

# Idaho Employment

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

IDAHO  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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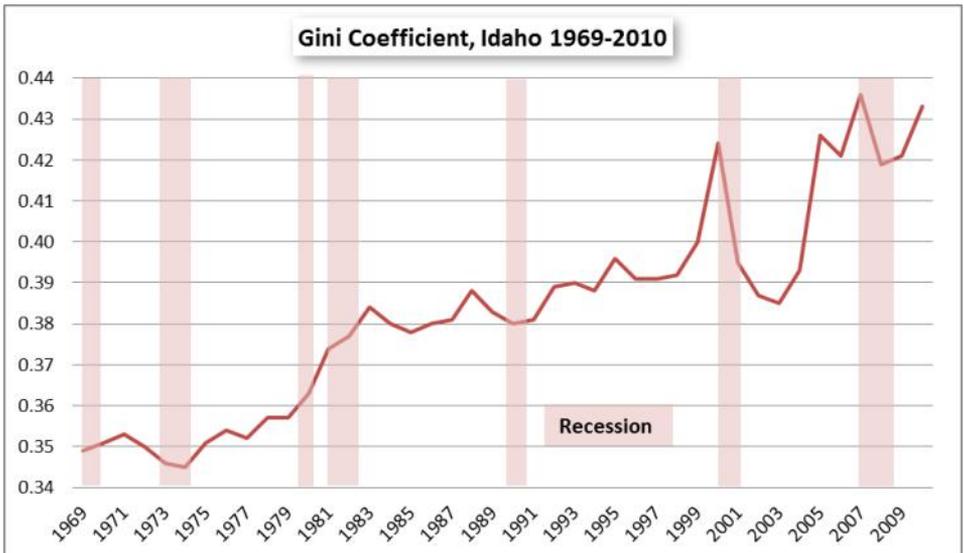
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## INCOME DISPARITY

Between 1947 and 1968, the index used by the Census Bureau to measure family income inequity showed inequity decreasing in the United States. But since then the trend has reversed, and Idaho has experienced the same trend.

The measure is called the Gini index, which is the ratio of cumulative income to the percent of the population earning that income. It ranges from 0.0 for perfect equity to 1.0 for maximum inequity. Perfect equity, for example, would be the bottom 10 percent earning 10 percent of the income, the middle 10 percent earning 10 percent of the income and the top 10 percent earning 10 percent of the income. Maximum inequity would be the top 1 percent earning 100 percent, or all, of the income.

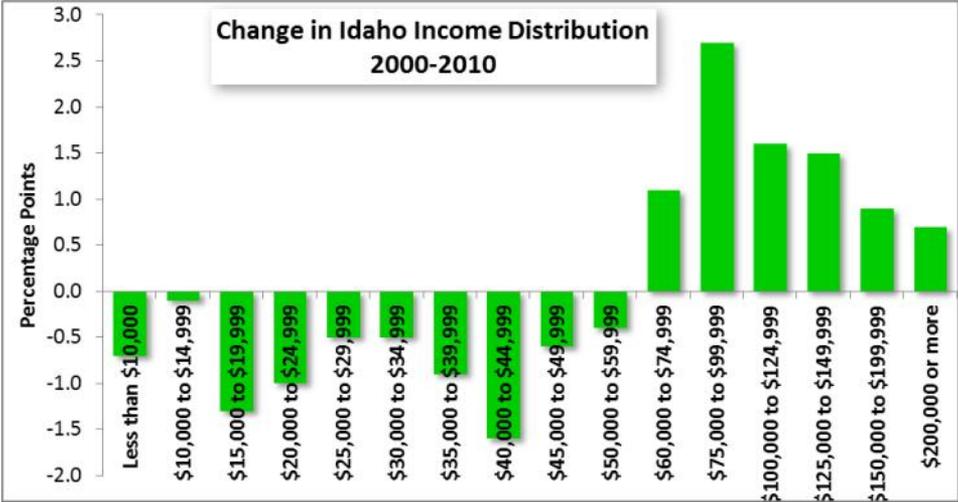


Source: US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

Income inequity has increased in Idaho in recent years as the distribution of income expanded in all income categories over \$60,000. This is partly due to rising incomes in the mining industry. Larger profit shares due to increasing silver prices over the past few years have caused income levels

Gini Index of Income Inequality			
	2006	2010	Change
U.S.	0.464	0.469	0.005
Idaho	0.421	0.433	0.012

to soar. The average wage for all industries, minus mining, was \$34,800 in 2010 compared to \$66,800 in the mining industry. After adjusting for inflation, the average wage for all industries (excluding mining) declined 3 percent from 2000 to 2010, while the average wage in the mining industry increased 30 percent.



Distribution among each income level shows how proportionate, or disproportionate, income equality is in the economy. The data show that Idaho has a larger middle class than the remainder of the U.S. with a slightly larger lower class and a much smaller upper class.

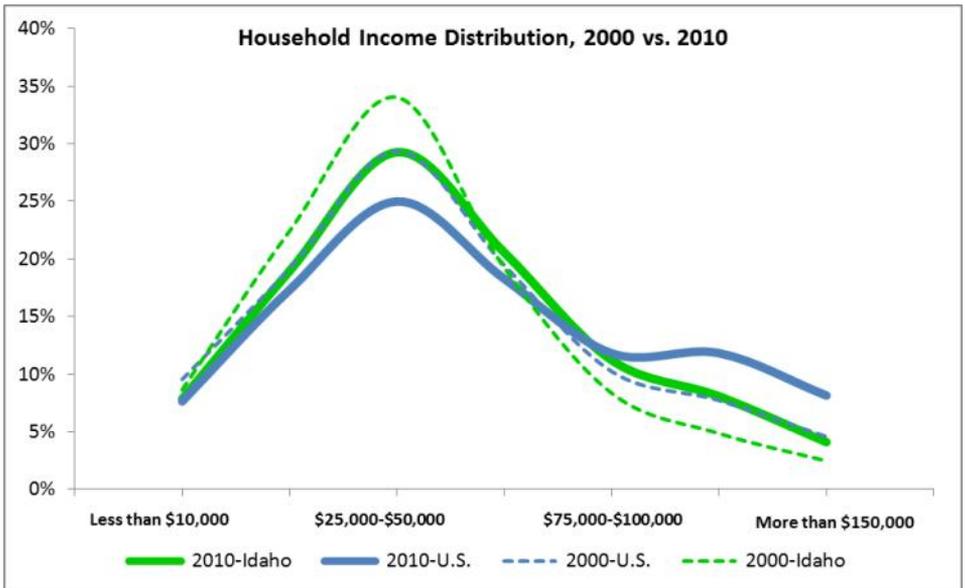
Nationwide, the gap has widened over the past decade. The most notable increase was in the upper class, those who earned \$100,000 or more. In 2000, the upper class represented 12 percent of the population, compared to 20 percent in 2010. A similar phenomenon occurred statewide. In 2000, 7 percent of wage earners comprised the upper portion of households. That number increased to 12 percent of households in 2010.

Proportion of Household Income in Each Income Category				
	2010		2000	
	Idaho	U.S.	Idaho	U.S.
<b>Lower Class</b> (less than \$25,000)	27%	25%	31%	29%
<b>Middle Class</b> (\$25,000-\$99,000)	61%	55%	62%	59%
<b>Upper Class</b> (100,000 or more)	12%	20%	7%	12%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey

Household income makes some counties appear rich and others relatively poor.

Counties in Idaho with the highest median household income are Blaine, Ada and Teton while Madison, Idaho and Owyhee counties struggle to keep a solid economic base. Between 20 percent and 27 percent of households in both Blaine and Ada counties have incomes exceeding \$100,000. At the same time, places like Boundary and Lewis counties only have 4 percent or 5 percent of households with incomes exceeding that amount. The larger retirement communities of Boundary and Lewis counties have fewer wage earners and a higher portion of households claiming income from Social Security and pensions.



Idaho Median Income -- \$46,400			
County	High Median Income	County	Low Median Income
Blaine	61,900	Madison	35,500
Ada	55,800	Idaho	34,500
Teton	53,400	Owyhee	33,400

Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Another contributing factor to the most recent rise in income disparity is the aging of the baby boom population. People between 45 and 65 are in their prime earning years and, most likely, have higher incomes since they have climbed toward the top of their career ladders. This could explain the rise in the upper class as in recent years. As that generation closes in on retirement age, the distribution of income will most likely fall back as retirement holds down incomes.

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### BSU CAREER CENTER CONDUCTS WORKFORCE SKILLS SURVEY

Boise State University is conducting a research project aimed at identifying the skills and competencies needed by Treasure Valley and Southern Idaho employers. Over the next couple of weeks, thousands of Idaho employers will be invited to take a survey where they can offer input on the challenges of hiring employees for new or existing businesses.

The Career Center has partnered with more than 20 organizations in gathering input for this project, including local chambers of commerce, the Department of Labor, school districts and professional associations. Partner organizations also will help with distribution of the survey.

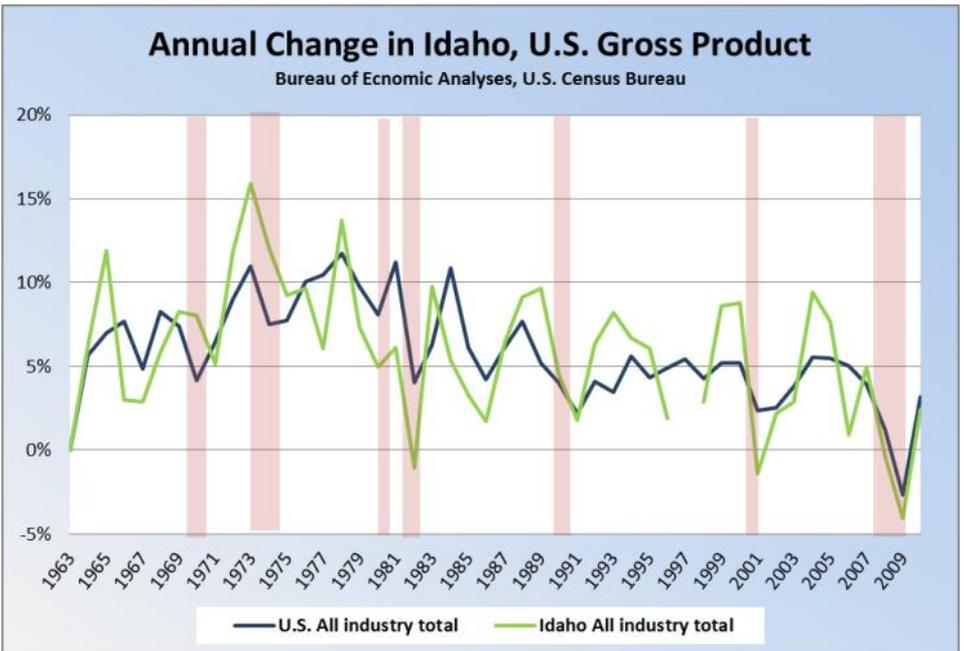
To learn more, contact Kaylor at the Boise State Career Center, (208) 426-4351 or [debbiekaylor@boisestate.edu](mailto:debbiekaylor@boisestate.edu).

## IDAHO'S RECESSION RECOVERY RECORD: SLOW BUT STEADY

As the unemployment rate falls and markets improve, the term “recovery” is coming up more and more. But it has been two and a half years since the National Bureau of Economic Research declared an end to the 2007 recession. That long stretch in an economic trough has prompted many to assess this recession worse than others in recent memory, and by some measures it is.

### GROSS PRODUCT

Gross product is one of the most widely cited statistics on the health of an economy. It is the value of all finished goods and services produced in an area for a given time period, usually a year. The annual data on gross product do not track perfectly with the monthly recession data, but they do show some interesting characteristics.



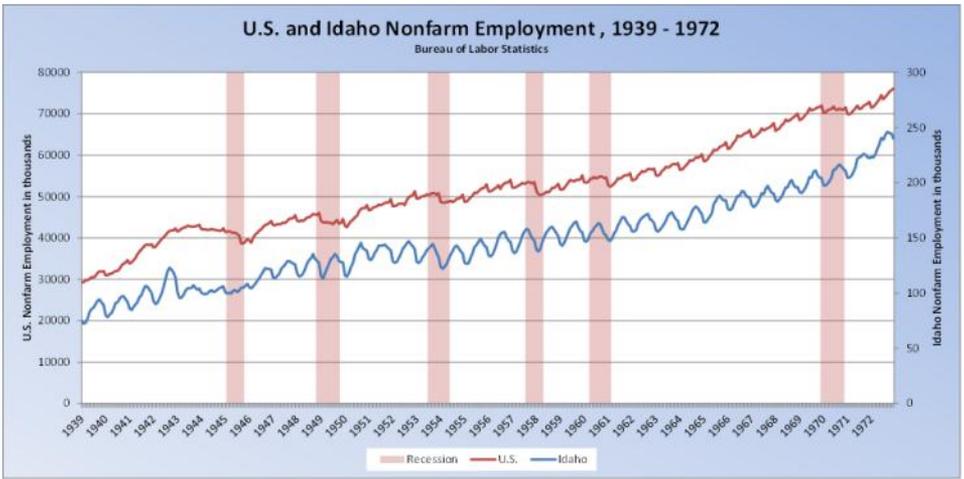
First, the most recent recession is the only recession since 1963 where gross product declined year over year at a national level. It was the most severe decline in gross product for Idaho. What appears as a decline in 1997 is the result of a shift in industry classification systems, not a real decline in output. The 2007 recession is also the longest, lasting 18 months compared to the 16-month recessions in 1973-1975 and 1981-1982.

Looking at Idaho's year-over-year change in per capita gross product shows that both booms and busts affect Idaho more strongly than the nation. While the nation only saw gross product per capita contract in the most recent recession, Idaho also saw year-over-year decreases in 1982 and 2001. On the other hand, Idaho tends to have a more robust recovery after recessions than the nation. This is especially notable after the 1971-1972 recession where Idaho saw three years of plus 10 percent growth in per capita gross product.

