

Idaho Employment

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

IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Volume 23.1

January 2011 Issue, December 2010 Data

C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER, GOVERNOR

ROGER B. MADSEN, DIRECTOR

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Idaho's Debt Analyzed in Five Categories, page 3
- Idaho's Job Recovery to Remain Flat in 2011, page 5
- Casino Project May Bring Green Jobs to SE Idaho, page 15
- Children in Poverty Increasing in South Central Idaho, page 15

Current data on state, county and selected areas nonfarm jobs: <http://lmi.idaho.gov/IdahoEconomy/IdahoNonfarmEmploymentForecast/tabid/2445/Default.aspx>

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

STATES VARY ON MINIMUM WAGE LAWS

The federal minimum wage currently is \$7.25 by law. This rate supersedes state minimum wages set lower than \$.725 an hour. However, in states where the state minimum wage is greater than the federal minimum wage, the state minimum wage prevails.

Several states have departed from the federal minimum wage. Washington's minimum wage is the highest in the nation, which increased to \$8.67 an hour on Jan. 1. Arkansas, Georgia, Minnesota and Wyoming have minimum wages lower than the federal minimum of \$7.25, and Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Tennessee have no established minimum wage at all.

Seventeen states and the District of Columbia have minimum wages higher than the federal minimum wage while the remaining 24, including Idaho, have matched the federal minimum wage.

Ten states have linked their minimum wages to a consumer price index – Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Vermont and Washington – and typically adjust their wages on Jan. 1 each year. Seven did so this year and Washington was among them. The other six states that increased their state minimum wages were:

- Arizona 10 cents to \$7.35.
- Colorado 12 cents to \$7.36.
- Montana 10 cents to \$7.35.
- Ohio 10 cents to \$7.40.
- Oregon 10 cents to \$8.50.
- Vermont nine cents to \$8.15.

Georgia and Wyoming have the lowest state minimum wage at \$5.15 an hour.

Florida, Missouri and Nevada's minimum wage rates remain unchanged at \$7.25 an hour. Nevada's minimum wage rate is \$7.25 with health insurance benefits provided by the employer or \$8.25 with no health insurance.

Nationwide, 2.2 million workers earn at or below the federal minimum wage, about 3 percent of all hourly-paid workers. One quarter of them are 16 to 19 years of age, 67 percent are women and 58 percent live in poverty.

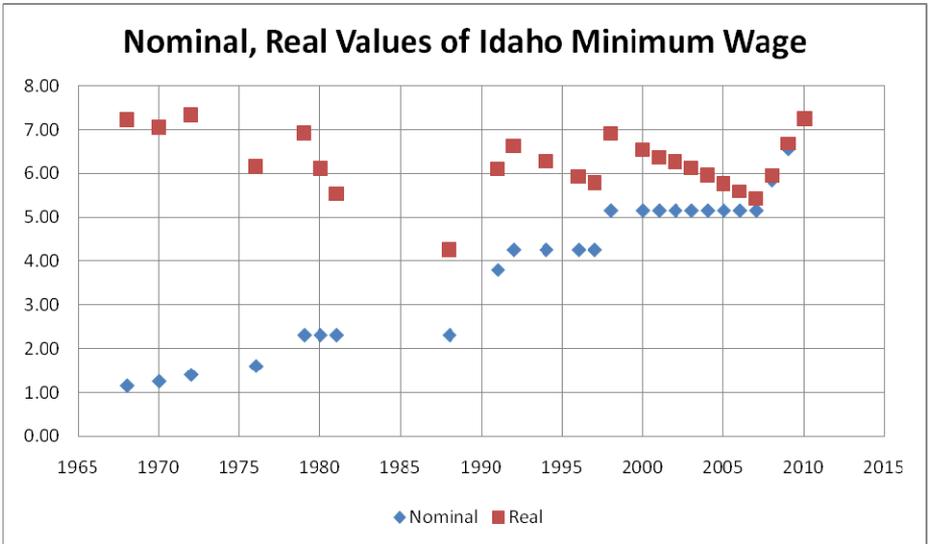
The current Idaho state minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. The minimum wage for a tipped employee is \$3.35 per hour. There is a training wage for new

employees under 20 years old – \$4.25 per hour. But that can only be paid for the first 90 calendar days of employment.

