followed at \$1,507, and mining came in at \$1,502. The average for financial services was essentially unchanged.

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Average Weekly Wages by Industry 1st Quarter 2010





Area and County Developments

The January and February county, metropolitan and labor market area employment data along with benchmarked data for 2010 and 2009 are scheduled for release on March 18 and will be available on our website at [.http://lmi.idaho.gov/](http://lmi.idaho.gov/).

NORTHERN IDAHO

Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- More than 1,000 people took part in the fourth annual North Idaho Project Homeless Connect event organized by the Idaho Department of Labor. About 150 volunteers representing nearly three dozen agencies offered lunch, food, clothing, dental services, bike repair, guidance and other assistance to the homeless and others in need. The number of those served at the event has been doubling every year.
- The Idaho Community Foundation awarded over \$600,000 in grants from the Gladys E. Langroise Advised Fund to nearly 60 community groups and arts organizations. In northern Idaho, Kinderhaven received \$20,000 while the Festival at Sandpoint and the Boundary County branch of the University of Idaho Foundation were awarded \$4,000 each. Kootenai County nonprofits including the Jacklin Arts and Cultural Center in Post Falls have also been among the grant recipients in recent years.
- The North Idaho Rural Health Consortium of five hospitals has been awarded a \$421,622 grant for telemedicine services and distance learning from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities program. The money will finance a new video bridge, video systems room and telemedicine charts for consortium members – Kootenai Medical Center in Coeur d'Alene, Benewah Community Hospital in St. Maries, Bonner General Hospital in Sandpoint, Boundary Community Hospital in Bonners Ferry and Shoshone Medical Center in Kellogg.
- Inland Industrial's 2010 revenue was up more than 20 percent from 2009 and expects to exceed its 2010 first-quarter revenues this year by about 15 percent. The company has parlayed a string of federal government projects and a mix of smaller private-sector jobs into a strong 2010 revenue gain. In addition to a full-time staff of eight, the company probably employed an average of about 32 temporary workers during the year.
- For the fifth straight year Pita Pit Inc. with 187 U.S. franchises has made Entrepreneur Magazine's "Franchise 500" list. The Coeur d'Alene-based chain ranked 124 among all franchises and first in its category of pita sandwiches. The company moved up 36 positions from 2010 on the all-franchise list. Pita Pit opened nearly 20 locations last year.
- Avista recently gave \$50,000 to charities serving citizens in its service areas in Washington and northern Idaho. Funding for these contributions comes from Avista shareholders and is not charged to customers. Receiving \$5,000 each were the Boys & Girls Club of Lewiston at \$5,000, the Boys & Girls Club of Spokane, Fresh Start of Coeur d'Alene, Meals on

Wheels of Coeur d'Alene, Meals on Wheels of Spokane, the Salvation Army of Spokane, St. Vincent DePaul of Coeur d'Alene and Meals on Wheels of the Spokane Valley. Receiving \$10,000 was Catholic Charities of Spokane. Donations through the Avista Foundation and the company totaled \$2.2 million in 2010 throughout its three-state service territory.

- The Boise-based chapter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation expanded its territory to include Idaho's nine northern counties. Along with Make-A-Wish's increased presence in the Panhandle comes a new regional development director, April Needham of Coeur d'Alene.
- North Idaho College received a \$552,000 grant from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation to expand its I-BEST program – Idaho Basic Education and Skills Training program. This is a new initiative piloted last fall to allow students to obtain a GED certificate while learning a trade through one of the college's professional-technical programs.
- Washington's Shared-Work Program kept 32,000 workers on the job in 2010, a record and up by 10,000 from 2009. Shared-Work replaces some wages of full-time workers whose hours are reduced. Had the 32,000 program beneficiaries instead collected the average 20 weeks of unemployment benefits laid-off workers averaged last year, the cost to the state's unemployment insurance trust fund would have been \$69 million.
- Gee Automotive, an eastern Washington-based auto retailer with a location in Coeur d'Alene, has acquired Spokane Kia, making it the only Kia dealer for the Spokane-Coeur d'Alene area. The acquisition reflects how well the dealership has been doing. Fourth quarter sales were up 60 percent over 2009.

BENEWAH COUNTY

- The Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort Hotel, operated by the Coeur d'Alene Tribe near Worley, held a job fair to fill more than 150 jobs in its \$75 million expansion. A new restaurant will need almost 100 workers, the spa 26 and the new hotel facilities another 25.
- Combining a \$50,000 grant from the state Department of Education for \$50,000 with \$1,000 from the Idaho Community Foundation, the St. Maries school district purchased and installed new technology, known as Mimio, at each of its four schools. As a teaching aid, Mimio makes an ordinary whiteboard into an interactive computer screen.
- Benewah Area Transit has expanded its transportation services from St. Maries to the outlying communities. Two round trips will be offered from Plummer, Santa, Fernwood, Emida, Harrison, Calder and Avery each month.