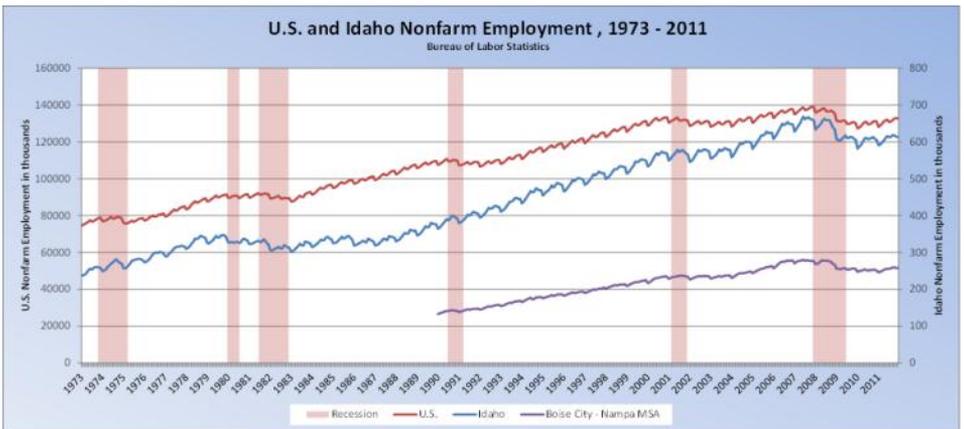
With a 2.4 percent increase in 2010, Idaho's first year into recovery is similar to the recovery year of 2002 which recorded a 2.2 percent change. While not enough to make up for the 4.1 percent loss in 2009 and not nearly as robust as the past recoveries, it is not unprecedented.

## EMPLOYMENT

Employment levels are another measurement of economic health. From 1939 to 1972 – with the exception of the recession in 1953 – Idaho employment at worst went flat, and during some recessions like the one in 1970 Idaho kept growing.



But the recessions of the early 1980s and during the past decade make notable changes to the employment line. With an almost identical shift in Idaho's employment, the early 1980s was a sobering reminder that recovering to prerecession highs can take a long time. Idaho lost 13 percent of its employment from a peak in late 1979 to the bottom in early 1983. Similarly, the state's most recent recession recorded a 13 percent decline from peak to trough. The recessions of early 1980s also took an extended time to recover to the pre-recession employment highs at almost five and half years from the low point.



A comparison of job totals 30 months after the end of each recession shows that Idaho and the Boise metro area are currently slightly below the employment level at the end of the recession in June 2009 and as much as 7 percent below the peak employment levels. The only other decrease 30 months after the end of a recession was the recession of 1980, where the economy went back into recession 12 months after the first recession ended. In all other cases, Idaho improved dramatically over the 30 months after recessions – in most cases showing growth of 10 percent or more from the trough. The average change for Idaho has been 9.2 percent from the trough and 7.6 percent from the peak at 30 months from recession's end. This is no-

### Comparison of Nonfarm Employment 30 Months After a Recession

	U.S.		Idaho		Boise City - Nampa MSA	
	% change from trough*	% change from peak*	% change from trough*	% change from peak*	% change from trough*	% change from peak*
Recession Ending in October 1945	14.0%	6.2%	12.3%	18.3%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in October 1949	11.1%	5.9%	2.1%	1.9%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in May 1954	9.8%	6.0%	12.8%	5.0%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in April 1958**	8.5%	2.7%	8.2%	0.1%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in February 1961	9.2%	5.4%	16.8%	12.0%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in November 1970	8.1%	6.5%	18.6%	23.4%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in March 1975	10.7%	6.6%	21.4%	21.9%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in July 1980***	-2.1%	-2.1%	-7.5%	-7.7%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in November 1982	9.2%	6.9%	7.2%	2.5%	n/a	n/a
Recession Ending in March 1991	3.9%	2.1%	16.2%	15.8%	18.3%	18.3%
Recession Ending in November 2001	0.1%	0.3%	3.6%	5.0%	3.2%	3.9%
Recession Ending in June 2009	1.0%	-4.4%	-0.8%	-6.9%	-0.1%	-6.8%

\* Peaks and troughs as designated by NBER for the U.S.

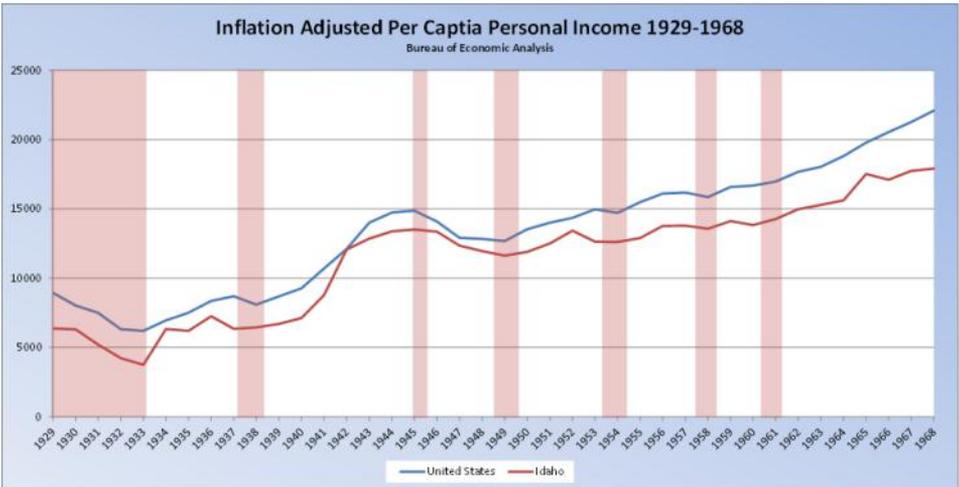
\*\* Comparison month fell into the 1961 recession

\*\*\* Comparison month fell just after the end of the 1982 recession

ably greater than the same figures for the country as a whole, which are 7 percent from trough and 3.5 percent from the peak.

### PERSONAL INCOME

Per capita personal income perhaps reflects the effects of a recession even better.



Both state and national per capita personal income have been adjusted for inflation using Oregon State University's 2010 conversion factors.

In the recoveries from 1929 to 1968, Idaho and the nation had different experiences. Notably, Idaho's personal income jumped up immediately after the Great Depression, almost reaching its prerecession level the first year after the recession was declared over. The nation, however, regained ground only slowly, not reaching its inflation adjusted 1929 level until 1940.

The rapid income growth displayed in the recovery of 1934 unfortunately is not the norm for Idaho. The period after the 1945 recession at the end of World War II shows that recovery of per capita income can take several years. After reaching a peak \$13,500 in 1945, Idaho does not recoup its losses until 1956, 11 years later.

After 1956, per capita personal income started a gradual rise, taking only small one-year dips until the recession in 1974. It took Idaho four years to make up the ground it lost in that downturn only to lose it again during the economic turmoil of the early 1980s. It was not until 1987, 13 years later, that Idaho was able to regain the 1974 levels.

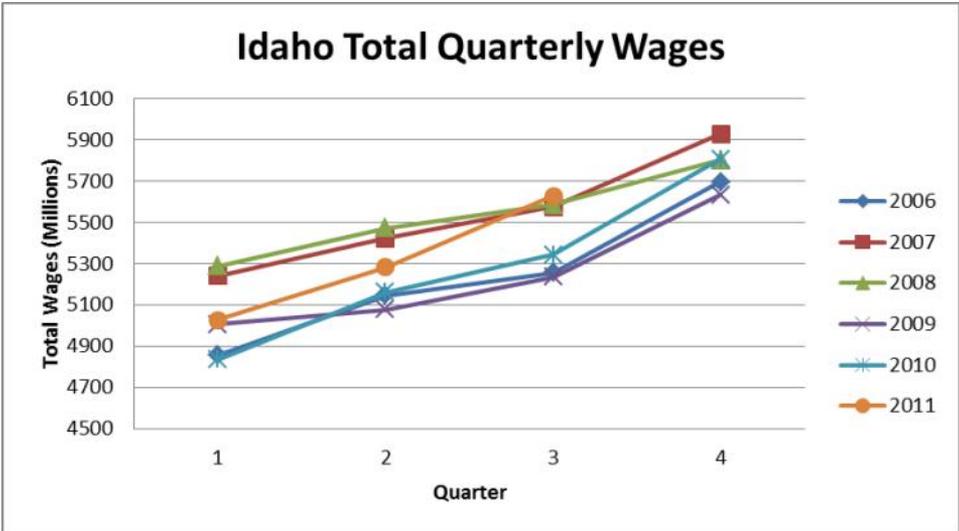
The economic growth the past two decades made short work of the small decreases caused by the recession in 1990 and 2001, but the effect of the current recession still lingers. Idaho's 2010 per capita income was \$2,300 off its 2007 peak of \$34,200. But 2010 did show modest growth over 2009.

While this recession is fresh in minds and its effects on Idaho's economy still linger, it is not the first time a recovery has taken a while. All three measures have shown similarly slow recoveries in the past; 2001 for GDP, the 1980s for employment, post-World War II and the mid-1970s for personal income. But these comparable past recoveries are the exception, not the norm when looking at Idaho's past.

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### IDAHO WAGES EXCEED PRE-RECESSION LEVELS

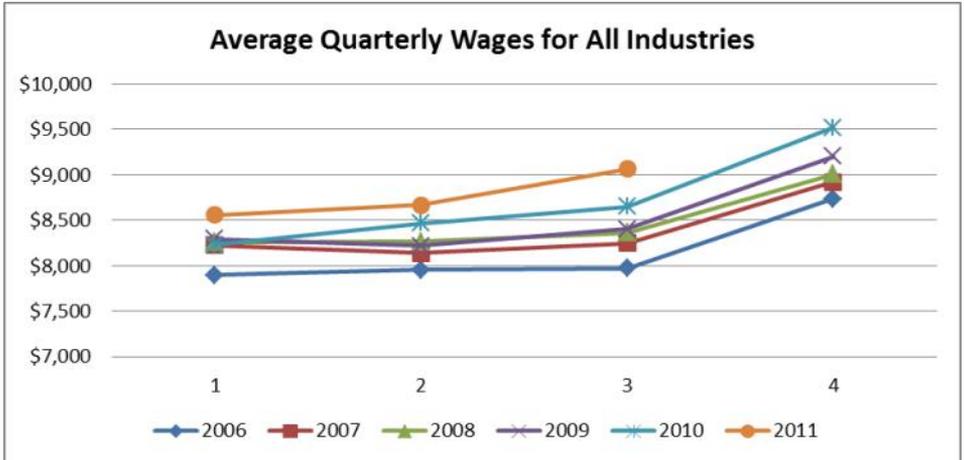
Idaho total wages hit a new high in the third quarter of 2011. Preliminary figures from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages show that covered wages paid in Idaho in the third quarter totaled over \$5.6 billion – the highest third quarter level ever recorded. This was a 5.3 percent increase from third quarter 2010 and a 0.7 percent increase over the previous third quarter record in 2008.



Total covered wages have historically followed a pervasive pattern of steady growth, but this pattern was broken in 2009 when total wage levels plunged below 2006 levels. Since then, total wages have resumed their upward climb. But third quarter 2011 marks the first quarter in which total wages paid exceeded prerecession levels. While there is usually a seasonal increase in total wages between the second and third quarters, third quarter 2011 saw a 6.5 percent over-the-quarter gain, which is the greatest second-to-third quarter change since 2005 as the expansion got under way.

Total wages alone do not tell the whole story since total employment has fluctuated since 2006. But average quarterly wages – total wages divided by average total employment for the quarter – bear out the fact that wages are rising again. Average quarterly wages have risen steadily since before the recession, except for two years of stagnation in 2008 and 2009. Average quarterly wages began to climb again in 2010, and preliminary figures from 2011

suggest an even steeper increase in average quarterly wages than in the previous year, suggesting that workers might be making more money each quarter due to overtime work as well as raises and bonuses, which were held back during the toughest years of the recession. The rise in average quarterly wages could be expected to flatten out as the economic outlook improves and hiring increases, reducing the need for overtime and adding lower-paid new workers to the workforce.



Taken together, the changing patterns in total wages and average quarterly wages seen in Idaho in the third quarter of 2011 seem to be a harbinger of overall growth and better things to come.

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## IDAHO'S "E-TAILERS" SHOW STRONG GROWTH DESPITE DOWN ECONOMY

Idaho's retail trade employment grew 1 percent between 2000 and 2010. At the same time employment in the electronic shopping and mail-order house portion of retail increased 122 percent. This "e-tailer" type of business has become a high-growth piece of Idaho's retail industry.

Back in 1888, Richard Sears printed his first mailer, advertising watches and jewelry. Soon after, the postal system adopted the rate of 1 cent per pound for printed mail order catalogs. Any customer spending over \$10 wouldn't have to pay the 25 cent price of the catalog. The Sears, Roebuck and Co. catalog continued to expand providing thousands of rural settlers access to products without traveling to big cities. (Source: <http://www.searsarchives.com/catalogs/history.htm>.)

Fast forward to 2012. Millions of consumers would not dream of shopping without going online to price check, compare and review everyday items. These online catalogs have transformed the way brick and mortar retailers do business. Many customers will never set foot in a store, choosing to have items shipped directly to their doorstep. Those who do set foot in store might scan bar codes with their cell phone to make sure they're getting rock bottom prices. Many states – including Idaho – have increasing concern about lost tax revenue from consumers buying products online without paying appropriate sales and use taxes.

One thing is for sure – the e-tail industry has grown as technology and Internet access has transformed the way we live and shop.

Rapid e-tailer growth has occurred across all measures tracked by the Department of Labor – employment, employer count and wages. The industry posted over 1,300 Idaho jobs in 2010 – roughly 2 percent of all retail trade jobs. Although the number probably understates the actual count considering many traditional retailers have a portion of their staff devoted to online sales. The fact remains the industry has grown significantly even while retail trade as a whole experienced decline during the recent recession.

Employment, employer counts and total wages at e-tailers increased statewide between 11 percent and 12 percent from 2007 to 2010. Retail trade industry employer counts declined 4 percent over the same period while employment and total wages each fell 10 percent. Longer term comparisons show meaningfully higher growth rates for e-tailers – up to 288 percent increase in the number of employers compared to 3 percent for retail trade as a whole and 20 percent for all industries. It’s important to note there was a 224 percent increase in e-tailer wages while employment increased 122 percent.

Annual Comparison	Employment		Employers		Total Wages	
	2007-2010	2000-2010	2007-2010	2000-2010	2007-2010	2000-2010
<b>E-tailers</b>	11%	122%	12%	288%	12%	224%
<b>All Retail Trade</b>	-10%	1%	-4%	3%	-10%	22%
<b>All Industries</b>	-8%	8%	-3%	20%	-5%	36%

The most recent data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages shows e-tailers outperforming other retail trade and all industries by all measures. Employment growth between the third quarter of 2010 and the same quarter in 2011 was positive for all industries but only increased 0.6 percent. E-tailer employment grew 1.2 percent - doubling the rate of growth for all industries. Retail trade employment only grew by 0.3 percent.

Between the third quarter of 2010 and 2011, Idaho employer counts for all industries fell by almost 1 percent while retail trade fell 1.6 percent. But employer counts for e-tailers grew 10.5 percent. E-tailer total wages increased by over 12 percent while retail trade increased by 5 percent with all industries increasing 5.5 percent.