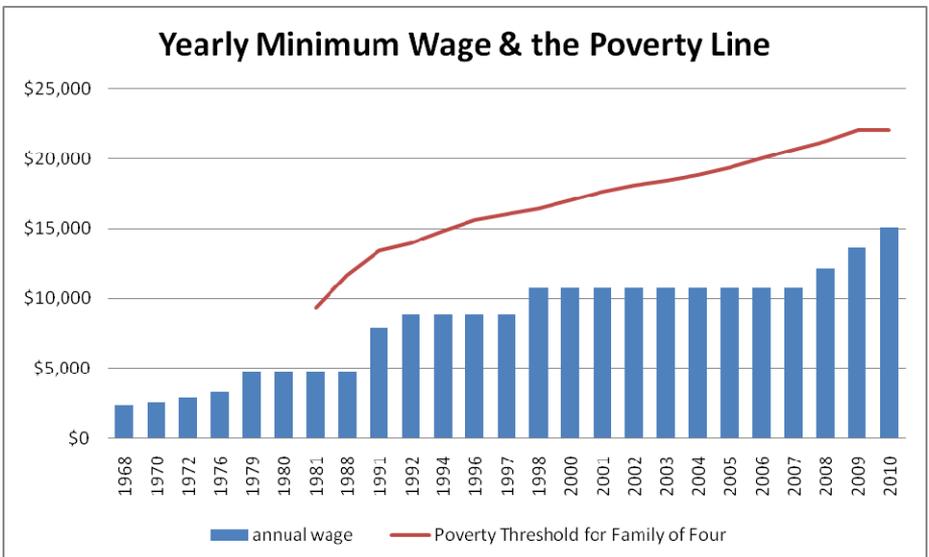
According to the 2010 Idaho Occupational Employment and Wage Survey, 30,900 workers earned minimum wage in Idaho. That is 5 percent of the work force, a larger share than the national percentage of minimum wage earners.

Prior to 1991, Idaho’s minimum wage was lower than the federal minimum wage except in 1968. Since then, the state has kept in line with the federal minimum wage rates.

The actual, or nominal, value of Idaho’s minimum wage has ranged from \$1.15 in 1968 to \$7.25 since July 2009. These values were adjusted for inflation to 2010 dollars to reflect the real value for comparison. Calculated in real dollars, the 1968 minimum wage was \$7.23, within two cents of the buying power of the 2009 minimum wage at \$7.25. The real value of the minimum wage falls during the periods between state and federal increases. The period 1997-2007 is the longest during which the minimum wage was not adjusted. Since then, the minimum wage increased in three 70-cent increments – to \$5.85 in July 2007, \$6.55 in July 2008 and \$7.25 in July 2009.



In Idaho a minimum wage job of 40 hours a week generates an annual income of \$15,080. Federal guidelines place a family of two making \$14,570 a year or less in poverty per year. The poverty threshold for a family of three is an income of \$18,310 a year and for a family of four \$22,050 a year.



Minimum-wage jobs have been insufficient to lift a household out of poverty if only one household member works and have barely met the mark when two people are working for the minimum wage.

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

IDAHO DEBT ANALYSIS

Much of the current recession can be attributed to debt accumulation at multiple levels. The Federal Reserve has taken unprecedented steps to stabilize financial markets by lifting troubled assets and toxic mortgages from the balance sheets of the United States banking system. The long term implications of such efforts will without doubt be a part of history books yet to be written.

Each Idaho county has felt the effects of the recession – some more than others. For the first time in over nine years, the state unemployment rate is now higher than the national rate. Fortunately for most of Idaho’s counties, delinquency rates on debt have stayed below the national average. The Federal Reserve tracks five categories of debt.

PRIME MORTGAGES

The most recent Federal Reserve data show only six Idaho counties above the national average of 2.9 percent of prime mortgages in foreclosure. Prime mortgages have a lower interest rate than other mortgages and are those given to borrowers deemed to have the lowest risk of defaulting. The state had only 2.2 percent of prime mortgages in foreclosure. Compared to neighboring states, Idaho is second highest but is far below Nevada’s 6.7 percent.