Sandpoint Charter School received \$359,398.49 of the Governor's \$2.75 million initiative for select schools across the state to construct solar arrays. The school will install a 64,680-watt solar panel array on site, which could save the school \$7,000 to \$8,000 a year in energy costs – about two-thirds of its overall need.

BONNER COUNTY



A revision to their Solar Roadways concept has won co-founders Scott and Julie Brusaw of Sagle an early lead in the second phase of the Eco-magination Challenge and another \$100,000 grant from General Electric. The original solar road concept placed solar cells and a computerized panel of LEDs between sheets of steel-strong, high-friction glass. With panels installed over the roads and highways, they could provide

drivers with traffic markers and emergency warnings, melt away snow and ice, house Internet and phone lines and of course, generate clean, renewable energy. In fact, estimates show that if Solar Roadways replaced asphalt and concrete as America's primary transportation surface, the network would produce enough energy to power the nation three times over. The modified concept focuses on home applications. Computerized LED lights could illuminate the home in the evening or help direct first-time visitors toward the residence. Kids could switch pre-programmed LED sequences to jump from hopscotch to four-square on the fly. The heating element would eliminate annoying snow-shoveling during the winter. Perhaps best of all, the household energy bill would be substantially reduced or even eliminated.

- The Lake Pend Oreille Alternative High School received a donation from the Ambrosiani-Pastore Foundation. The foundation did not disclose the amount, calling it substantial enough to support the school's literacy program, guest authors, the "Seconds Anyone?" work-based learning thrift store, student scholarships, graphing calculators and the economically disadvantaged student fund.

BOUNDARY COUNTY

- Kaniksu Health Services of Bonners Ferry, serving low-income residents in northern Idaho's two northern-most counties, began construction of a new \$1.25 million community health center in February. The 9,000-square-foot center, to be called the Boundary Regional Community Health Center, will be east of the current health center, which is about 3,000 square feet. The new center will house primary care, medical, dental and behavioral-health services. Coeur d'Alene-based Ginno Construction Co. is the general contractor for the project, which is expected to be completed in July. Dahlberg Architects, also of Coeur d'Alene, provided the architectural services. The new center is being financed with a low-interest loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development program. The Bureau of Primary Health Care, a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, also granted Kaniksu \$500,000 for construction.

KOOTENAI COUNTY

- After working with the Air Force global strike command on a three-year test program, Transtector Systems was awarded a \$4.6 million contract for what Transtector calls its advanced "source region electromagnetic pulse electrical surge arrester" – hardened technology that will be used to protect minuteman weapon systems. Surge protection devices designed, developed and manufactured by Transtector Systems are specifically used to protect electrical and communications systems in military vehicles, watercraft, aircraft and facilities.
- Ground Force Manufacturing, which builds mining support equipment in Post Falls for companies around the world, has purchased a 10-acre tract across from its Coeur d'Alene plant. The new company that will occupy the site, Under-Ground Force, will produce smaller products for underground mining. Ground Force has primarily focused on larger equipment for open pit mining.
- The Idaho Legislature killed a bill that would have expedited the Kootenai Technical Education Campus. The bill would have allowed construction of the professional-technical high school in Rathdrum to begin before the money was collected from taxpayers.
- St. Vincent de Paul received a \$5,000 grant from the Home Partnership Foundation to support operating costs and provide winter warming centers

in Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls for an estimated 1,500 homeless people. The Idaho Housing Finance Association awarded 24 critical needs grants totaling \$168,836 to homeless shelters and service providers across Idaho.

- The city of Coeur d'Alene established a local improvement district to fund infrastructure improvements in the northwestern part of the city. The district will cover \$215,000 of the \$450,000 cost of water and sewer installation. The city of Dalton Gardens and the Coeur d'Alene water and wastewater departments will finance the rest.

SHOSHONE COUNTY

- Recognized by Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel Online, Silver Rapids at Silver Mountain won the distinction as one of the top 10 water parks in the nation. Silver Rapids was featured as Idaho's largest water park designed with all ages, especially teens, in mind. Approximately 70,000 residents and visitors splashed their way through Silver Mountain's water park in 2010.



In an effort to conserve the forests and capitalize on the existing resources, the Shoshone County Commission in conjunction with the Shoshone County Forest Health Working Group has proposed construction of a medium-sized biomass energy generator. The project would provide an outlet for timber from the county's overcrowded forests that have left valley communities vulnerable to wildfires.

- The Silver Valley lost a mining icon this past month. Robert "Bob" Hopper, owner of the Bunker Hill mine and vocal opponent of the Environmental Protection Agency's continued presence in the Silver Valley, died in Coeur d'Alene. Hopper left behind his legacy and a great void as a member of the Silver Valley community.