3rd Quarter Comparison	Employment		Employers		Total Wages	
	2007-2010	2010-2011	2007-2010	2010-2011	2007-2010	2010-2011
<b>E-tailers</b>	10.2%	1.2%	18.1%	10.5%	12.2%	12.1%
<b>All Retail Trade</b>	-9.5%	0.3%	-5.4%	-1.6%	-3.5%	5.0%
<b>All Industries</b>	-8.0%	0.6%	-4.2%	-0.9%	1.1%	5.5%

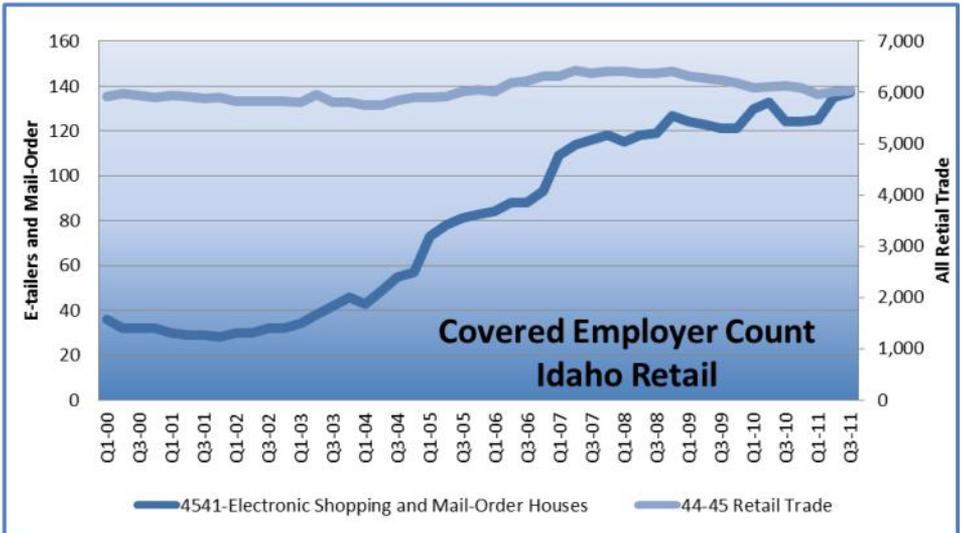
Retail trade employment is well distributed throughout the state. Location quotients do reveal slightly elevated concentrations in the northern region and the lowest concentration in the southeastern portion of the state. E-tail

trade employment is significantly more concentrated up north. Northern Idaho and southwestern Idaho make up over 93 percent of state e-tail employment, which totaled over 1,300 and more than 75,600 for all retail trade in 2010.

Location Quotient - 2010		
Region	Retail Trade	E-tail Trade
Northern	1.26	4.54
Southwestern	0.96	0.82
Eastern	1.00	0.17
North Central	0.97	0.15
South Central	0.97	0.15
Southeastern	0.95	0.11

Pressure for retailers to maintain an online presence is intensifying as customers become increasingly price sensitive. Penny pinching was once filled with high transaction costs that have now been greatly reduced or eliminated through the use of technology. As the trend continues, look for increasing numbers of Idaho businesses adapting to the e-tailer business model.

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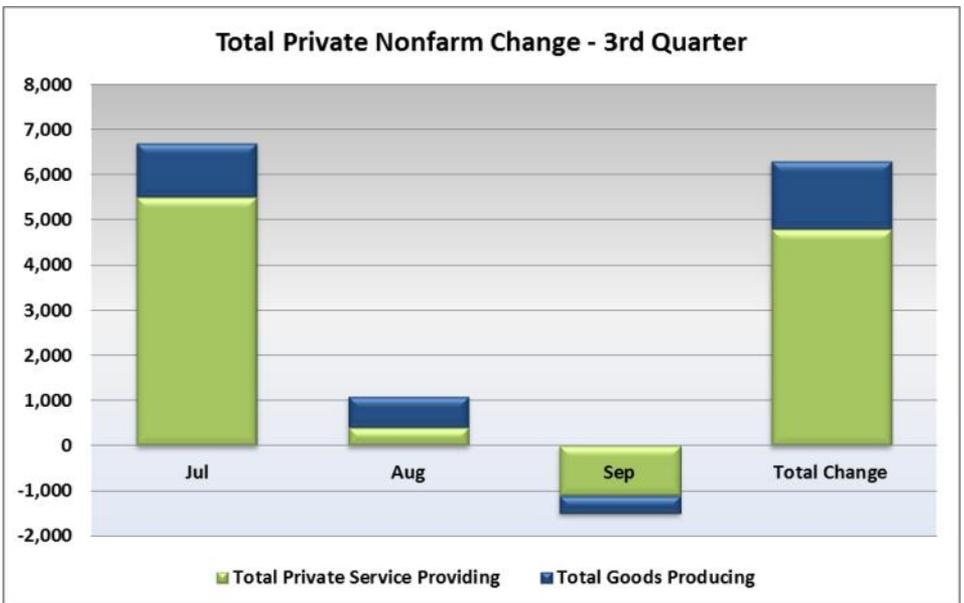
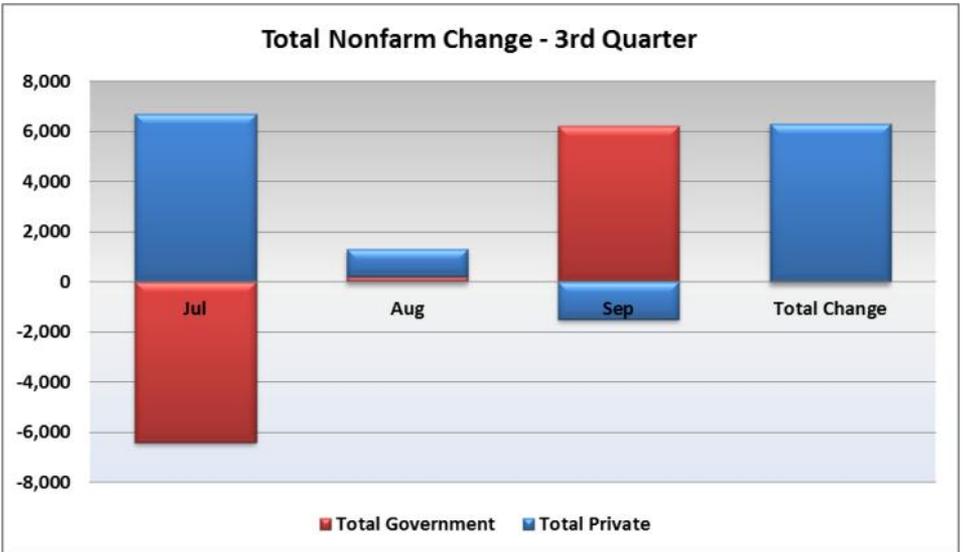


## IDAHO JOB GROWTH HEATS UP IN THE THIRD QUARTER

Idaho’s nonfarm employment experienced stronger-than-anticipated growth in the third quarter of 2011, updated figures from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages show. Gains came primarily in private services and stand to make the annual average of 2011 finish above 2010 for the first time since 2008.

For only the second time in a quarter century, employers added jobs from June to July – about 300. The only other time since 1977 that jobs did not decline in July was 1993. That robust July helped propel the rest of the quarter with August growing at 0.2 percent and September at 0.8 percent. This uptick in economic activity pushed nonfarm jobs in 2011 to 0.6 percent above July and August 2010 and 1 percent higher than September 2010.

The largest share of change in the third quarter comes from the private service sector which generated 4,800 new jobs, or three of every four jobs created during the quarter – not surprising since 81 percent of all Idaho nonfarm jobs are in services. The goods producing sectors – construction, mining and logging and manufacturing – accounted for the other 1,500 jobs. While public education employment, the largest share of government employment,



fluctuated through the summer, the net effect was no change in job totals so the entire 6,300 jobs gained from June to September came from private industry.

Gains in the private service sector were centralized in six of Idaho industries – wholesale trade, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, education, health services and leisure and hospitality.

Retail trade had the largest gain, adding 1,200 jobs over the course of the third quarter for its best year since 2007. Jobs totaled 76,100 in August, 3,200, or 4 percent, more than at the start of the year.

Wholesale trade added 400 jobs in July. Even though it held steady for the rest of the third quarter, it has maintained a healthy pace above the 2010 level. From January to June, it had a year-to-year gain of 1.2 percent and 1.5 percent in July.

Transportation demonstrated a very robust, if seasonal, 2.9 percent increase in August and a 1 percent increase in September. Trucking was mainly responsible, showing a welcome third quarter gain on the heels of a second quarter decline deeper than normal.

Private education services opened the school year in September with 200 more jobs than it ended the previous school year in the spring although that only matched the total for September 2010.

Health care fell in July by 0.7 percent but came back with 0.3 percent growth in August and 0.5 percent growth in September. This sector has grown at a consistent, reliable pace over the past 22 years, but growth in 2011 was more muted than in the past. Year-over-year growth was down over two full percentage points from the average of 4.3 percent for the previous five years. July and August came in at just 1.9 percent. Dips in nursing, residential care and social assistance accounted for the sector's weaker performance overall. Social assistance suffered its deepest decline in the third quarter since 1992.

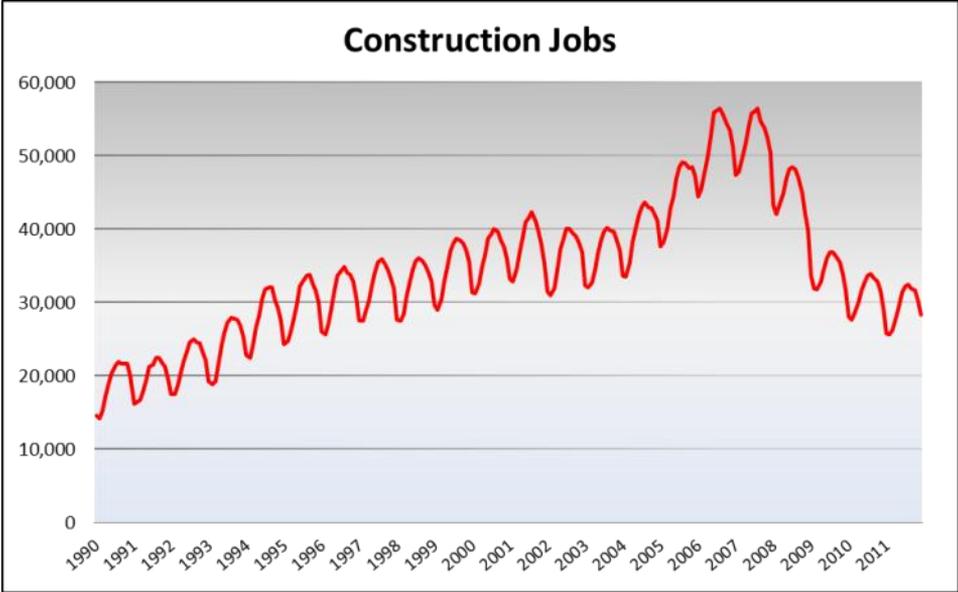
Leisure and hospitality had its best performance since the downturn began with a year-over-year job gain of 2.7 percent in July and 1.4 percent in August. The normal seasonal decline of 3.2 percent in September left the sector with a 2.8 percent quarterly gain over 2010 going into the fourth quarter.

Despite professional and business services adding just 100 jobs over the quarter, the increase year-over-year in July was 1.3 percent and 1.7 percent in September.

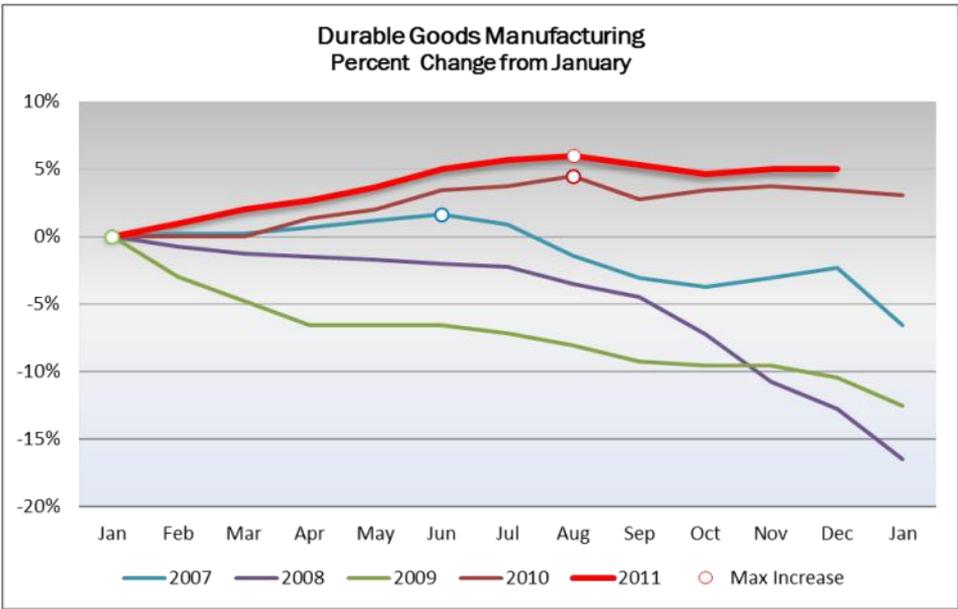
Financial, insurance and information services did not post growth during the quarter.