Prime Mortgages in Foreclosure		
	Sep-10	Y-O-Y Change
United States	2.9%	0.4%
Idaho	2.2%	0.2%
Nevada	6.7%	1.5%
Oregon	2.1%	0.6%
Utah	2.0%	0.3%
Washington	1.8%	-0.2%
Montana	1.4%	0.4%
Wyoming	0.9%	0.4%

Lincoln County has the state’s highest percentage of prime mortgages in foreclosure – just under 5 percent – while Latah County has the lowest at 0.6 percent.

Idaho Prime Mortgage Foreclosure Rates (September 2010)							
5 Highest Rates				5 Lowest Rates			
# of Homes	County	Sep-10	YOY Change	# of Homes	County	Sep-10	YOY Change
1,816	Lincoln	4.9%	3.1	15,340	Latah	0.6%	0.1
2,456	Adams	4.4%	1	4,485	Lemhi	0.7%	-0.2
4,898	Teton	4.4%	1.9	3,036	Custer	0.9%	0.6
10,172	Valley	4.0%	0.2	16,891	Nez Perce	1.0%	0
67,954	Canyon	4.0%	0.4	1,841	Oneida	1.1%	-0.6

ALL MORTGAGES

It is difficult to imagine how the economy would be different if all the mortgages that were issued during the last decade were prime rated. Nationally 5.3 percent of all mortgages are in foreclosure – up three-tenths of a point from a year earlier. After adding higher risk loans to the equation and comparing all

mortgages, only five Idaho counties have higher percentage of homes more than 90 days delinquent on payments.

Teton County leads Idaho with the highest percentage of all mortgages that are delinquent by 90 days or more. This small county borders Teton County, Wyo., and the very affluent Jackson Hole area. The real estate boom led to an excessive amount of development – and a large number of jumbo loans. Many of the developments have been difficult to liquidate.

All Mortgages (Delinquent 90+ Days)							
5 Highest Rates				5 Lowest Rates			
# of Homes	County	2010 Q3	YOY % Change	# of Homes	County	2010 Q3	YOY % Change
4,898	Teton	7.3%	3.9	15,340	Latah	1.2%	-0.2
67,954	Canyon	6.3%	-0.7	7,706	Idaho	1.4%	-1.3
10,172	Valley	6.3%	-1.1	8,183	Cassia	1.6%	-0.2
14,515	Blaine	5.9%	1.0	4,485	Lemhi	1.7%	-1.9
5,149	Boise	5.5%	2.9	7,587	Minidoka	1.7%	-0.3

BANK CARDS

When bank accounts are depleted and lending has dried up, many Americans resort to credit cards for a quick form of payment. Nationwide only 1.3 percent of bank card payments are delinquent by 60 or more days – down four-tenths of a percentage point from a year earlier. A bank card delinquency rate is defined as the number of consumers who have at least one active account with a status of 60 or more days delinquent as a percent of the total number of consumers who have at least one active account.

A large majority of Idaho’s counties fall below the national average for bank card payment delinquency. Only 13 of 44 counties are above the national average. Many of the counties have seen decreasing percentages of the last year.

Bank Cards (Delinquent 60+ Days)					
5 Highest Rates			5 Lowest Rates		
County	2010 Q3	YOY % Change	County	2010 Q3	YOY % Change
Benewah	2.3%	1.2	Lemhi	0.2%	-1.8
Power	2.1%	0.4	Franklin	0.5%	-0.2
Shoshone	2.0%	-0.9	Gem	0.7%	-1.0
Jerome	1.9%	-0.1	Boise	0.8%	-0.7
Boundary	1.8%	0.5	Washington	0.8%	-0.5

AUTO LOANS

A depressed economy has led to decreased new car sales. Federal cash-for-clunker incentives bolstered short term car sales. Nationwide, only 1.1 percent of auto loans are delinquent by 60 or more days – down 0.3 percentage points from a year earlier. In Idaho only three counties are above the national rate – Bingham, Gem and Bannock. Boise, Boundary and Owyhee counties all show zero percent of auto loans in delinquency.