OPENINGS/EXPANSIONS

- Auto World in Post Falls
- Element Architecture in Coeur d'Alene
- Sprint Wireless in Post Falls
- Jimmy John's in Coeur d'Alene
- Porky G's Southern Style BBQ of Spokane Valley in Coeur d'Alene
- Peyton's All Season Motorsports, which offers RV repair, in Post Falls
- Make-A-Wish Foundation in northern Idaho
- Western States of Missoula, which acquired Harris-Dean Insurance of Coeur d'Alene, plans to expand
- Denny's in Post Falls, taking over Thad's Restaurant and interviewing its 20 employees

BUSINESS CLOSINGS

- Hard Case moves from Post Falls to Spokane
- NightHawk Radiology in Coeur d'Alene, leaving 70 employees with the choice of transferring out of state or being laid off

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NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis and Nez Perce counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

CLEARWATER COUNTY

- The Idaho Department of Labor will hold its annual career fair in Orofino on April 28. More than 30 employers from different industries will show students from throughout north central Idaho local career opportunities. For the eighth time, hundreds of young people will get hands-on experience in the work of people in the skilled trades and learn what various occupations pay and require for skills and training. Students will learn about careers in law enforcement, banking, health care, electrical line installation and repair, forestry, fish and wildlife management, heavy equipment operation and logging. They will have a chance to operate heavy equipment like front-end loaders, graders, skidders, feller bunchers and log and dump trucks.
- Two grants totaling \$1,000 from Clearwater Paper allowed teachers at Orofino Junior- Senior High School to purchase equipment for professional-technical classes including a 110-volt, wire-feed welder to teach safe welding techniques. Also purchased was equipment to hook up two computers and a scanner in a professional-technical classroom. With a growing recognition of the importance of technical education during a time of tight school budgets, schools are exploring many new ways of keeping their programs fresh.

IDAHO AND LEWIS COUNTIES

- For a small county, Idaho County has a strong machining industry that employs about 60 people. Its largest metal fabrication companies include Intermountain Machine & Fab Inc., Wimer Machine, J.C. Uhling Products and Militech. In addition, Anderson Aeromotive employs machinists to repair aircraft. Two new machine shops recently opened. Mt. Idaho Machine a few miles outside of Grangeville offers gun machining, gun smithing and tool repair. Owner Darrel Stucky formerly worked as a machinist for Anderson Aeromotive. In Cottonwood, Tom Bower opened TS Teknadyne, a custom machining shop with high-technology capabilities. He expects to make a variety of machinery and parts including hydraulic products, large nuts and bolts and flanges. Bower worked at St. Mary's Hospital in biomedical electronics and engineering, taking care of everything from IV pumps to boilers.
- Canyon Area Bus Service in Riggins received the I-Way Leadership Award for 2010 for its innovation, strength of its partnerships and depths of volunteer commitment. Canyon Area Bus runs a free fixed route shuttle twice a day from Riggins to New Meadows and McCall. It also provides on-demand service for doctor appointments outside Riggins and Tuesday service to Grangeville. It also arranges for volunteers to drive seniors and disabled individuals who need assistance with necessities such as shopping, medical appointments, funerals and weddings.
- Although its business has picked up, Idaho Sewing for Sports near Grangeville is still waiting for business to return to normal. Chief Executive Officer Gunther Williams recently told the 14 employees that they will keep working full-time by having them work on community projects when commercial orders from ski resorts and sports centers are slow. Currently, Williams plans to give each employee the opportunity to help out in the community

at least 16 hours per month. This will provide more than 2,200 hours of community service per year.

- The successful new Veterans Administration satellite clinic at Syringa General Hospital in Grangeville may serve as a model for a similar clinic that Latah County officials hope will open at Gritman Medical Center in Moscow. Michelle Schaeffer, director for the Syringa veterans clinic, said since the clinic opened Sept. 30, 94 veterans have been seen by the health care providers and more than 100 have enrolled for services. The contract allows a patient capacity of 225. Steven Hull, veterans service officer in Moscow, said there are 2,900 veterans in Latah County, and having a clinic there would replace services that will be lost after the mobile clinic is no longer available.
- Pacific Cabinets Inc., which employs nearly 50 people near Ferdinand, is thriving despite the sluggish economy. It recently won a \$600,000 contract on a medical office building in the Providence Office Park in Portland. Its expertise in medical cabinets is why it is producing and installing \$2 million worth of cabinets at the Central Washington Hospital in Wenatchee, and it landed a \$3.6 million contract with St Luke's Hospital in Twin Falls and Boise. Its production capacity and ability to obtain bonding helped the company land a \$3.4 million project at the Coeur d'Alene casino in Worley. With construction activity sharply curtailed in the last three years, Pacific Cabinets has aggressively controlled costs. It convinced major vendors to participate in this endeavor by offering an additional 2 percent early pay discount on invoices. The biggest cost reductions came from ideas supplied by employees. Owner Steve Frei said two production workers took it upon themselves to combine multiple work orders to increase the efficiency of the panel saw. By implementing employee suggestions for improvement, Pacific Cabinet reduced labor costs by more than 25 percent and overall costs by more than 15 percent. Those initiatives were exactly what the company needed to survive the recession and rack up record profits in 2010. Frei does not believe the economy will get better any time soon. "We are looking forward to the challenges in 2011 knowing that we have a dedicated team that has survived the worst economy since the Great Depression."