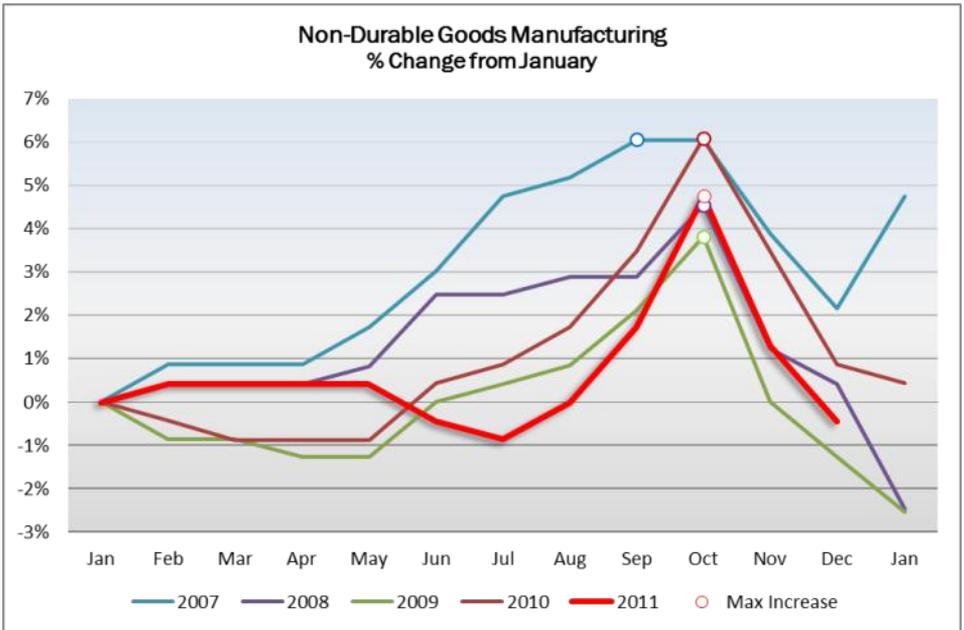
Goods production contributed 1,500 of the quarter's new jobs. Construction, buoyed by a strong second quarter, continued to perform its healthiest pace in four years, growing 2.5 percent in July and another 0.9 percent in August to hit a seasonal peak of 32,200 jobs before beginning the seasonal slowdown in September, dropping 1.8 percent. Construction is steadily, if slowly, moving ever closer to the point where current month jobs will exceed the same month a year earlier. The third quarter ended with the year-to-year deficit at 4.5 percent, the smallest gap since 2007. Nationally, 2011 was one of the worst years on record for the single-family housing market, according to IHS Global Insight. Annual new home sales have been the lowest on record

for the past five quarters. Construction jobs in 2011 matched the level of 1995, and it will be many years before they recover to the prerecession level.



Manufacturing showed mild gains through mixed results. The decline in durable goods manufacturing that began in 2007 finally began to turn the corner with slight monthly gains in 2010. Even though the annual average for 2010 finished 3.9 percent below 2009’s annual average, 2011 has continued the positive trend of steady, month-to-month incremental growth and could propel 2012 to job levels finally exceeding those of the previous year. The three months from July to September pushed over-the-year gains to 5.7 percent, despite the reduction of 100 jobs during this time. Nondurable goods manufacturing posted seasonal growth after an uncharacteristic decline in July with the closure of XL Four Star Beef in Nampa. That left year-over-year jobs 1.3 percent below the third quarter 2010.





Logging and mining recorded a moderate increase over 2010. Consistent gains in mining were partially offset by losses in logging.

Because of third quarter job performance and national gross domestic product growth in the fourth quarter, Idaho should continue to see the upward trend continue into the fourth quarter. Still, there remains a great deal of uncertainty in the economy, and European debt and currency issues are at the forefront, and any external event strong enough to affect the United States will certainly impact Idaho. But the third quarter of 2011 has shown the most positive economic result Idaho has seen since the economy fell with the financial meltdown in 2007 and 2008. It is the first indication of relief in a long time.

*The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages is a research program that collects data through the Idaho’s Unemployment Insurance program. It is federally administered and funded but operated by the individual states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rica and the U.S. Virgin Islands, which ensure specific business and employee information remain confidential. In Idaho, this program captures data on over 90 percent of the state’s total employment.*

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## **SCHWEITZER ENGINEERING LABORATORIES OPENS IDAHO PLANT**

Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories began production at its \$10 million plant in Lewiston on Jan. 30 with about 60 workers in the 106,000-square-foot building. The plant makes data cables, fiber optic cables and plastic parts used in digital relays. When it also begins assembling relays in late March, its employment will rise to 160.

The plant overlooking the Snake River is the first tenant of the Port of Lewiston’s new business and technology park. In partnership with Lewiston’s urban renewal agency, the port helped develop infrastructure such as roads and utilities in its 45-acre park, providing a ready-to-build site for Schweitzer. About 18 acres of port-owned land remains available for development.

## **PRODUCTS AND CUSTOMERS**

Schweitzer, an employee-owned business, makes products and offers complete solutions that minimize blackouts and electrical system damage. Its mission is to invent, design, manufacture and distribute complete solutions that make electric power safer, more reliable and more economical. Products range from a credit card-sized communications-encryption device to help guard against cyber attacks to a self-contained modular control house the size of a railroad freight car. As well as serving electric utilities, Schweitzer serves mines, refineries, industrial plants, universities, hospitals, municipalities, military installations, airports and large commercial operations.

In 1982, Pullman resident Ed Schweitzer invented the world's first micro-processor-based protective relay, revolutionizing the power protection industry. The relays can pinpoint a problem's location, eliminating the need for an expensive helicopter to travel hundreds of miles along a power line. Relays remain the company's top seller, but it is constantly expanding its line of products and services. It has invented and makes dozens of products that protect, monitor, control and communicate with electric power systems, generators, motors, transformers and related apparatus. Schweitzer also is a recognized leader in the design and manufacture of control houses, panels and fault indicators. Through SEL University, the company provides engineering services and serves the advanced training needs of industry professionals.

The strong emphasis on quality has encouraged the company to pursue a policy of vertical integration, making more and more of its inputs. Schweitzer, as president and founder, told an audience of economic developers last September, "We manufacture our products. Unlike our competitors, who just assemble parts."

The company's competitive edge comes from how it treats its customers, Schweitzer told economic developers last fall. From the beginning, the company has followed a strategy of keeping prices low.

"We're always looking at efficiencies and sharing them with customers," Schweitzer said. "That makes us more efficient and competitive throughout the world." Through interactions with customers, the company discovers unmet needs in the market and then develops solutions.

Schweitzer covers all its products with a 10-year warranty but in practice stands behind them indefinitely.

"In 27 years in business, we've never charged a customer for repair or replacement of anything we've made," Schweitzer said.

The company repairs parts for free even when the customer caused the problem. That makes it even more important that products be made correctly, and it keeps customers coming back. Reliability is important because Schweitzer's products are protecting equipment that costs tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars and thousands of people may rely on the electricity produced. The company uses the information it gains from repairs to provide its research and development division with further insight into product features and customer needs.

## **IMPRESSIVE GROWTH**

Quality products, outstanding customer service and constant development of new products have fostered impressive growth. The company also benefits

from pent-up demand for products and services to support the wind and solar energy industries. Employment has grown from 1,000 in 2000 to 3,400 today.

Schweitzer's expansion also has been fueled by international sales. Today, about 40 percent of its revenues come from outside the United States. Every day, the company ships to about 30 different countries, and products reach 140 countries in all. In addition to its 47 U.S. offices, there are 36 engineering and support offices around the world to provide prompt service to its international customers.

The company became the largest private sector employer in the nine-county region of north central Idaho and southeastern Washington in the middle of 2011 when its employment in Pullman surpassed Clearwater Paper's. Clearwater Paper employed 1,650 people at that time. With the sale of its 250-employee lumber mill and the opening of Schweitzer's Lewiston plant and continued expansion in Pullman, that difference has increased.

At the same time it started production in Lewiston, the company opened its Solution Delivery Center in Pullman. Large classrooms on its main level allow customers to learn about and test products before shipment, while engineers conduct research and development on the other two floors. It is the 11th building at Schweitzer's Pullman headquarters, where about 1,800 people work. The company also expanded its San Luis Potosi manufacturing plant in Mexico in the last few months, increasing its employment from 400 to 500.

Ed Schweitzer expects company employment worldwide to double in the next 10 years.

### **SCHWEITZER IN LEWISTON**

Before choosing Idaho for its new plant, the company examined a number of potential locations in several states and countries. Ed Schweitzer said the decision to build in Lewiston came after looking at the company demographics. About 140 employees commuted from the Lewis-Clark Valley to Pullman when the decision was made in 2010. By last fall, about 200 people were making the 70-mile round trip.

The Lewiston site has the potential for many more jobs. The new plant would be able to house up to 500 people working in two shifts. There also is room next door for another building of similar size.

### **ONE OF THE "BEST COMPANIES TO WORK FOR"**

Schweitzer landed on the list of the 100 Best Companies to Work For in the February issue of Fortune magazine. Two-thirds of the scoring depended on a survey of all the employees. Ed Schweitzer calls it an honor.

"It is meaningful because of the input from our employee owners," he said. "Their feedback speaks volumes for their pride in who we are and our values as an organization."

The other third of the score came from a corporate culture audit that looked at pay and benefits, hiring practices, internal communications, training, recognition programs and diversity.

Fortune noted the company has never had a layoff, provides an \$80 a month education benefit and caters a lunch for all employees every Friday. In addition, Schweitzer allows each employee to direct \$100 of company money every year to a school of his or her choice.

It started the process of becoming an employee-owned company in 1994 and made the full transition to 100 percent employee ownership in 2009. That provides additional security for employees, as well as keeping them interested in improving efficiency and increasing profitability.

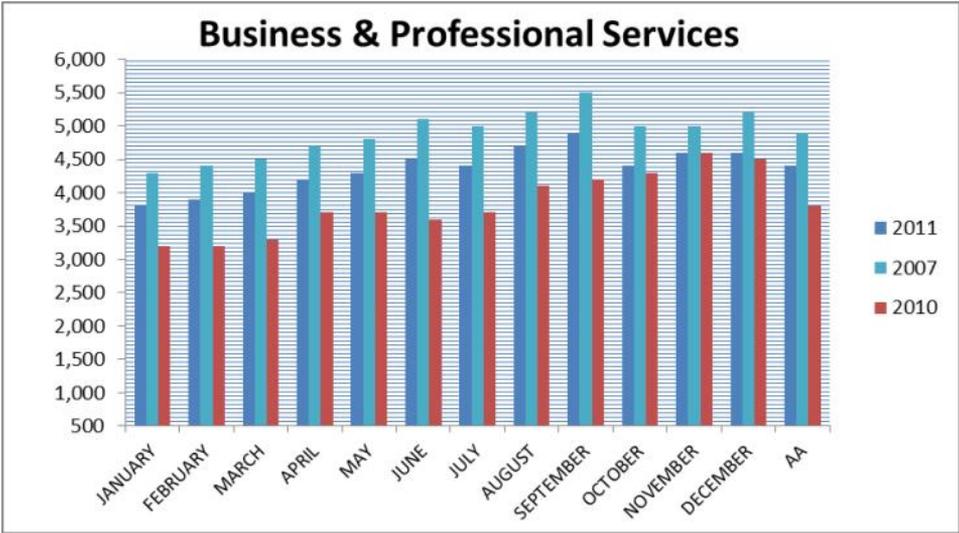
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**TWIN FALLS – JEROME NONFARM JOBS TURN AROUND IN 2011**

Nonfarm jobs increased 1.3 percent during 2011 in the Twin Falls area that covers Twin Falls and Jerome counties. It is another subtle sign that the region is beginning to recover from the recession, which ended 2½ years ago. Job totals fell 4.5 percent in 2009 from 2008 and 2 percent from 2009 to 2010.

**THE LEADERS**

Professional and business services led the way. This sector that includes staffing agencies and call centers posted a 15.8 percent boost in jobs year over year. This sector is somewhat volatile. Call center employment can yoyo as the centers lose and gain contracts. The regional staffing agencies are generally focused on blue-collar jobs. They take on temporary construction jobs during warmer months and factory jobs when businesses are not yet ready to absorb the risk of expanding their own payrolls in an uncertain economic future, so much of this sector’s recent growth may not translate into permanent jobs.



Health services continued to grow, increasing 4 percent from 2009 to 2011. Health care in particular experienced a rash of expansion not only regionally but also statewide and nationally. Two new hospitals opened and a merger involving a third established new norms for the sector. Twin Falls is seeing increased construction of new medical office buildings as it strives to meet the medical needs of a growing region. Social assistance and nursing and residential care facilities have experienced fairly stable employment although cuts in government Medicaid spending will impact all institutions at some point. Some individuals may no longer have Medicaid-subsidized in-home care, which could move them into a residential care facility, which may see a greater percentage of impoverished patients in a rising resident popula-

tion. That actually could cost more in the long run since in-home care is a less expensive option to nursing homes.

Private education, on the other hand, saw jobs decline 0.4 percent from 2009 to 2011.

**THE UNDERDOGS**

The industry that has taken the biggest beating through the recession continues to be construction. In Twin Falls and Jerome, construction is down 12.7 percent year over year. March posted a 20 percent decline from March 2010, and November was off 17.6 percent from the previous year. The latest decline continues the downward trend since construction peaked in 2007. This sector had provided paychecks that enabled families to take advantage of what Idaho has to offer. It provided on-the-job training for high school graduates and dropouts alike as they entered the workforce. And during the summer, it provided jobs for teachers and students. From 2007 to 2011 south central Idaho saw construction jobs fall by a little over 40 percent while southwestern and northern Idaho posted declines of more than 45 percent. The urban metro areas retained jobs slightly better than the rural areas.

Construction Industry	2007	2011	% change
Nation	7,627,000	5,504,000	-27.8%
State	53,254	30,065	-43.5%
Coeur d'Alene Metro	5,900	3,400	-42.4%
Lewiston Metro	1,400	900	-35.7%
Boise Metro	23,600	13,500	-42.8%
Twin Falls MSA	6,371	3,567	-44.0%
Pocatello Metro	2,100	1,800	-14.3%
Idaho Falls Metro	4,800	3,000	-37.5%

Food manufacturing saw an 11.5 percent increase in jobs during the recession while other manufacturing lost almost a quarter of its jobs. The recession and the addition of homemakers to the workforce increased pressure on households to shorten the time for meal preparation, boosting demand for prepared foods, at the same time the export market was expanding, especially for dairy products in the Pacific Rim.

Government has been relatively stable regionally through the recession. Local government has to keep pace with the population, experiencing 2.2 percent growth since the recession to mirror annual growth over the past 10 years in Jerome and Twin Falls counties.

See comparison charts by industry on pages 41-42.

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**YOUNG EINSTEIN BUILDS YOUTH INTEREST IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CAREERS**

As Idaho looks to the future, it needs to develop a larger labor pool of workers with scientific and technical skills. To that end, the Idaho Department of Labor has partnered with other organizations on the Young Einstein program.

Young Einstein was developed in 2008 in cooperation with Partners for Prosperity and Idaho State University’s Energy Systems Technology Education

Center. Young Einstein works with a broad range of students in the 16-county region of eastern Idaho. Despite being less than four years old, about 5,000 students from kindergarten to high school have become involved in the program that focuses on grade school-age children.

The program often offers young students their first exposure to the science of energy production. Department of Labor projections show energy will be a growing and important industry in eastern Idaho in the coming years, and the region could lack enough technically trained workers to meet its demands.

“It’s never too early to start exposing students to the exciting career possibilities in the energy field,” Kandi Rudd, manager of Labor’s Pocatello office, said. “Energy will be an important sector moving forward, and we need to ensure that we have a trained workforce available to meet the growing demands.”

At Tendoy Elementary School in Pocatello, grade school children received an opportunity to participate in the Young Einstein program this winter. Students and their teachers get a curriculum and science experiments while parents, who also have a major role, are provided a curriculum and tools they can use at home to encourage an interest in science. The learning materials are designed to stimulate an interest to learn more about science, eventually resulting in a greater number of scientifically and technically trained workers in eastern Idaho.