STUDENT LOANS

According to the Census Bureau, more than 58 percent of the Idaho population age 25 and older has at least some college education – the national average is 55 percent. Graduating college in the middle of a deep recession makes finding that first job even more difficult. New graduates are entering a very competitive labor market against a large number of experienced workers.

Auto Loans (Delinquent 60+ Days)

5 Highest Rates			5 Lowest Rates		
County	2010 Q3	YOY % Change	County	2010 Q3	YOY % Change
Bingham	1.5%	0.3	Boise	0.0%	-0.4
Gem	1.5%	0.3	Boundary	0.0%	-1.1
Bannock	1.2%	-0.1	Owyhee	0.0%	-0.4
Bonneville	1.1%	0.4	Cassia	0.2%	-0.8
Jefferson	1.1%	0.5	Caribou	0.3%	-0.3

Nationwide 10.6 percent of student loan payments are delinquent 60 days or longer – up a tenth of a point from last year. In all, 15 of Idaho’s counties are above the national rate.

Student loan delinquency has fluctuated by large amounts over the last year. Shoshone County student loan delinquency decreased by 14.3 percentage points while Clearwater County increased by 11.7 percentage points. As the price of education has increased and the job market remains depressed, students will continue to find repaying student loans difficult. A table showing debt information in each category by Idaho county is on page 6.

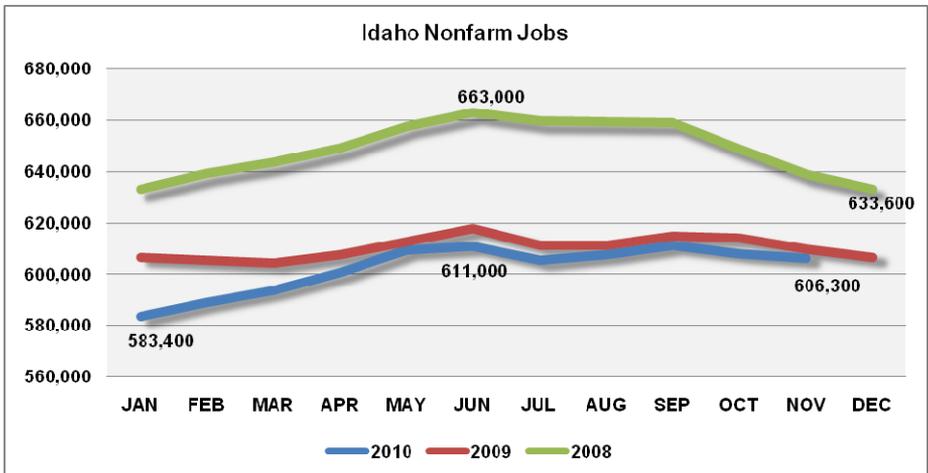
Will.Jenson@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist
(208) 557-2500 ext. 3077

Student Loans (Delinquent 60+ Days)

5 Highest Rates			5 Lowest Rates		
County	2010 Q3	YOY Change	County	2010 Q3	YOY Change
Washington	14.8%	9.7	Teton	4.5%	-7.2
Caribou	14.5%	-0.7	Gooding	4.7%	-8.7
Benewah	14.4%	8.3	Boise	5.0%	0.6
Shoshone	13.6%	-14.3	Power	5.8%	1.8
Clearwater	13.5%	11.7	Bonneville	6.8%	-1.7

IDAHO’S JOB RECOVERY TO REMAIN FLAT IN 2011

Record-breaking job losses that marked Idaho’s economy in 2009 ended last winter. Limited growth in early 2010 brought a return of seasonal job patterns. But what few job gains Idaho experienced came in fits and starts, stalling last spring not just below the depressed levels of 2009 but below the levels of 2005.