LATAH COUNTY



GoNano Technologies in Moscow received a \$149,000 National Science Foundation grant to develop a nanospring catalytic converter for diesel engines that will perform more efficiently and emit fewer small carbon particles than other diesel engines. In 2013, stricter federal standards for diesel emissions will take effect. GoNano also received an National Science Foundation grant in July 2010 to develop a carbon dioxide recycling system using the nanospring technology. These new regulations will affect carbon emissions standards for allowable particle size and number of particles.



Genesee School is one of nine Idaho schools to receive funding from the Solar Panels for Schools program. The state earmarked \$2.75 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for the program. Genesee School will use the \$270,000 grant to purchase and install solar panels at the school to generate electricity and revenue.



A \$25,000 donation from Texas entrepreneur Randy Hill and his company, APT Advanced Trailer and Equipment LP, to the University of Idaho is funding research into converting woody biomass to energy. It has financed installation of a pilot-scale pyrolysis unit at the university steam plant. Pyrolysis is a type of incineration that uses almost no oxygen.

When applied to an organic material like wood, pyrolysis yields biofuel plus a small amount of charcoal. Armando McDonald, professor of wood chemistry and wood composites, said the value of pyrolysis is its potential to generate substantial amounts of clean energy with little to no waste. Hill also donated a biomass drying trailer and funding to install it at the university steam plant and funding to formalize bioenergy and bioproducts efforts at the university. University of Idaho Sustainability Director Darin Saul sees research on woody biomass utilization as part of a larger bioenergy and bioproducts effort focused on regionally important feed stocks including manure, oil seeds and food processing waste. McDonald, Saul and the bioenergy and bioproducts working group plan to collaborate with private sector partners to address identified bottlenecks in the bioenergy/bioproducts industry development.

- Volunteers have turned out in large numbers to help renovate the 105-year-old Grange Hall in Kendrick. Last June more than 70 people joined the local chapter of the fraternal organization in an effort to preserve the historic building. Since then, volunteers and Grange members have insulated, rewired and refurbished the building. It has been used as a meeting place for many different organizations including the Grange, Freemasons, the Order of the Eastern Star and the area's garden club. It also houses the local food bank. The volunteers plan to make the building into a functional, central location for meetings and other events like receptions and community dinners, effectively making it the community center. Small rural areas rely on community centers to foster the sense of community.
- Spring semester enrollment at the University of Idaho rose about 2 percent from last spring's level. The Moscow university with campuses in Coeur d'Alene, Boise and Idaho Falls has enrolled 11,710 full- and part-time students. Enrollment on the Moscow campus is 10,409, up 1 percent from last spring.
- The Moscow Walmart, which closed in October when the new Pullman supercenter opened, held a liquidation sale in mid-January to prepare for the store's expansion later this year. The renovated store with an additional 28,000 square feet will reopen in early 2012 as a supercenter, selling groceries in addition to all the items it had been selling. Walmart's studies of shopping behavior on the Palouse convinced executives to commit to the construction earlier than expected.
- A scholarship program at the University of Idaho is helping disabled veterans go to school. Operation Education helps veterans with permanent disabilities who have served since Sept. 11, 2001, with tuition, room and board, textbooks, child care, transportation and whatever else they may need to make it through college. The program also assists spouses of qualifying veterans. In the last two years, there has been a surge in veteran enrollment. The number of G.I. Bill beneficiaries on campus is up to 300 this year, compared to 220 in fall 2009. Operation Education has provided 16 disabled veterans and their spouses with assistance above traditional GI bill benefits. Many disabled veterans are facing higher barriers to employment than can be eliminated with education. Information about Operation Education and its scholars can be found online at www.uidaho.edu/operationeducation

NEZ PERCE & ASOTIN COUNTIES

- Construction began in late January on the \$11 million Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories building at the Port of Lewiston's Business and Technology Park. When construction is completed in September, Schweitzer

will hire 20 operators, technicians, engineers and support staff for precision injection plastic manufacturing. Eventually the Lewiston plant will also make electronic circuit boards, fiber optic cables and other components needed to build electronic instruments. Within three years, it could employ up to 250 people. There's plenty of space for future growth. The new building will be able to house up to 400 people working in two shifts. There also is room next door for another building of similar size. President Ed Schweitzer praises the highly qualified work forces in both the Pullman-Moscow and Lewiston-Clarkston areas.