Early this month staff from the department, Partners for Prosperity and the university’s Energy Systems Technology Education Center put on a special parents and students night at Tendoy Elementary, where they learned about why inventors and scientists are important to Idaho’s future. Children and parents got a chance to participate in special science experiments.

“The program lets our kids know what high-tech careers are possible, and that science can be fun,” Tendoy Elementary School Principal Janice Nelson said.

Young Einstein is an example of how the Department of Labor is working with local agencies and groups to address not just the workforce needs of the future but is also working to enhance the educational experience of Idaho’s children.

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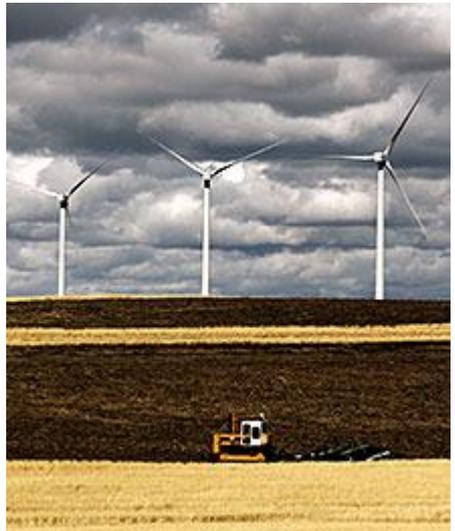
## **WIND FARMS ON THE PALOUSE BENEFIT NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO**

As the regional hub of southeastern Washington and north central Idaho, the Lewiston metropolitan area is benefiting from wind farms. Wind farms have been built or are being built in Garfield, Columbia and Whitman counties – three of the four southeastern Washington counties tied most closely to north central Idaho. The increased income they generate boosts spending at retail stores, building material suppliers and service providers. Latah County also is seeing increased spending as a result of wind farm construction in neighboring Whitman County. Also, some of the construction workers come from the Lewiston and Moscow areas.

Garfield County’s economy is improving because of work on the 343-megawatt Lower Snake River project started in 2010. Touching the borders of

Washington and Idaho, the county of 2,226 residents has benefited from the 150 temporary jobs on the 149 wind towers under construction west of Pomeroy. Future plans by Puget Sound Energy could lead to construction of a total of 795 wind towers – 440 in Garfield County and 355 in Columbia County – with a generating capacity of 1,437 megawatts. That would be nearly twice the size of the largest wind farm in the world today. Phase I is expected to begin operation this year. After construction, the first phase should employ up to 25 people permanently. The second and third phases have received permits, but no start dates have been announced. When the third phase becomes operational, permanent employment will rise to about 75, which would have a significant impact on the labor forces of Garfield County at 780 and Columbia County at 1,260,

Economic activity in Columbia County picked up last year because of the Lower Snake River Wind project construction near Dayton. The Dayton area already has two operating farms. Hopkins Ridge had 87 towers with generating capacity of 150 megawatts when it began operations in 2005. Marengo’s two phases totaled 117 towers with capacity of 210 megawatts and began operation in 2007 and 2008. Together, they employ about 40 people. The economic improvement contrasts strongly with the county’s employment decline over the prior 10 years as asparagus and other vegetable processing plants closed.



Hopkins Ridge Wind Farm near Dayton. Photo courtesy of Puget Sound Energy.

After construction is completed, wind projects have economic impact through the lease of land that the turbines occupy, the increase in property taxes, the permanent employees hired to maintain and operate the farms and the demand for services such as office space, cleaning, office supplies, vehicle maintenance and repair, and hotel accommodations and restaurant services for corporate staff and others visiting the sites. Some wind farms also attract tourists wanting to see the 220-foot towers that rise another 130 feet because of the blades. The Dayton Chamber of Commerce has begun marketing the area’s wind and alternative energy projects. Puget Sound Energy operates free tours of the Hopkins Ridge project and partners with the Weinhard Hotel in Dayton to market a wine and wind tour for hotel guests.

### **PALOUSE WIND**

The most impact on Idaho comes from the Palouse Wind project in Whitman County. The project is ahead of schedule because a mild winter allowed work to continue on the substation, turbine pads and roads. About 20 people worked during the winter on the site 36 miles north of Pullman where Boston-based First Wind is building 65 towers. Starting this spring, the Palouse Wind project will employ between 150 and 200 construction workers. First Wind estimates the total cost at \$170 million. The project is expected to become operational in October. It will employ eight permanently. Under a 30-year

contract with Avista, the wind farm will deliver an average of 40 megawatts – up to 100 megawatts during peak generation – to homes and businesses.

The small town of Oakesdale, three miles from the site, and neighboring communities expect to see an uptick in economic activity as construction workers frequent their businesses. Some of the increased spending will go to Pullman and Moscow, the retail and entertainment centers for the area. In addition, Whitman County, especially Oakesdale, will benefit from the increased property tax collections after agricultural land is converted to industrial use and the income from the 30-year lease agreements First Wind has signed with 30 different landowners for 9,000 acres. Expansion of the project later is unlikely because of the site's unique characteristics.

### **PROSPECTS FOR WIND POWER**

Several factors make the Palouse attractive to wind prospectors. Topography, location of the jet stream and frequency of cold fronts make it a good place to find the strong, reliable winds required for electricity generation. The rolling hills provide visible evidence that the wind there is strong and steady. Proximity to regional transmission lines and compatible land uses also make the Palouse attractive. Avista, the electric utility serving most of eastern Washington and northern Idaho, recently upgraded its power line, creating excess capacity. Washington state's renewable portfolio standard, which mandates that utilities supply 15 percent of their energy from renewable sources by 2020, provides further incentives.



The Palouse near Oakesdale, Wash. *Photo: McGregor Agronomy.*

After identifying suitable sites, wind prospectors install meteorological towers to collect data about wind speed, direction, temperature and pressure. After a year or more of data collection, they can determine if the site would generate enough revenue to justify costs over the 20- to 30-year life of a project. It costs about \$1 million to install a megawatt of generating capacity.

Even on the Palouse, some sites that look likely do not pay off. In 2007, Iberdrola Resources began investigating wind resources in the Colton area. It announced in November that the wind did not blow often or hard enough to justify the investment. The company is still considering other sites in Whitman County.

2012 is expected to be a banner year for wind power nationwide. The federal production tax credit, which has provided incentives for wind farm operators to produce power since 1992, expires at the end of 2012. Many experts believe that Congress, which has extended the credit in the past, will let it expire this time. The looming deadline is one reason for the flurry of projects this year as companies accelerated decisions to ensure getting the credit.

Another factor slowing expansion of wind power is low natural gas prices, which make it tough for wind to compete.

**TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING**

Hundreds of wind turbines in the Columbia River Gorge have caused an unusual problem for utilities in the Pacific Northwest. Sometimes there is too much electricity for the grid to soak up. In June 2010, for example, a violent storm caused a simultaneous surge in wind power and in traditional hydro-power, creating an oversupply that threatened to overwhelm the grid and cause a blackout. The transmission network had so much power that the Bonneville Power Administration, the wholesale provider of electricity that manages much of the electrical transmission in the Northwest, turned off all its fossil fuel generation, gave electricity away to neighboring networks and required the system’s only nuclear plant to slash its production by 78 percent. After that, whenever excess power threatened the grid, the agency ordered wind turbines to shut down. But several wind operators appealed to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and in December the commission ruled in their favor, saying the Bonneville Power Administration must come up with new rules that do not discriminate against the wind generators.

The Bonneville Power Administration offered a compromise in early February. It proposed paying half the losses incurred by wind power producers when they are forced to shut down because the grid is overwhelmed. Wind power generators said the proposal did not cover enough of their losses.

With more wind farms coming on line, Bonneville started a pilot project last year to recruit consumers willing to draw in excess electricity when that happens, storing it in a basement water heater or a space heater outfitted by the utility. When excess supply threatens the grid, an operator in a control room hundreds of miles away now raises the thermostat on a volunteer’s water heater by 60 degrees and the extra heat is stored in devices that act like thermal batteries, capable of giving back the energy when it is needed. Room and water temperatures in the home scarcely change. Portland General Electric is beginning a similar program paid for by the federal Energy Department.

Recently, Bonneville surpassed 3,000 megawatts of wind-generated energy on its transmission grid, and the power provider expects to have between 5,000 and 6,000 megawatts connected to it by 2013, far more than past estimates.

The agency has received several requests for new energy transmission lines to connect new wind farms in Washington to its grid. It is in the process of reinforcing the transmission system to handle all kinds of energy.

**WIND POWER CAPACITY INSTALLED IN WASHINGTON**

Year	Amount	Year	Amount
2000	0	2006	818
2001	180	2007	1,163
2002	228	2008	1,375
2003	244	2009	1,849
2004	241	2010	2,104
2005	390		

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## TECHHELP MAKING ADVANCED MANUFACTURING MORE COMPETITIVE IN IDAHO

TechHelp is not a household word, but it is playing an important role in supporting Idaho's manufacturing firms.

Launched in 1996 as a partnership between Boise State University, the University of Idaho and Idaho State University, TechHelp's mission is to be a catalyst for strengthening Idaho manufacturing sector and accelerating its transformation into a more efficient and powerful engine of innovation driving economic growth and job creation. TechHelp provides technical and professional assistance, training and information to Idaho manufacturers, processors and inventors to strengthen their global competitiveness through product and process improvements. The organization offers advanced manufacturing services that help Idaho companies increase both their profitability and global competitiveness.

TechHelp's Services Include:

- Product development and planning
- Lean manufacturing
- Government contracting
- Six Sigma
- Stage Gate product development
- Marketing assistance
- ISO 9000

A 2007 study demonstrated TechHelp's important positive economic impact – \$65.6 million. Of that \$41.6 million could be linked to the 724 new jobs TechHelp worked to create. Another \$13.3 million was tied to plant and equipment modernization, and \$10.6 million came in higher net profits for the companies working with the group.

In eastern Idaho, the Idaho Department of Labor's business services team has been working to connect local manufacturers to the services TechHelp provides.

"Labor is a key stakeholder in facilitating targeted partnerships with industry through its Business Solutions program," Marsha Wright, a regional business solutions specialist with the department, said. "The Business Solutions team strongly believes it is vital to bring resources such as TechHelp to our manufacturing business partners to strengthen their success for future job growth."

A key TechHelp initiative is promoting lean manufacturing, which seeks to eliminate from the production process waste and anything that does not add value to the customer.

Last month at Labor's Pocatello office, David O'Connell of TechHelp presented a free seminar, in partnership with the department, on lean manufacturing for local businesses.

"In a questionable economy, employers need to use every tool available to them – not just to maintain but to build their business," Carla Erikson, a business solutions specialist at the Pocatello office, said. "TechHelp is a resource that identifies and provides solutions to 10 different kinds of waste. These principles can greatly increase profit margins."

According to O’Connell, waste is often “unseen and unnoticed by manufacturers,” maintaining that about 95 percent of what manufacturers do brings no value to the customer. Eliminating that waste and those processes makes a company much more competitive.

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*“Lean,” is a production practice that considers the expenditure of resources for any goal other than the creation of value for the end customer to be wasteful, and thus a target for elimination.*

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Ten areas O’Connell identified as producing the most waste for companies are:

- Product defects
- Overproduction
- Production bottlenecks and waiting periods
- Nonvalue-added processes
- Transportation
- Inventory
- Employees moving from one location to another
- Failing to fully use employee skills, knowledge and abilities
- Energy
- Environmental issues

But O’Connell said only 10 percent to 20 percent of Idaho’s manufacturers are using lean manufacturing processes.

He believes that by implementing lean processes and reducing waste Idaho’s manufacturing sector can compete with anyone overseas despite often cheaper foreign labor costs.

Author and management consultant Dennis P. Hobbs agrees.

Hobbs believes that lean manufacturing should be the core competency of any manufacturing business so the company’s sales division can “beat any competitor where delivery, price and quality are expected by the customer.”

According to O’Connell, lean manufacturing helps Idaho companies compete globally “by creating an environment where employers and employees work together to meet customer demand and eliminate waste. The lean manufacturing process helps a company become more nimble, efficient, responsive and competitive. This is especially important in the global marketplace where companies must adapt to different regulations, standards, languages, certifications and packaging requirements.”

O’Connell contends manufacturers need to continue improving existing operations while developing new products, new markets and new processes.

“Lean manufacturing builds a culture of excellence which allows a company to increase profitability for current products and to introduce new and innovative products that will grow the company’s profitability and its employment base,” he said.

Several eastern Idaho companies have already benefited from TechHelp’s efforts. Woodland Furniture in Idaho Falls worked with TechHelp to introduce lean processes into its manufacturing operations, and within three months the furniture maker cut costs \$6.5 million, reduced product and inventory floor space 40 percent and curtailed production lead time from 12 weeks to one.

In Preston, Freedom Plastics retained their entire workforce of 35, increased profits and reduced production time for standard orders from five days to two days by implementing lean processes.

The Idaho Department of Labor's ongoing efforts to work with TechHelp represent a commitment to support Idaho's business community. When employers are more efficient and competitive globally, the citizens and economy benefit.

More information on TechHelp is at [www.techhelp.org](http://www.techhelp.org).

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**The** Census Bureau's website has a great link — QuickFacts - <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>. QuickFacts provides the latest census data for the state, counties or cities. From there you can access more detailed information. Click on the link above, pick a state, then select a county or city and find the latest data quickly and easily.

## CENSUS FUN FACTS: MARCH

### Irish-American Heritage Month and St. Patrick's Day

Originally a religious holiday to honor St. Patrick, who introduced Christianity to Ireland in the fifth century, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into a celebration for all things Irish. The world's first St. Patrick's Day parade occurred on March 17, 1762, in New York City, featuring Irish soldiers serving in the English military. This parade became an annual event, with President Truman attending in 1948. Congress proclaimed March as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1995, and the President issues a proclamation commemorating the occasion each year.

#### **SOME FACTS ABOUT THE IRISH AND ST. PATRICK'S DAY. . .**

- **34.7 million** – the number of U.S. residents who claimed Irish ancestry in 2010. This number was more than seven times the population of Ireland itself — 4.58 million. Irish was the nation's second most frequently reported ancestry, trailing only German.
- **144,588** – the number of Irish-born naturalized U.S. residents in 2010.
- **7** - the number of places in the United States named Shamrock, the floral emblem of Ireland. Mount Gay-Shamrock, W.Va., and Shamrock, Texas, were the most populous, with 1,779 and 1,910 residents, respectively. Shamrock Lakes, Ind., had 231 residents and Shamrock, Okla., 101, and three Shamrock Townships in Minnesota, Nebraska and Missouri had populations of 1,272, 413 and 40, respectively.
- **26.4 billion and 2.3 billion** – U.S. beef and cabbage production, respectively, in pounds, in 2010. Corned beef and cabbage is a traditional St. Patrick's Day dish.