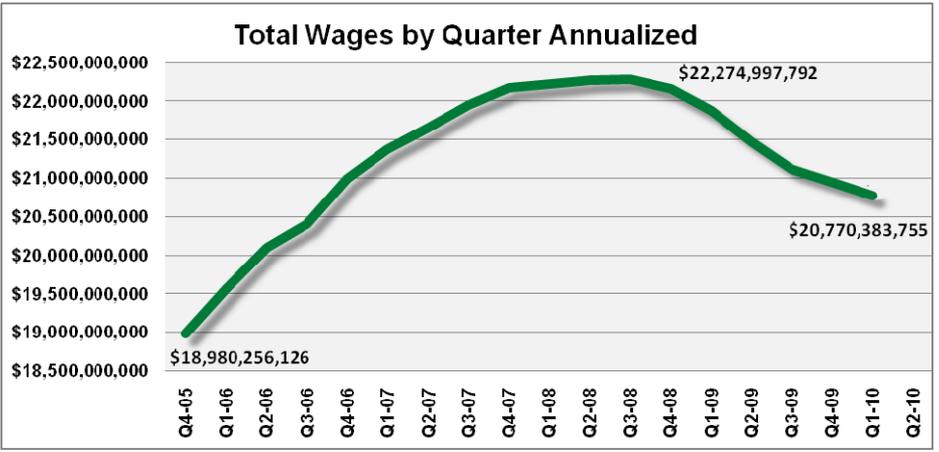


The economy shed over 50,000 jobs by the time it hit bottom in August 2009 – a year-over-year loss of 7.3 percent.