- Hells Canyon Visitor Bureau President Michelle Peters says tourism is up. "Instead of declining like a lot of the areas, we have been up," Peters said. "We are a drive market and AAA is one of our main target audiences that we do advertise to and we have several conventions that have been in town, and another thing that has increased is the sports teams and events at the local venues." National publicity has helped including Outdoor Life magazine designating Lewiston as one of the nation's four best places to visit to hunt and fish. American Cowboy magazine announced in January that the Lewis-Clark Valley was as one of the 20 best places to live and visit in the west. The Red Lion in Lewiston agrees that 2010 was a banner year. The most noticeable increases came from rafting and jet boating groups. Hotel-motel receipts in Nez Perce County from April through December totaled \$7.6 million, 3.4 percent higher than the same months the year before.
- Lewis-Clark State College posted record enrollment for spring classes. It enrolled 4,213 students this spring, 7.6 percent more than spring 2010. It was the first time Lewis-Clark has had more than 4,000 students in the spring semester. Spring enrollment has jumped by almost 1,000 over the past four years. Some of the enrollment growth is a result of better retention of students from semester to semester. Nursing and health sciences along with business continue to be the most popular programs at the college. Each has more than 500 students.
- Asotin County will receive \$267,000 from the Washington Department of Ecology to plan, design and build stormwater projects. Retrofit projects correct deficiencies in aging stormwater infrastructure in urban areas. Low-impact development uses vegetation, healthy soils, porous pavement, dispersion and other infiltration techniques to manage stormwater where it originates, resulting in fewer hard surfaces and less runoff. About \$105,000 will go to the unincorporated area of the county, \$73,000 to the city of Asotin and \$89,000 to the city of Clarkston.
- Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter made Culdesac capital for a day on Jan. 26. Fourteen miles southeast of Lewiston on U.S. Highway 95, the town of 379 residents is largely a bedroom community for the Lewis-Clark Valley. The average commute to work for Culdesac residents is half an hour. More than half of the commuters from Culdesac work in Lewiston, Clarkston and Lapwai with another 20 percent in Orofino, Moscow and Kamiah. The school district is the community's largest employer. It showed creativity in dealing with declining school budgets. This school year, it entered a cooperative agreement with the Lewiston School District, which now provides food service, counseling and school bus maintenance for Culdesac at a financial savings. The Culdesac Wolves and Highland Huskies in Craigmont combined sports programs this year. By sharing resources, the school districts could avoid making cuts and students have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of sports.

NEW BUSINESSES

- Antiques by Russ moved from Uniontown, Wash., to Main St. in Moscow
- Mac's Supper Club and Lounge in White Bird
- Thai House serving authentic Thai food in Clarkston
- That One Place, a gift store, in downtown Lewiston
- Unfair Advantage, a hair salon, in Lewiston

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SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

ADA COUNTY

- Micron wants to build an additional 50,000-square-foot building for its 300mm wafer research and development center. The center will be two times larger than what is required for research and development with plans to use the additional space for future expansion. At the end of January Micron had posted on its website just under 150 job openings in the Treasure Valley.
- M2M Communications, a Boise company that focuses on utility remote monitoring and control products, was recently acquired by EnerNOC Inc., which focuses on implementing “smart” technology to gain efficiencies in energy distribution. Currently, M2M employs over 20 people in Boise and has plans to increase the local work force.

CANYON COUNTY

- A new family practice clinic will be opening in Caldwell this summer after Saltzer Medical Group recently hired two physicians from out of state.

ELMORE COUNTY



Six new wind farms slated to be constructed in Elmore County have received approval from the Idaho Public Utilities Commission to sell their power to Idaho Power Co. The new wind farms are expected to generate an average of 60 megawatts of power.

GEM COUNTY

- Walgreen's opened a store in Emmett in January, hiring 10 local residents and employing five other people who had worked at another Walgreen's in the valley.



The Emerald Forest Products mill expects to hire another 10 to 20 people through 2011. The mill opened in early 2010, hiring 50 people. Emerald Forest Products plans to build a 10 megawatt woody bio-mass power that should supply enough power to run the mill. Construction may begin this year on the power plant. Excess power would be sold to Idaho Power.

PAYETTE COUNTY

- On Jan. 1, the cities of Fruitland and Payette merged their local chambers of commerce to create the Payette County Chamber of Commerce, which will serve the entire county. The transition from two chambers to one came as each city sought ways to reduce spending during the economic downturn. By merging the two chambers, the cities were able to reduce costs associated with overlapping administrative functions from each.

- The Payette County Library expansion will be completed this year after being awarded an \$80,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The project has been in the works for several years as the number of people using library services rose dramatically.

VALLEY COUNTY

- Surprising many people involved in the bankruptcy hearing surrounding Tamarack Resort, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Terry Myers sided with Credit Suisse Bank, which intends to sell portions of the resort over time. Selling the resort in this manner reduces the likelihood Tamarack will be purchased by Green Valley Holdings Inc. of Eagle, which offered \$40 million.
- Cascade may see a new recreation center by the end of the year if the Southern Valley County Recreation District receives approval from the Cascade City Council. The recreation center is expected to cost \$1.4 million and include indoor fitness equipment and two pools, one being open year-round. If all goes as planned, construction would begin in July. According to Economic Modeling Specialists Inc., 29 jobs would be created during the construction phase followed by several permanent jobs once construction is completed.