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, Facts for Features](#).

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## **NORTHERN IDAHO**

**Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone counties**

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### **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**



Over the next 30 years Kaiser Aluminum is planning a \$16 million clean-up of historic pollution at its 512-acre property in Trentwood, Wash. Kaiser has already spent \$12 million to reduce PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, into the Spokane River. PCBs have led to health advisories for limiting eating fish from the river. Currently, the Spokane River violates state standards for levels of PCBs from extensive discharges.

- The Idaho Transportation Department recently awarded a \$640,000 contract to Airway Heights-based transportation contractor West Co. to do repair and maintenance work on seven bridges and overpasses on Interstate 90 between Coeur d'Alene and Wallace. The work is scheduled to start this summer.

### **COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS**

#### ***BOUNDARY COUNTY***

- New Montana minimum wage of \$7.65 an hour went into effect Jan. 1, which would affect Boundary County residents who work across the border in Montana. Idaho's minimum wage is the same as the nation's at \$7.25 an hour.
- The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service last November proposed designating 375,562 acres in Bonner and Boundary counties and Washington state's Pend Oreille County as vital habitat for endangered woodland caribou. The agency estimates a herd of 46 caribou in the area. Boundary County commissioners invoked federal law to be included as participants in the process. The community is concerned the proposal would prohibit activities such as snowmobiling, hiking and huckleberry picking.

#### ***BONNER COUNTY***

- An air medical transport service announced plans to establish a base in Sandpoint as soon as March. The Oregon-based nonprofit plans to assign as many as 15 employees including flight nurses, flight paramedics, pilots and mechanics. The payroll for the highly skilled personnel should exceed \$1 million annually.
- After naming Sandpoint the most beautiful small town in America this past summer, Rand McNally recently named the northern Idaho city the top ski town of the season. Sandpoint topped places like South Lake Tahoe, Calif.; Park City, Utah; Bangor, Maine; Glenwood Springs, Colo.; Mammoth Lakes, Calif.; and Jackson, Wyo.

## **KOOTENAI COUNTY**

- The Boys and Girls Club of Kootenai County plans to build a \$1.4 million, 8,800-square-foot facility in Post Falls in April. The club currently serves about 400 students with more on a waiting list, ages 6-18, from both Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls. The Post Falls center will include a gym, kitchen, technology area, teen area and open space for games and programs.
- Mayor Sandi Bloem broke the tie of the City Council to preclude a public advisory vote on the multimillion-dollar McEuen Field conceptual project. At last check, the first phase of the project on the downtown park overhaul was estimated at around \$17 million.
- North Idaho College President Priscilla Bell asked the Legislature's joint budget committee for \$99,800 to expand dual-enrollment programs with area high schools, \$250,000 to restart the college's physical therapist assistant program and a \$528,700 for remodeling to allow student services to be consolidated in a single building. None were recommended for funding by the governor. North Idaho College's for-credit student enrollment has increased 45 percent in four years, and professional-technical education enrollment has grown by 68 percent. In 2005, the state provided 45 percent of the school's funding while tuition and fees provided 27 percent and local property taxes 18 percent. Now, both student tuition and fees and local property taxes exceed state funding as a portion of the budget with all near a third. Tuition has climbed 22 percent since 2008 with the annual cost for a full-time student at \$2,764. The school will receive \$706,900 in state funding next year to cover increased numbers of students next year.

## **SHOSHONE COUNTY**

- Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter held a town meeting following the Lucky Friday mine closure. During the meeting, he said that he would request Mine Safety and Health Administration representatives to conduct a similar town hall event in the Silver Valley and fully explain the nature of the closure and the reopening process.
- Idaho Department of Labor held a resource fair for Silver Valley miners laid off after Hecla's Lucky Friday mine was shut down in mid-January. US Silver, Coeur d'Alene Mines and Barrick Gold attended, and Neumont Mining Corp., Still Water Mine and Shasta Gold Corp. of Redding, Calif., sent information packets about potential opportunities. There was also information on special training programs, job and career searches, interviewing skills and résumé development. North Idaho College answered questions about education and training opportunities. Panhandle State Bank discussed financial issues, and representatives from community agencies laid out local resources available to the workers and their families.
- Megaloads have positively affected Wallace's local economy. Mammoet Canada Western, a company specializing in heavy lifting and transport, is using space across from the Wallace Inn for megaload parking and maintenance. This has and will continue to increase spending in retail and local restaurants and hotels for at least the next four months.

- The legendary Snakepit restaurant and bar in Enaville has closed. The Snakepit was known to recreationalists as the gateway to the Coeur d’Alene River. Owners, Rose Mary and Joe Peak’s, battles with cancer had forced the couple to close the bar after three decades. Rose Mary passed away at age 65 in January. No buyer has been found. The Snakepit originally opened in 1880.

**OPENINGS**

- FBI Building at Riverstone in Coeur d’Alene
- Allinol Truck & Auto Repair in Hauser
- Save More Automotive in Coeur d’Alene
- Sleep Country in Coeur d’Alene
- Miles Coffee Co. in Hayden with 14 employees
- Miller Paint in Coeur d’Alene with six employees

**EXPANSIONS**

- Rocky Mountain Construction Group Inc. into a new \$1 million shop building. It currently employs 26 and expects to add 12 this year.

**CLOSURES**

- Post Falls Movie Theater
- Coeur d’Alene Cycling & Fitness in Coeur d’Alene
- Adhara, a tanning, make-up and swimsuit store in Coeur d’Alene

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**NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO**

Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis and Nez Perce counties

**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**



The Clearwater Basin Collaborative will receive \$3.1 million for forest restoration projects on the Middle Fork of the Clearwater and Selway rivers in fiscal year 2012. The Forest Service allocated \$40 million nationwide for projects funded under the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Act to improve water quality, wildlife habitat and reduce fire risk while providing logs to local mills. The local projects on 1.4 million acres in the Clearwater and Nez Perce national forests began two years ago and are expected to last 10 years. The collaborative of forest stakeholders including environmentalists, loggers, off-road vehicle enthusiasts, economic developers and government officials is working on a number of issues including the construction of an all terrain vehicle trail from Avery to Elk City, agreements to increase logging in roaded areas of the forest and deals that could lead to the designation of new wilderness areas.



Following severe cuts in their recreational budgets, the Nez Perce and Clearwater national forests announced in January that they would not open the Lochsa Historic Ranger Station and some camping areas near the Lochsa River this summer. The log station next to the Lochsa, 48 miles east of Kooskia, depicts life at remote Forest Service ranger stations in the 1920s. It generally opens for Memorial Day and closes after Labor Day. The shuttered camping areas are Wendover and Jerry John-

son campgrounds, the Walde and Weitas Butte lookouts and the Liz Butte, Weitas and Meadow Creek cabins. The two forests are receiving half as much funding for recreation as they did three years ago because of reduced spending nationwide and a change in the way the Forest Service allocates spending to give more money to forests closer to population centers. Although federal stimulus money gave facelifts to the Wendover Campground and Walde Lookout in 2009, they fell victim to the drop in recreational funding used for management and maintenance of campgrounds, historic sites, rental cabins and visitor centers. The Forest Service expects that in the long run vendors rather than the agency will operate some popular campgrounds. It also expects to rely more on volunteers to keep some sites open.



The Clearwater and Nez Perce national forests are in the process of becoming a single administrative unit. For the last three years, they have had a common supervisor. Many staff members are traveling back and forth between the Nez Perce headquarters in Grangeville and the Clearwater headquarters in Orofino. A recent analysis estimated that consolidating headquarters would save between \$10 million and \$14 million over a 20-year time period. That analysis also concluded that the best site for the headquarters was Kamiah. Not only is it the most central to the 4-million acre combined forest, but it also would be the most economical place to build a new headquarters, based on property the Forest Service already owns in the town. Even after consolidation, Grangeville and Orofino would have Forest Service offices. The fire dispatch center and smokejumper base would still employ about 45 people in Grangeville, and the headquarters of the North Fork Ranger District would still employ about 27 people in Orofino. Officials in Grangeville and Orofino expressed concern about the loss of jobs and the potential loss of population that the new headquarters would cost their communities while Kamiah residents are looking forward to 73 high-paying jobs in their community. Before the consolidation occurs or building plans are made, the Forest Service will hold hearings and offer other opportunities for public comment.

- Grant writers in north central Idaho have a new resource, an online foundation search system. The Clearwater Economic Development Association began exploring the possibility of subscribing to a foundation search system and making it available for nonprofits and governments throughout the region. It arranged with the Friends of the Lewiston Library to house the resource and provide a technical expert. After the association solicited \$4,000, the cost of a one-year subscription, Avista Corp. stepped up to fund the project that could enhance economic development in the region. Now, citizens can go to the Lewiston Library to search for funding opportunities.

### **NEZ PERCE TRIBE**

- A \$53,806 grant from the Economic Development Administration will fund a feasibility study for an equine center the Nez Perce Tribe may build near Lapwai. The center, which would house the tribe's horse breeding program, could provide jobs and educational opportunities. It would celebrate the horse culture of the Nez Perce, who were famous for

their horsemanship and selective breeding. They developed the Appaloosa breed, known for its speed, intelligence, endurance and colorful spotted coat. The tribe encourages its youths to learn to ride and learn the responsibilities of caring for horses. An equine center could attract visitors to the reservation. The tribe has received inquiries in recent years from France and other European countries about tours because of interest in the Nez Perce Tribe and the Appaloosa horse. Center guides might offer horseback tours of the area. Riding events and activities at the center could also be a tourist draw. The feasibility study will analyze the business opportunities offered by an equine center and estimate the return on investment.

- The Nez Perce Tribe distributed \$200 to every member in February from the tribe's fish mitigation settlement with Avista Corp. There was also a distribution of an undisclosed amount of gaming revenue in September. Tribal officials said such distributions benefit both tribal members and are an economic stimulus for the community at large. About 3,400 people are on the tribe's membership rolls. About two-thirds live in north central Idaho.

## COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

### CLEARWATER COUNTY

- Although the state mental hospital in Orofino saw a 50 percent increase in admissions in the past five years, its employment fell from 95 to 80. The reduced employment was the result of an 11 percent cut in its state funding. Admissions have risen at the 60-bed hospital because of a growing demand for mental health services. Most patients are staying for shorter periods as State Hospital North stabilizes them and then cooperates with local support groups to ease patients back into their own communities. The average length of stay fell from almost 60 days in 2009 to 35 days this year. Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter recommended a \$7.3 million budget for fiscal 2013, up from \$7.18 million this year.



Residents of Konkolville, an unincorporated town three miles from Orofino, finally know that plenty of water will pour out when they turn on the faucet. The water plant and distribution system serving 44 households was developed by the Konkolville Lumber Co. in the late 1940s. When Tri Pro purchased the mill in 2007, Konkolville Lumber gave ownership of the water plant and system to the town's residents, who formed Konkolville Water Co., which has been assessing the aging system and planning for future repairs and upgrades. This summer, some local residents hand-built dams to get enough water into the system for their use. With help from the Clearwater Economic Development Association, the water company received a Community Development Block Grant of \$380,000, a \$98,000 loan and a \$224,000 Rural Community Block Grant. Riverview Construction of Orofino had the improved system with a connection to Orofino's water system operating by the second week of December. Water company board member Renee Hedrick said, for the first time ever she could run the dishwasher, do a load of laundry and take a shower all at the same time.

## **IDAHO AND LEWIS COUNTIES**



While Idaho outfitter and guides have experienced large reductions in business in the last few years, Killgore Adventures is expanding. It is planning to build along U.S. Highway 95 just east of White Bird to house the business and Killgore Land Co., a real estate company. It also will include a restaurant overlooking the Salmon River and possibly a tourist shop. Next to the building, tourists will be able to see a few of the longhorn cattle the Killgores raise on their ranch. Killgore Adventures offers jet boat trips and guided hunting and fishing trips in Hells Canyon. It also operates Hells Canyon Jet Boat Trips and Lodging near White Bird, 17 miles from the put-in for the Snake River. In addition to motel rooms, it also offers 14 full hook-up spaces for RVs and an area for tent camping. The business is open year-round. The busiest season is May through October. The new building will provide more space for staging trips and allow helicopter tours, which Killgore Adventures will book through Kiwi Air of Clarkston.

- Lack of snowfall kept the ski areas in Grangeville and Cottonwood closed in December and the first three weeks of January. They both were open by the last weekend in January. Together, the two ski areas employ about a dozen people. They impact the local economy by bringing visitors from as far away as Lewiston and Clarkston and by providing amenities that make the Camas Prairie a more attractive place to live.
- Telecommunications continue to improve on the Camas Prairie. Inland Cellular customers there get better cell phone coverage from a new tower on Cottonwood Butte, providing 3G coverage for faster data access.

## **LATAH COUNTY**

- Walmart reopened its Moscow store as a supercenter Jan 25. The store had been closed since the fall of 2010 when Walmart opened a supercenter in Pullman, eight miles away. The expanded store is 28,000 square feet larger than the old store, is open around the clock and employs 220 people — about 20 more than it did before the closure.

## **NEZ PERCE AND ASOTIN COUNTIES**

- Enrollment at Lewis-Clark State College rose to a record 4,269 students this spring, up 1.3 percent from a year ago. Full-time enrollment also was the highest ever at 2,995. There also was strong growth in dual-enrollment students, high school students who earn college credit through their local schools. The college's enrollment numbers have been growing throughout the last decade. Today's enrollment is 57 percent higher than in 2001. Despite the enrollment surge, the college's employment remains about the same - around 750. The school eliminated about 80 temporary and 22 permanent employees over the past four years.
- Community Action Partnership in Lewiston will receive a \$150,000 grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation to support the Bridges to Work program over two years. The program helps prepare people for employment and retain jobs once they are hired. "A lot of programs focus on getting people jobs," Community Action Partnership Director Angie Titus said. "We want to focus on work force retention." The program strengthens participants' interpersonal and communication skills and teaches the

“hidden rules” of the workplace. “The really compelling thing about this project is it’s really comprehensive - from pre-employment to retention,” Bill Vesneski of the Allen Foundation said.