Idaho Debt Summary by County

# of Homes	Location	Prime Foreclosure		All Mortgages (90+ Days Delinquent)		Bank Cards (Delinquent 60+ Days)		Auto Loans (Delinquent 60+ Days)		Student Loans (Delinquent 60+ Days)	
		10-Sep	YtY Change	2010 Q3	YtY Change	2010 Q3	YtY Change	2010 Q3	YtY Change	2010 Q3	YtY Change
	National	2.9%	0.4%	5.3%	0.3%	1.3%	-0.4%	1.1%	-0.3%	10.6%	0.1%
641,479	State of Idaho	2.2%	0.2%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
155,919	Ada	2.3%	0.2%	4.3%	0.1%	1.2%	-0.6%	0.9%	-0.1%	8.9%	0.4%
2,456	Adams	4.4%	1.0%	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
32,034	Bannock	1.3%	-0.2%	2.3%	-0.7%	1.1%	-0.6%	1.2%	-0.1%	8.5%	0.0%
3,621	Bear Lake	2.0%	-0.1%	3.2%	0.1%	1.1%	0.3%	1.0%	-0.8%	10.0%	-1.9%
4,364	Benewah	1.2%	-0.1%	4.7%	2.1%	2.3%	1.2%	0.4%	-1.0%	14.4%	8.3%
15,655	Bingham	1.4%	0.1%	3.4%	0.7%	1.1%	-0.4%	1.5%	0.3%	10.8%	2.3%
14,515	Blaine	2.5%	0.7%	5.9%	1.0%	1.1%	-0.1%	0.7%	-0.2%	10.2%	6.3%
5,149	Boise	2.4%	0.4%	5.5%	2.9%	0.8%	-0.7%	0.0%	-0.4%	5.0%	0.6%
19,864	Bonner	1.6%	-0.3%	3.4%	0.1%	1.5%	-0.5%	0.6%	-1.0%	8.2%	-0.8%
38,265	Bonneville	1.5%	0.0%	2.9%	0.3%	1.1%	-0.7%	1.1%	0.4%	6.8%	-1.7%
4,734	Boundary	1.6%	0.3%	3.5%	-0.6%	1.8%	0.5%	0.0%	-1.1%	12.0%	11.2%
1,286	Butte	1.2%	0.0%	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
739	Camas	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
67,954	Canyon	4.0%	0.4%	6.3%	-0.7%	1.7%	-0.7%	1.0%	-0.7%	12.5%	1.3%
3,283	Caribou	2.0%	1.0%	2.4%	1.2%	0.9%	0.4%	0.3%	-0.3%	14.5%	-0.7%
8,183	Cassia	1.9%	0.0%	1.6%	-0.2%	1.2%	0.0%	0.2%	-0.8%	9.1%	-12.2%
557	Clark	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
4,330	Clearwater	1.8%	0.3%	2.3%	-0.4%	1.1%	-0.4%	0.4%	0.0%	13.5%	11.7%
3,036	Custer	0.9%	0.6%	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
12,128	Elmore	1.2%	0.3%	2.5%	0.4%	1.3%	-0.1%	0.9%	0.2%	10.8%	3.3%
4,405	Franklin	1.3%	0.1%	2.4%	-1.9%	0.5%	-0.2%	0.7%	0.3%	8.5%	-13.6%
7,939	Fremont	1.9%	0.3%	5.1%	2.4%	1.7%	0.8%	0.7%	-0.5%	8.8%	-5.3%
6,836	Gem	2.9%	-0.1%	5.0%	0.6%	0.7%	-1.0%	1.5%	0.3%	12.3%	-1.6%
6,026	Gooding	1.6%	0.1%	4.7%	2.1%	1.4%	-0.7%	0.9%	-0.5%	4.7%	-8.7%
7,706	Idaho	1.7%	0.5%	1.4%	-1.3%	0.9%	-0.4%	0.9%	0.0%	8.0%	3.8%
8,140	Jefferson	2.2%	0.1%	2.1%	-1.6%	1.3%	-0.7%	1.1%	0.5%	9.2%	6.0%
7,519	Jerome	2.3%	0.4%	2.9%	-0.2%	1.9%	-0.1%	0.8%	-0.6%	13.1%	6.3%
60,162	Kootenai	2.1%	0.2%	4.4%	0.7%	1.2%	-0.8%	0.7%	-0.4%	10.1%	0.2%
15,340	Latah	0.6%	0.1%	1.2%	-0.2%	1.3%	0.4%	0.3%	-0.8%	8.6%	-0.7%
4,485	Lemhi	0.7%	-0.2%	1.7%	-1.9%	0.2%	-1.8%	0.5%	0.1%	8.5%	-1.2%
1,825	Lewis	1.3%	0.6%	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
1,816	Lincoln	4.9%	3.1%	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
11,094	Madison	1.1%	0.0%	1.8%	-0.1%	1.2%	0.3%	0.9%	0.2%	9.9%	-2.3%
7,587	Minidoka	1.4%	-1.0%	1.7%	-0.3%	1.3%	-1.3%	1.1%	-0.5%	11.8%	3.1%
16,891	Nez Perce	1.0%	0.0%	2.7%	-0.7%	1.4%	0.0%	0.7%	0.2%	9.4%	1.2%
1,841	Oneida	1.1%	-0.6%	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
4,838	Owyhee	2.4%	0.7%	2.5%	0.1%	1.5%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.4%	11.9%	-2.9%
8,982	Payette	2.1%	0.3%	4.7%	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%	1.1%	-1.2%	9.4%	-2.4%
3,021	Power	2.2%	1.8%	3.6%	2.4%	2.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%	5.8%	1.8%
7,271	Shoshone	3.1%	-0.3%	3.6%	-0.3%	2.0%	-0.9%	0.6%	-0.8%	13.6%	-14.3%
4,898	Teton	4.4%	1.9%	7.3%	3.9%	1.3%	0.3%	0.9%	-0.3%	4.5%	-7.2%
30,179	Twin Falls	2.3%	0.7%	2.7%	0.0%	1.6%	-0.1%	0.6%	-0.1%	11.2%	1.5%
10,172	Valley	4.0%	0.2%	6.3%	-1.1%	1.6%	-0.4%	0.5%	0.0%	12.9%	1.9%
4,417	Washington	2.2%	0.3%	4.5%	-1.7%	0.8%	-0.5%	0.4%	-0.7%	14.8%	9.7%

Source: Federal Reserve Bank of New York — U.S. Credit Conditions Report.



Wages plunged by \$1.5 billion, a 6.4 percent loss.