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SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

BLAINE COUNTY



Carey High School was among nine schools awarded a grant to install solar panels in its gymnasium. The \$249,945 grant was provided under the Solar Panels for Schools program from the Idaho Office of Energy Resources, which received 43 applications statewide. Carey High School will soon be generating 42,770 watts of clean electricity from this investment of federal stimulus funds.

- “Authentic Sun Valley” is the new slogan being promoted by the Sun Valley Marketing Alliance. In cooperation with Sun Valley Co., the alliance hired Backbone Media of Aspen, Col., to create a public relations and social media campaign to lure “young affluents” who want an original experience to become a tradition in their lives. Sun Valley Co. and the alliance just launched a shared Facebook page, facebook.com/sunvalley. Other social media such as YouTube and the new discover.sunvalley.com will offer the opportunity to show exciting video of skiers schussing through knee-deep powder and boarders jumping off cliffs. One benefit to using social media is the ability to know how many people respond almost immediately. There is a delay in determining the impact of traditional advertising in glossy magazines and similar media. The alliance is targeting young people under 35 who have “surprisingly low awareness” of Sun Valley. Its history, remoteness, luxury and amenities as a mountain playground and family destination are what “new active affluents” want, Candice Pate, the alliance’s new interim chief management officer, said. “They want to collect experience instead of things,” she said. “They want someone to ‘teach me,’ not ‘serve me.’ They want to be engaged more than informed, and they consider themselves explorers versus tourists.”

- Hailey's plans for an ice rink and rodeo grounds lost a multimillion-dollar donor. Much of the concrete perimeter work has been completed, but the roof will be put on hold until donations come in. A \$3.5 million bond was approved by voters last May to cover part of the project cost.

GOODING COUNTY



The completion of 122 wind turbines over the last five months in Gooding and Cassia counties – a \$500 million investment – will generate 183 megawatts of energy, enough to power 39,700 average-sized homes, according to Exergy Development Group, developer of the site. The use of clean energy and reduction of green house emissions has the effect of taking 57,000 cars off the road. The project generated 300 temporary construction jobs and 25 permanent jobs maintaining the turbines.



The Gooding City Council voted to support the Youth Advisory Council in its attempt to start a community garden this spring by supplying the needed water. The garden will not only beautify the town but also be a community gathering place and source of homegrown vegetables.

JEROME COUNTY

- County commissioners are looking for alternatives after voters repeatedly rejected a bond issue for a new jail. They are now considering adding on to the existing jail as a stop-gap measure until the economy recovers and another bond election can be held.
- It appears now that until the economy turns around the University of Idaho will be unable to provide the cash needed to get the proposed Livestock Research Center off the ground. The Idaho Dairymen's Association has already donated money to the project as have a number of corporations and quasi-governmental agencies. The university intends to sell some of its land, but prices have slipped so low it would not be prudent to sell in the current down market.

LINCOLN COUNTY



Shoshone High School has received a nearly \$183,000 grant from the Idaho Office of Energy Resources under the Solar Panels for Schools program to install solar panels in its gymnasium. The school will soon be generating 36,000 watts of clean electricity. The investment of federal stimulus funds will be recovered over the next three decades through reduced electric bills.

MINIDOKA AND CASSIA COUNTIES



Pacific Ethanol celebrated three years without an injury with a barbecue for its 36 employees; steaks were grilled by Chief Executive Neil Koehler. The Burley plant produces 175,000 gallons of ethanol a day from 60,000 bushels of corn. The plant closed for one of those years due to decreased demand for the fuel, high corn prices and tight bank financing. Now, new cars are more easily retrofitted for the 85 percent ethanol fuel blend, and demand for fuel is up compared to 2008 when gas prices were so high. The company has reorganized its assets and is better prepared to weather another high corn and gas price year. The company's Boardman, Ore., plant weathered the adverse conditions without closing.



Some construction has resumed on the Renova ethanol plant in Heyburn after it was bought by creditors. But creditors and governmental agencies still owed money by Renova, which filed for bankruptcy protection, have not heard from Bill Drinkwine, consultant for the Idaho Creditors Trust Group and site construction manager for Dilling Mechanical, the general contractor on the Renova project. Drinkwine collected his

administrative fee of \$1.5 million up front from the contractors. The project sold to Natural Chem Group LLC of Houston for \$2.4 million. The company intends to manufacture biofuel and hire 30 workers. The original estimated cost was \$60 million, but the plant was only half completed.

- Service Corporation International of Houston has pulled out of south central Idaho, selling the Hansen-Payne Mortuary in Burley and the Hansen Mortuary in Rupert to Morrison Funeral Home and Crematory of Rupert.