### **OPENINGS**

- Affordable Consignments, a store offering household furniture, electronics and decorations, on Main Street in Moscow
- Home Grown Quilts on Main Street in Grangeville
- Simple Eats, a restaurant and food shop, in the space formerly occupied by Sugar Mammias Baked Goods in downtown Lewiston
- The Woolly Manor in Elk City, selling craft supplies and specializing in handspun wools, fibers for spinning, looms and spinning wheels

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## **SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO**

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

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### **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**

- Southwestern Idaho car dealers had a great 2011. New car sales were up 15 percent while used car sales were up 10 percent. 2011 ended up being the best year for the area since 2008. Many customers were looking at vehicles with increased fuel efficiency.

### **COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS**

#### **ADA COUNTY**

- The ALMSA Corp. of Eagle was bought by Yardi Systems of California. The software firm plans to retain all the staff and expand this year. The company develops software to manage assisted living and long-term care facilities.
- Baliho received a \$5 million venture capital investment last month. The Boise-based software company has plans to use the money to expand and double its workforce from 58 to over 100 by year end. Baliho was founded in 2005 and provides local marketing automation services and software to national brands.
- SolutionPro, a Boise-based data center, was purchased by Involta LLC of Iowa. No employment changes were announced, but the new owners said that an expansion should take place in the next 15 to 20 months to meet current and future demand.
- Scentsy is starting work on its 157,000-square-foot, five-story headquarters building in Meridian that will consolidate its more than 700 employees. Work will begin in March and be completed in 2013. Scentsy is also expanding its product line to include chocolate fondue kits. The company hired employees to handle the new line of products and said that if the product line is successful more jobs could be added.
- Hewlett-Packard is converting an old manufacturing building on its Boise campus into an office building. The company hopes to fill it with another corporate group or an outside business. Two other vacant buildings in the

complex are already office buildings and HP is looking for tenants. HP has been consolidating its workforce on the Boise campus to free up buildings.

- PEAK broadcasting filed for protection from creditors under the federal bankruptcy laws. Citing the sluggish economy and weak advertising sales, the company hopes to reduce its \$93 million secured debt by 60 percent. Neither programming changes nor layoffs for any of Peak's six local radios stations are expected. Peak Broadcasting employs 60 people in Boise.

### **CANYON COUNTY**



The first building of St. Luke's new Nampa Medical plaza was completed recently. The 120,000-square-foot building was built up to silver LEED standards and will house Saltzer Medical Group as well as an emergency room and imaging department.

- Saint Alphonsus is planning to expand its Nampa Health Plaza. The \$33.5 million expansion will add an emergency department, heart care center and maternity center to the plaza and create about 85 new full-time jobs. The project is estimated to be completed in fall of 2013, but the emergency department is scheduled to open this fall.
- The College of Western Idaho announced its new professional-technical building will be named after Micron. The building is expected to see its first students this summer. Both the Micron Foundation and the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation made substantial donations for the building's renovation.
- Texas Roadhouse began hiring in earnest last month for its new Nampa restaurant, which will open this month.

### **ELMORE COUNTY**

- The Mountain Home city council has approved a plan to refinance the debt on its police station. The plan, which involves replacing its existing financing with bonds issued through the Idaho State Bond Bank, would save the city money and allow it to pay off the project ahead of schedule.
- Tillamook announced this month that it will be moving some of its cheese packaging away from its headquarters in Oregon to its co-packers in Mountain Home and Salt Lake City. The move will affect roughly 50 people in the Tillamook, Ore., area.
- Marathon Cheese had a hiring event last month in the Mountain Home local office. Over 60 people attended the job fair. A representative of the company said that "current business demands across the board from multiple customers require us to continue our hiring efforts in Mountain Home." The company was looking to fill over a dozen openings.

### **OWYHEE COUNTY**

- Reynolds Creek and Jordan Creek bridges were completed last month. The \$800,000 project was aided by a Local Highway Technical Assistance Council grant and matching county funds.



Hiring began for the construction phase of the new 20 megawatt solar power plant outside Murphy last month. Up to 90 people were being

sought for the project, which is slated to be complete by early summer. Interconnect Solar Development, the plant's owner, should be supplying electricity to Idaho Power by July.

### **WASHINGTON COUNTY**

- Champion Home builders received a new contract that allowed it to hire 70 temporary employees last month. The contract is to supply manufactured homes to the Dakotas, which have seen a large influx of workers for the newly developed gas and oil fields.

### **VALLEY COUNTY**

- This year's Winter Carnival in McCall was a success and a much needed draw to the area. With the late onset of winter, the added business was welcome. Residents believe the event drew slightly smaller crowds than in years past. However, organizers said that the attendance for events on the second and last weekend were much higher, bringing in possible records breaking numbers for some of the local area businesses.

### **OPENINGS**

- Duke, Scanlan & Hall PLLC, law firm, in Boise with 12 employees
- Good Floatations, floatation tank therapy, in Boise
- Boise Fry Co. restaurant in Boise
- Canyon County Coin in Nampa
- Saltzer Medical Group in Nampa
- Collect It second-hand store in Weiser
- India Fashion and Grocery Store in Boise
- Bev's Attic fabric store in Cascade
- AuldMemories formal wear in Weiser
- Horizon Home Health and Hospice in Weiser

### **CLOSINGS**

- Pins and Needles a fabric store in Council
- Scavengers consignment store in Nampa
- Moxie Java on Main Street in Boise

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## **SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO**

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

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### **COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS**

#### **BLAINE COUNTY**

- St. Luke's Wood River Valley is providing chemotherapy at patients' homes to alleviate the stress and inconvenience of travel as far as Boise or Twin Falls. The service is an outreach from St. Luke's Mountain States Tumor Institute and requires a unique set of administrative and technical skills. It is the most service-oriented cancer treatment program in rural Idaho.
- The Hailey Library has expanded its offerings to include E-books, allowing patrons with Nooks, Kindles and smart phones to check out electronic copies of books. The program has been very popular. Most books have a waiting list.

- The snowpack in the Big Wood Basin is 64 percent of average and most ski resorts are hurting. Sun Valley has refined its snow making and grooming to maintain a quality experience on the open runs. The snow-making machines, which run around the clock, have enhanced technology that improves the quality of their snow.
- The Blaine County local option tax came in \$16,000 over projections in November after falling \$14,000 short in October.
- Over 800 registered for the 37<sup>th</sup> Boulder Ski Tour, which honored the late founder Rob Kiesel. Kiesel also started the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation's cross-country program and was a former head coach of the U.S. Nordic Ski Team. The course is 19.8 miles from Galena Lodge to the Sawtooth National Recreational Area headquarters 8 miles north of Ketchum.

**TWIN FALLS COUNTY**

- Newmont Mines hosted a job fair for the National Guardsmen, who had returned from the Middle East, and hired 40 of the more than 70 participants at \$23 to \$35 an hour with benefits. The skills of the servicemen were a perfect fit for the mining operation that primarily hired diesel mechanics, drivers and information technology specialists.



A fair amount of National Guardsmen who recently returned from the Middle East attended a job fair at the Magic Valley office for jobs at Newmont Mines.

- Glanbia USA, a long-time cheese producer in south central Idaho, announced it will move its Twin Falls national headquarters downtown. Uptown Developers, a group headed up by Kent Taylor – a developer and one of Glanbia's current landlords – will construct the new 35,000-square-foot office building and 14,000-square-foot Innovation Center. The company currently has a 7,000-square-foot Collaboration Center for presentations adjacent to a test kitchen and laboratories. Those workers will relocate once construction is complete in about a year. "This is a big deal," said Melinda Anderson, the city's urban renewal director. "It'll bring in an additional 50 to 100 people to work and also help the downtown merchants." The urban renewal agency will spend about half its \$1.5 million budget for downtown improvements this year to the Glanbia site. Private investment in the complex is estimated at \$15 million. Glanbia, the nation's largest producer of American-style cheese, has been in Idaho for nearly 21 years with plants in Twin Falls, Gooding and Richfield.
- LMS Defense Inc. will move its corporate headquarters from Sparks, Nev., to Twin Falls. The company trains law enforcement, private security and the military on counterterrorism and defensive tactics. "Relocating our corporate headquarters to Twin Falls will allow us to grow the business in

a more business-friendly environment with plans to expand counterterrorism training, defense and R&D testing for law enforcement officers in Idaho, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming and Montana," John Chapman, founder and chief executive said. The company plans to hire five people locally for administrative support for the new headquarters and add 15 to 20 more when a new training facility is built in late summer. The company, founded in 2006, hopes to collaborate with Idaho National Laboratory, Bureau of Homeland Security, Twin Falls County Sheriff's Office and the College of Southern Idaho on training support.

- Jo Dodds, a popular long-time Twin Falls High School teacher, is among 26 teachers nationally to participate in research flights over the coming year aboard NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy. The Boeing 747 can reach altitudes of 45,000 feet and has a 100 inch telescope on board. Dodds is looking forward to enriching her astronomy class with her experiences.



Idaho Power and a group of Castleford farmers have agreed on a diversion of the intended Gateway West transmission line in an attempt to retain the value of privately owned land. The Bureau of Land Management has agreed that the alternative route, while close to environmentally sensitive areas, has the infrastructure to overcome remaining obstacles.

- The Buhl School District was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Target Corp. and the Ellen DeGeneres show. A community member and parent – on her day off – wrote a letter explaining why the school district deserved the grant, basing it on existing budget constraints. Another school district and 48 schools were also awarded grants. How the funds will be used has not been determined.
- Stepping Stones, a halfway house for released felons, has reopened under new management after receiving state certification. The home has financial help from the faith-based community. The 10 current residents suffer from addictions and are living within strict guidelines that include no smoking in the house, no drug or alcohol use and limited television viewing.

### **GOODING/LINCOLN COUNTIES**



Shoshone and Hagerman are home to a unique animal production industry – yaks. Marc and Tina Bolduc, who are new to the industry, have named all 16 and have been pleased with the quality and health advantages of the meat. "It's a red meat, but it has way less fat than beef," Marc Bolduc said. "It actually has less fat than chicken and turkey, but its real high in protein." The retail prices are comparable to beef, ranging from \$7.99 to \$21.99 a pound. Apparently, yaks have more intelligence than other barnyard or pasture animals. The yaks also have a cashmere-like underbelly fur that provides one pound of fiber per yak selling for \$4 an ounce. By all counts, it seems to be a very productive animal.



Fish Processors of Idaho received a Value-Added Producers Grant of \$300,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to development and

implement a marketing plan for white sturgeon roe, currently selling at \$28.40 an ounce wholesale. Retail prices could be as high as \$100 an ounce. “Bottom line – it’s often difficult for an ag producer to open up a new market,” said Tobin Dixon, specialist with USDA Rural Development. “So it’s a grant that sort of helps them over that hump.” Leo Ray, a University of Oklahoma graduate who developed a love for aquaculture while studying, is now the 74-year old principal of the business which has also raised catfish, tilapia and trout over his 40 years in the Hagerman Valley. The wild fish are considered endangered globally. The 2007 Agriculture Census reported there were two caviar farms in both Idaho and California, but California has an edge because of the University of California Davis and its vast research resources close to the farms in the Sacramento Valley.

## **CASSIA COUNTY**



Black Pine gold mine in southern Cassia County may reopen under new mineral rights owner, Western Pacific Resources Corp., which plans to conduct exploratory analysis on test holes in June. The mine produced 13,800 ounces during the 1990s when a previous owner, Pegasus Gold, went through bankruptcy. The site has since experienced reclamation from a bond posted by Pegasus.

### **OPENINGS**

- Basque-American-Peruvian Diner in downtown Twin Falls
- Daylight Donuts in Twin Falls
- Incorporated Fitness-Zumba classes in Jerome
- The Groove Machine, new recording studio, in Burley
- Seasons Dental in Burley

### **CONSTRUCTION STARTED**

- Deseret Books in Twin Falls
- Dick’s Pharmacy/First Federal in Twin Falls
- St. Luke’s Internal Medicine Office in Twin Falls

### **CLOSURES**

- Spinners in Rupert
- Sage Mountain Grill in Albion

### **EXPANSION**

- Elite Fitness in Burley

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## **SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO**

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

### **COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS**

#### **BANNOCK COUNTY**

- Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter promoted his Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission program early this month at Idaho State University’s new Research and Innovation in Science and Engineering Complex in Pocatello. IGEM is a statewide effort to create new enterprises and high-paying knowledge-based jobs by increasing strategic areas of research and development through partnerships of industry, higher education and government. The

initiative is modeled after USTAR, a Utah program which has added many new high-tech jobs to that state's economy.

### **BINGHAM COUNTY**



As part of an effort to cut costs, the Aberdeen School District is considering moving to a four-day school week. The district is collecting public input on the proposal. The community was hit last fall by the announcement that J.R. Simplot, the community largest employer, would end operations within two years.

- The Idaho Department of Labor organized a career exploration fair at Blackfoot High School in early February so Bingham County high school students can explore career and educational opportunities close to home. Students from six Bingham County high schools talked with representatives of 13 postsecondary educational institutions and over 20 local employers.

### **CARIBOU COUNTY**

- Idaho State University's Bengal Solutions program has had a positive impact on many businesses and community organizations in southeastern Idaho. Last month two graduate students in business, McKay Womack and Paul Amoah, presented a feasibility study on a community center in Soda Springs. The study found that while the community would benefit from a center, the construction and ongoing operating costs would be difficult for Soda Springs to finance.

### **FRANKLIN COUNTY**

- Suppose Quilt Boutique in Preston will be featured in *Quilt Sampler*, a national trade publication for quilters. The store along with 10 others nationwide was selected from a group of over 3,000 quilting businesses.

### **ONEIDA COUNTY**



Corn has been grown in Oneida County as silage for cattle for decades. But the Thomas family farm is finding grain corn to be profitable as well. In 2010 the family's corn crop did not develop in time to be cut for silage so they were forced to let the corn crop mature into grain. They expected a poor yield, but they averaged a solid 100 bushels per acre. The 2010 success encouraged the Thomases to plant 1,000 acres of corn last May. That crop was successfully harvested in November. The price of grain corn is currently around \$6.50 per bushel. Globally the demand for corn has risen due to the increasing use of corn to make ethanol as an alternative fuel. The success of the Thomas family may encourage other southeastern Idaho farmers to grow corn for grain.

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## EASTERN IDAHO

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

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### REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS



Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter signed an Executive Order forming the Idaho Leadership in Nuclear Energy Commission, which is charged with finding opportunities and challenges associated with the Idaho National Laboratory. Members of the commission will include Department of Commerce director Jeff Sayer, representative from other state agencies, universities, members of the Idaho Legislature, local officials, the INL, industry and public. Public input will also play a critical role to the successful work of the commission.

### COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

#### LEMHI COUNTY

- Formation Capital announced Union Bank will act as the lead arranger to provide a credit facility supporting the \$77.7 million Recovery Zone Facility Bonds. A portion of these bonds will be used to finance the Idaho Cobalt Project outside Salmon with a production facility near Kellogg. Union Bank is headquartered in San Francisco.
- Salmon has a new medical clinic for veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs Salmon Outpatient Clinic is a primary care clinic but is prepared to handle multiple needs. Physicians will travel to the clinic monthly for in-person visits. During other parts of the month they will use a technology called Tele-Health. This device allows physicians to talk with and examine patients in Salmon from Boise – a first for Department of Veterans Affairs clinics. The Tele-Health machine is equipped with a stethoscope, otoscope, ultrasound, head camera and a face-to-face screen for the provider and patient. The next closest clinic is in Missoula, Mont.

#### MADISON COUNTY

- U.S. News and World Report ranked Brigham Young University-Idaho the second least expensive private college in the nation following Berea College in Kentucky. Tuition for Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints students is \$1,735 for 12 or more credits, Non-Mormon students pay \$3,470. Tuition is expected to increase 2.8 percent this fall.



The Eastern Idaho Entrepreneurial Center has expanded its partnership with Renewable Tech Ventures to aid entrepreneurs seeking venture capital funding. Renewable Tech Ventures is described as an early stage and growth-stage venture fund investing in renewable energy, clean technology, energy conservation, green materials and other technologies.

#### BONNEVILLE COUNTY

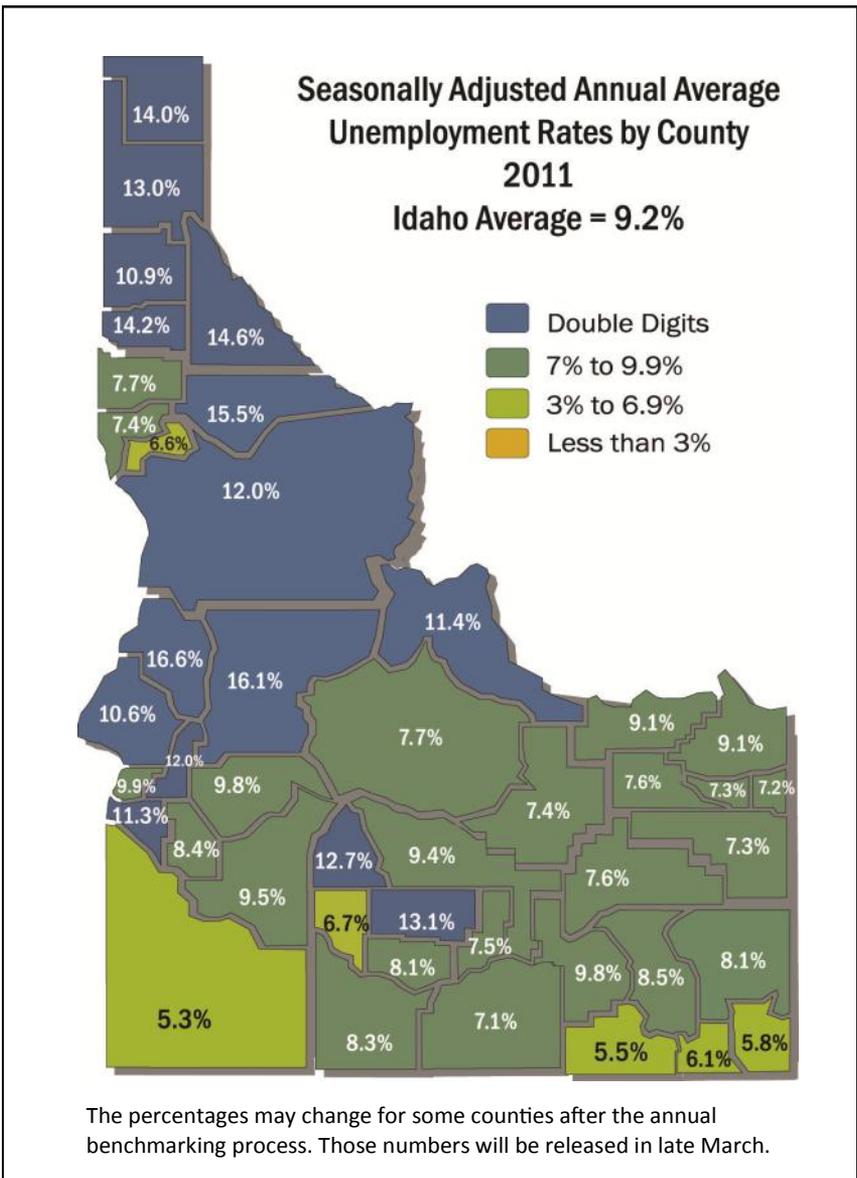
- Allegiant Airlines recently announced the addition of nonstop flights between Idaho Falls and San Francisco. Flights will begin April 27. Allegiant already provides flights from Idaho Falls to Las Vegas and Phoenix.
- The Idaho Falls School District received a \$15,000 grant from the Coeur d’Alene Tribe. Money will go toward the new magnet school, buying iPads

for classrooms at Emerson High School and the One District-One Book program to promote literacy. The tribe has donated \$17 million to Idaho schools since pledging 5 percent of gaming revenues in 1992.



The Center for Advanced Energy Studies announced a \$4 million increase in its budget. During 2011 Idaho granted the program \$1.6 million. In 2012 that will grow to \$2 million. The center made an 11-to-1 return on investment in 2011. A University of Idaho economist estimates the center generated \$26.8 million in regional sales, 366 jobs and \$620,000 in tax revenue in fiscal year 2011.

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## Year-Over-Year Changes in Employment by Month and Industry

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	ANNUAL AVG
INDUSTRY	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
<b>TOTAL NONFARM <sup>1</sup></b>	1.1%	1.9%	1.6%	1.1%	0.5%	1.6%	2.7%	2.4%	2.3%	0.0%	0.3%	1.6%	1.3%
<b>TOTAL PRIVATE</b>	1.6%	2.3%	1.9%	1.6%	1.3%	2.5%	3.7%	3.3%	3.3%	0.3%	0.9%	2.1%	2.2%
<b>GOODS PRODUCING</b>	-1.8%	-1.8%	-3.5%	-1.8%	-1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	3.2%	1.6%	-4.5%	-1.7%	1.8%	0.0%
<b>SERVICE PROVIDING</b>	2.0%	2.6%	2.6%	1.6%	0.9%	1.6%	2.9%	2.2%	2.8%	0.9%	0.9%	1.5%	1.9%
<b>PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING</b>	2.8%	3.2%	3.2%	2.3%	1.5%	2.7%	4.2%	3.8%	3.8%	1.5%	1.5%	2.2%	2.7%
<b>MINING, LOGGING AND CONSTRUCTION</b>	-14.3%	-14.3%	-20.0%	-13.3%	-6.3%	-6.3%	-11.8%	-16.7%	-16.7%	-16.7%	-17.6%	-6.7%	-12.5%
<b>FOOD MANUFACTURING</b>	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	10.7%	13.8%	9.7%	-3.0%	3.6%	11.5%	3.6%
<b>OTHER MANUFACTURING</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%	0.0%
<b>WHOLESALE TRADE</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-5.9%	-5.9%	-5.9%	-5.9%	-5.9%	-5.9%	0.0%
<b>RETAIL TRADE</b>	-3.6%	-1.9%	-1.9%	-1.8%	-1.8%	-1.8%	-1.8%	-1.8%	-1.8%	-1.8%	-1.8%	0.0%	-1.8%
<b>TRANSPORTATION, WAREHOUSING AND UTILITIES</b>	-3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	-4.5%	-4.8%	-4.8%	-4.5%	-8.3%	-3.8%	-3.8%	-7.4%	-4.2%
<b>INFORMATION</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-14.3%	-14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b>	0.0%	-6.3%	-6.3%	-6.3%	-6.3%	-6.3%	-6.3%	-6.3%	0.0%	-6.3%	0.0%	-6.3%	-6.3%
<b>PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES</b>	18.8%	21.9%	21.2%	13.5%	16.2%	25.0%	18.9%	14.6%	16.7%	2.3%	0.0%	2.2%	15.8%
<b>EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES</b>	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	3.5%	1.7%	10.5%	12.3%	14.3%	12.3%	14.0%	16.1%	7.0%
<b>LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY</b>	3.4%	3.4%	6.7%	6.5%	3.0%	6.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	3.2%	0.0%	3.1%
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>	0.0%	6.7%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	-1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	-1.7%	-3.3%	-3.4%	-3.7%	-5.6%	-1.8%	-1.7%	-1.8%	-1.8%	-1.8%
<b>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT</b>	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%	-16.7%	-16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%	0.0%
<b>STATE GOVERNMENT</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b>	0.0%	0.0%	-2.0%	-2.0%	0.0%	-4.2%	-4.5%	-2.3%	-2.2%	0.0%	-2.1%	-2.1%	-2.1%
<b>GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL SERVICES</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-2.9%	0.0%	-3.1%	-3.6%	-3.6%	0.0%	-2.9%	-2.9%	-2.9%	0.0%
<b>GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-4.0%	-3.8%	-7.4%	-3.8%	-3.8%	-4.0%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-4.0%

Not seasonally adjusted.

BF = Benchmarked; R = Revised

## Changes in Employment 2007 to 2011 by Month and Industry

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	AA
INDUSTRY	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
<b>TOTAL NONFARM</b>	-3.2%	-3.4%	-4.4%	-4.1%	-4.0%	-5.2%	-4.0%	-3.7%	-3.2%	-2.5%	-3.2%	-3.9%	-3.8%
<b>TOTAL PRIVATE</b>	-4.0%	-4.6%	-5.7%	-5.1%	-5.3%	-6.1%	-4.6%	-4.0%	-3.9%	-2.9%	-3.7%	-4.6%	-4.7%
<b>GOODS PRODUCING</b>	-16.7%	-17.9%	-20.3%	-17.6%	-18.6%	-16.9%	-17.3%	-16.9%	-15.6%	-11.3%	-16.9%	-17.1%	-16.9%
<b>SERVICE PROVIDING</b>	-0.3%	0.0%	-1.2%	-1.2%	-0.9%	-2.7%	-0.9%	-0.9%	-0.3%	-0.3%	-0.3%	-1.2%	-0.9%
<b>PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING</b>	-0.8%	-0.8%	-1.9%	-1.9%	-1.9%	-3.3%	-1.1%	-0.4%	-0.7%	-0.7%	-0.4%	-1.1%	-1.5%
<b>MINING, LOGGING, AND CONSTRUCTION</b>	-42.9%	-45.5%	-47.8%	-43.5%	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%	-40.0%	-37.5%	-41.7%	-41.7%	-41.7%
<b>FOOD MANUFACTURING</b>	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%	8.3%	4.0%	16.7%	6.9%	10.0%	9.7%	23.1%	11.5%	11.5%	11.5%
<b>OTHER MANUFACTURING</b>	-28.6%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%	-23.8%
<b>WHOLESALE TRADE</b>	-10.5%	-10.5%	-10.5%	-10.5%	-15.0%	-15.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%	-15.8%	-20.0%	-20.0%	-20.0%	-15.0%
<b>RETAIL TRADE</b>	-7.0%	-5.4%	-7.0%	-5.3%	-5.2%	-6.8%	-6.8%	-5.2%	-6.9%	-5.2%	-6.7%	-6.7%	-5.2%
<b>TRANSPORTATION, WAREHOUSING AND UTILITIES</b>	4.2%	4.2%	4.5%	4.5%	0.0%	-4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-3.8%	0.0%
<b>INFORMATION</b>	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%	-14.3%
<b>FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b>	-6.3%	-6.3%	-6.3%	-6.3%	-11.8%	-11.8%	-11.8%	-11.8%	-11.8%	-11.8%	-11.8%	-11.8%	-11.8%
<b>PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES</b>	-11.6%	-11.4%	-11.1%	-10.6%	-10.4%	-11.8%	-12.0%	-9.6%	-10.9%	-12.0%	-8.0%	-11.5%	-10.2%
<b>EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES</b>	16.0%	13.7%	13.7%	13.7%	15.7%	13.5%	21.2%	23.1%	23.1%	23.1%	22.6%	20.4%	17.3%
<b>LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY</b>	3.4%	3.4%	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%	6.1%	3.0%	6.1%	6.3%	10.0%	6.7%	6.9%	6.5%
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	1.9%	3.6%	3.6%	1.8%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	-3.8%	1.9%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%
<b>FEDERAL GOVERNMENT</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>STATE GOVERNMENT</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b>	4.5%	6.5%	2.1%	4.3%	4.3%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	4.3%	2.2%	0.0%	2.2%
<b>GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL SERVICES</b>	3.2%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	-3.6%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

BF = Benchmarked; R = Revised

January and February labor force data for Idaho will not be released until March 23 because of the annual benchmarking process. The data will be published online when they are released. See [lmi.idaho.gov](http://lmi.idaho.gov) for most current information.

## State of Idaho Data — State Economic Indicators

	Dec 2011**	Nov 2011*	Dec 2010	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>IDAHO LABOR FORCE</b> (1)					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	762,500	760,800	758,900	0.2	0.5
Unemployment	64,100	65,000	73,400	-1.4	-12.7
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	8.4	8.5	9.7		
Total Employment	698,400	695,800	685,500	0.4	1.9
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	759,900	760,800	755,000	-0.1	0.6
Unemployment	64,700	63,800	73,200	1.4	-11.6
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	8.5	8.4	9.7		
Total Employment	695,200	697,000	681,800	-0.3	2.0
<b>U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE</b> (2)					
	Jan 2012	Dec 2011	Jan 2011		
	8.3	8.5	9.0		
<b>UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE</b>					
	Jan 2012**	Dec 2011*	Jan 2011		
<i>Claims Activities</i>					
Initial Claims <sup>(3)</sup>	15,995	16,399	18,054	-2.5	-11.4
Weeks Claimed <sup>(4)</sup>	137,271	95,496	158,314	43.7	-13.3
<i>Benefit Payment Activities</i> <sup>(5)</sup>					
Weeks Compensated	111,930	77,818	111,096	43.8	0.8
Total Benefit \$ Paid	\$27,334,414.22	\$18,511,257.47	\$26,998,553.71	47.7	1.2
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$244.21	\$237.88	\$243.02	2.7	0.5
Covered Employers	47,306	47,306	48,186	0.0	-1.8
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months <sup>(4)</sup>	\$223,355,537	\$223,019,676	\$274,853,136	0.2	-18.7
<b>U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX</b> (2)					
	Jan 2012	Dec 2011	Jan 2011	% Change Month	% Change Year
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	224.1	223.7	217.3	0.2	3.2
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	227.5	227.0	221.0	0.2	2.9

\*\*Forecast data

\* Preliminary estimate

(2) Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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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