TWIN FALLS COUNTY

- The Southern Idaho Economic Development Organization has taken on another member with the addition of Glens Ferry. Executive Director Jan Rogers has worked with the community in the past to promote south central Idaho as a whole. The organization already includes the cities of Twin Falls, Filer, Kimberly, Jerome, Burley, Rupert and Gooding. The cooperative marketing effort provides service to smaller communities that could not otherwise afford the organization's level of expertise.
- The esteemed Castleford Men's Club has donated \$49,600 in proceeds from its annual auction to providing health care equipment for the community so no person is turned away. The club also provides college scholarships to all Castleford High School graduates.
- Twin Falls Airport reported a 20 percent increase in air travel from 2009. Passengers totaled 66,600 in 2010, up from 53,214 the previous year. Airport Manager Bill Carberry attributed much of the growth to Allegiant Air's expansion into Twin Falls with twice-weekly flights to Las Vegas. The majority of Allegiant passengers are from the Magic Valley, Carberry said, but internal surveys have shown the flights are drawing passengers from the Treasure and Wood River valleys. "Once they factor the inexpensive ticket prices, coupled with free parking at our airport here, many people are finding that it is actually worth the short drive to Twin Falls," Carberry said. Passengers are also coming into southern Idaho from Nevada. The airport's surveys indicate about 20 percent of traffic from Las Vegas are Nevada passengers.
- The College of Southern Idaho experienced a 2.9 percent dip in enrollment down to 8,273 students this semester from the fall semester. That followed increases of 14.5 percent 2009 and 9 percent in 2010. "It just can't continue at that rate," said Graydon Stanley, dean of students. "This helps us catch up a little bit." Translating part-time students into full-time equivalents gives the school 4,734 full-time student equivalent students this spring, down less than a 1 percent from fall. Physical science, agriculture, Internet technology and vocational courses saw increased enrollments, which Stanley attributed to the recession. "It's not a surprise that in this economy our greatest growth was in areas that lead right to employment," he said.
- The Twin Falls Fair Board voted to allow evening beer sales during next year's event but limited to a specific area. The board apparently believed beer sales would provide additional revenue to the board and also generate larger crowds on those hot August nights.

BUSINESS CLOSINGS

- Banner Furniture in downtown Twin Falls
- Idaho Home Health & Hospice in Buhl. Offices in Twin Falls, Gooding, Rupert, Hailey, Meridian, Pocatello, Idaho Falls and Rigby remain open.

- Smoking Cowboys in Twin Falls. The Jerome restaurant will not close.
- Appliance Warehouse in Twin Falls
- Lynwood Market in Twin Falls

BUSINESS LAYOFF

- C-3, the new call center in Twin Falls, laid off 100 employees leaving 700 on payroll.

BUSINESS OPENING

- KoKo Fit Club, a 24-hour fitness club in Burley

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SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

BANNOCK COUNTY



The Idaho Department of Labor drew a huge crowd of job seekers to its Jan. 25 to 27 job fair in the Pocatello office for Hoku Inc., which is beginning to staff up its polysilicon production plant. Polysilicon is used in solar panels and integrated circuits. The company is hiring polysilicon technicians and chemical operators. Jennifer Solecki, Hoku's Pocatello human resources coordinator, said half the candidates at the job fair passed written tests and were given the opportunity for job interviews. Plant Manager Ed Church said the area has "a great work force."

- Federal, state and local officials celebrated the expansion and renovation of the Pocatello airport terminal in early January. The ceremony included guided tours of the facility. Besides being the transportation hub for southeastern Idaho, the airport is adjacent to an industrial park, which has been instrumental in attracting new businesses and jobs to Pocatello.

BEAR LAKE COUNTY

- Residents of the seven-county Bear River Heritage Area commented on the area's marketing plan and the effort to gain federal recognition as a nationally designated heritage area as well as the group's long term strategic plan during a Jan. 24 meeting at the Cache County Courthouse in Logan, Utah. The Bear River Heritage Area includes the following counties: Bear Lake, Caribou, Oneida and Franklin counties in Idaho and Cache, Box Elder and Rich counties in Utah. The geographical focus of the area is Bear Lake, which sits on the Idaho-Utah border.

BINGHAM COUNTY



The Bingham County Planning and Zoning Commission announced denied the permit request of Blue Ribbon Energy to complete the second phase of the firm's planned wind farm near Goshen. The permit would have allowed Blue Ribbon Energy to place nine additional turbines near Goshen. Earlier Blue Ribbon Energy obtained permission to build a 27-turbine park near Goshen. Commissioners expressed concerns over the effects nearby windmills could cause residents in the Goshen area.

CARIBOU COUNTY

- Caribou Hospital dedicated a new \$2 million dollar surgical facility in mid-January. The 2,000-square-foot addition to the hospital includes a large operating room, a decontamination room, a clean supply room, a storage room, employee break room, surgical prep area and anesthesia office. Hospital Chief Executive John Hoops said the expansion was financed with

savings from past hospital operations. No government or private money was used. Caribou Hospital currently has the lowest infection rate in the state.

- Sen. Bob Geddes has resigned to become the new chairman of the Idaho State Tax Commission. In addition to leaving the Idaho Senate, where he served as President Pro Tem, the Soda Springs Republican is also leaving his job as an environmental engineer with Monsanto Corp. in Soda Springs. Geddes served in the Idaho State Senate 14 years representing Bear Lake, Bonneville, Caribou, Franklin, and Teton counties. Former state Rep. John Tippetts, who works for Agrium, has been named to replace Geddes in the Senate.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

- Visitors and local residents commemorated the 148th Anniversary of the Bear River Massacre on Jan. 29. The massacre occurred when Col. Patrick Edward Conner and his troop encountered a band of Northwestern Shoshone wintering five miles north of Preston. About 250 members of the Shoshone nation were killed including 90 women and children. Those tribe members who escaped were cared for by local Mormon families. The commemoration included a prayer and memorial service.

POWER COUNTY



The Power County Planning and Zoning Board granted Power County Wind Parks LLC a permit to build a rock quarry near American Falls. The quarry will be a temporary operation, providing gravel for roads to the Power County Wind Parks wind turbines. Without the roads, maintenance teams would have difficulty getting to the sites where the firm's turbines are located.

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EAST CENTRAL IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

MADISON COUNTY

- Brigham Young University-Idaho is raising tuition by 3.27 percent for the 2011-12 school year. The increase means students are paying \$1,735 per semester – up from \$1,680 per semester. The university's tuition increase was driven by a rising operating costs.



Madison High School will be installing 351 solar panels through the Idaho Solar Panels for Schools Program. A \$444,034 grant funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will cover the cost of the new panels. The panels are expected to reduce the school's energy bill by \$8,000 to \$12,000 a year. The investment will pay for itself in about 35 years. Educational components will be added to the school's Environmental Solutions class, and a monitoring system will allow students to track energy savings and creation.

TETON COUNTY

- State budget cuts have forced the University of Idaho Research and Experiment Station in Teton to cut costs. Farm operations now use one-third of the 600 available acres to curtail labor and operating costs. Research centers thought the state have looked for other sources of funding as more budget cuts roll in.

FREMONT COUNTY

- New cabin rental regulations have brought in the first wave of applicants for public hearings. Under the new planning and zoning regulations, a public hearing is required for those wishing to rent on short-term basis to groups of 16 to 30 guests. Those wishing to rent to smaller groups will need a permit but will not require a public hearing.

BONNEVILLE COUNTY



Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter and U.S. Rep. Mike Simpson were on hand when the Idaho National Laboratory broke ground for a new research laboratory in Idaho Falls. The facility will house three related energy system programs – Biofuels and Renewable Energy, Energy Storage and Transportation and Hybrid Energy Systems Testing. Operations are expected to begin in August 2012.

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State of Idaho Data – State Economic Indicators

| | Dec 2010** | Nov 2010* | Dec 2009 | % Change From | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|
| | | | | Last Month | Last Year |
| IDAHO LABOR FORCE (1) | | | | | |
| <i>Seasonally Adjusted</i> | | | | | |
| Civilian Labor Force | 756,100 | 756,600 | 751,200 | -0.1 | 0.7 |
| Unemployment | 71,900 | 70,800 | 68,300 | 1.6 | 5.3 |
| Percent of Labor Force Unemployed | 9.5 | 9.4 | 9.1 | | |
| Total Employment | 684,200 | 685,850 | 682,900 | -0.2 | 0.2 |
| <i>Unadjusted</i> | | | | | |
| Civilian Labor Force | 751,800 | 755,000 | 747,300 | -0.4 | 0.6 |
| Unemployment | 71,900 | 71,200 | 68,400 | 1.0 | 5.1 |
| Percent of Labor Force Unemployed | 9.6 | 9.4 | 9.2 | | |
| Total Employment | 679,900 | 683,800 | 678,900 | -0.6 | 0.1 |

U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE⁽²⁾

| | Jan 2011 | Jan 2010 | Dec 2010 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 9.4 | 9.8 | 10.0 |

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Claims Activities

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|------|------|
| Initial Claims ⁽³⁾ | 18,054 | 19,827 | 17,804 | -8.9 | 1.4 |
| Weeks Claimed ⁽⁴⁾ | 158,314 | 116,504 | 164,365 | 35.9 | -3.7 |

*Benefit Payment
Activities⁽⁵⁾*

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------|-------|
| Weeks Compensated | 111,096 | 97,472 | 139,552 | 14.0 | -20.4 |
| Total Benefit \$ Paid | \$26,998,553.71 | \$23,222,932.81 | \$35,553,364.55 | 16.3 | -24.1 |
| Average Weekly Benefit Amount | \$243.02 | \$238.25 | \$254.77 | 2.0 | -4.6 |
| Covered Employers | 48,186 | 48,111 | 49,439 | 0.2 | -2.5 |
| Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months ⁽⁴⁾ | \$303,866,255 | \$312,421,065 | \$357,303,198 | -2.7 | -15.0 |

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| | Jan 2011 | Dec 2010 | Jan 2010 | % Change Month | % Change Year |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI- W) | 216.4 | 215.3 | 212.6 | 0.5 | 1.8 |
| All Urban Consumer (CPI-U) | 220.2 | 219.2 | 216.7 | 0.5 | 1.6 |

**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.

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