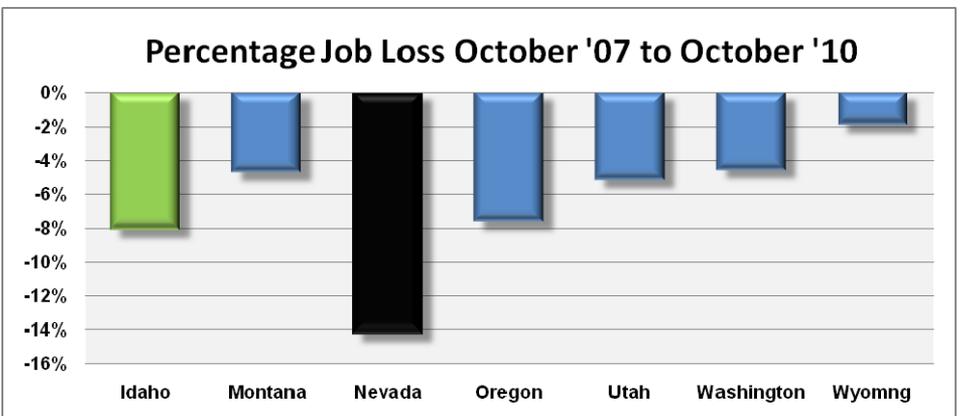
And there was a net loss of more than 2,500 employers from the beginning of the recession at the end of 2007 through the beginning of 2010 – a 4.3 percent decline.

Small businesses – those with fewer than 50 workers – bore the brunt of the recession. They provide nearly half the jobs and 44 percent of the wages in Idaho. From mid-2008, when the state finally started to really feel the recession, through last June, the number of small businesses dropped by 2,500.

Three-quarters of that loss – almost 1,900 – came in Fiscal Year 2009 and translated into nearly 21,000 jobs.

The state's job loss has slowed, but even so another 650 small businesses disappeared in Fiscal Year 2010 – taking with them another 5,300 jobs.

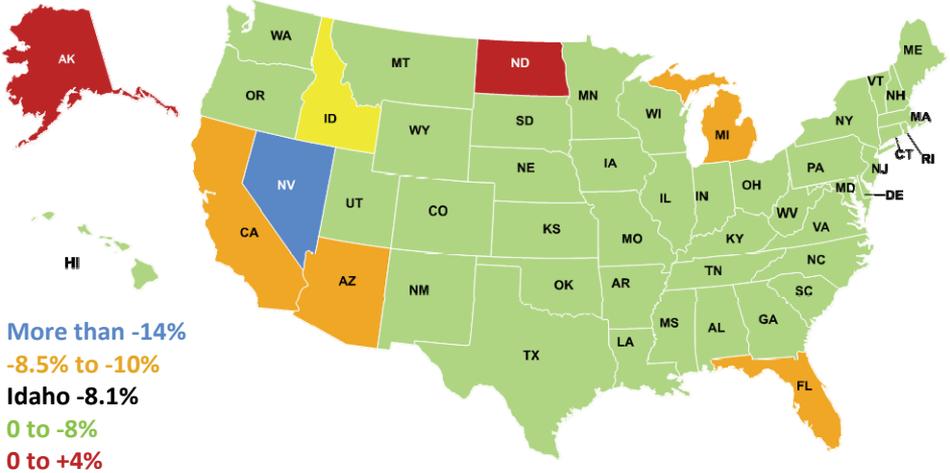
Idaho's job loss since the recession began was among the worst nationally and regionally.



At 8.1 percent, Idaho's job loss from October 2007 through this past October was second only to Nevada among the bordering states and sixth among all the states. Nevada posted the highest job loss at over 14 percent followed by Arizona, Florida, Michigan and California.

The state unemployment rate pushed to 9.5 percent last February – one tenth of a point short of the record set in December 1982 through February 1983.

Percentage Job Loss by State, October 2007-October 2010



Idaho's unemployment rate slipped back to 8.8 percent last summer before moving higher to 9.5 percent in December, the first time in over nine years that the state rate has exceeded the national rate, which was 9.4 percent.

The job statistics underscore the state's unemployment rate and Idaho's standing nationally. With one of the worst job losses in the country during this recession, Idaho has also experienced the greatest increase in its unemployment rate. See state comparison chart on page 9.

The state's unemployment rate soared from 3.4 percent in November 2007, the month before the recession began, to 9.5 percent in December – more than 176 percent.

By contrast, the national rate rose 109 percent from 4.7 percent to 9.8 percent in November before dropping back to 9.4 percent in December.

Unemployment benefits have been running at or near record levels from the state Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund for the past three years – and those amounts have been augmented by federally financed extended benefits.

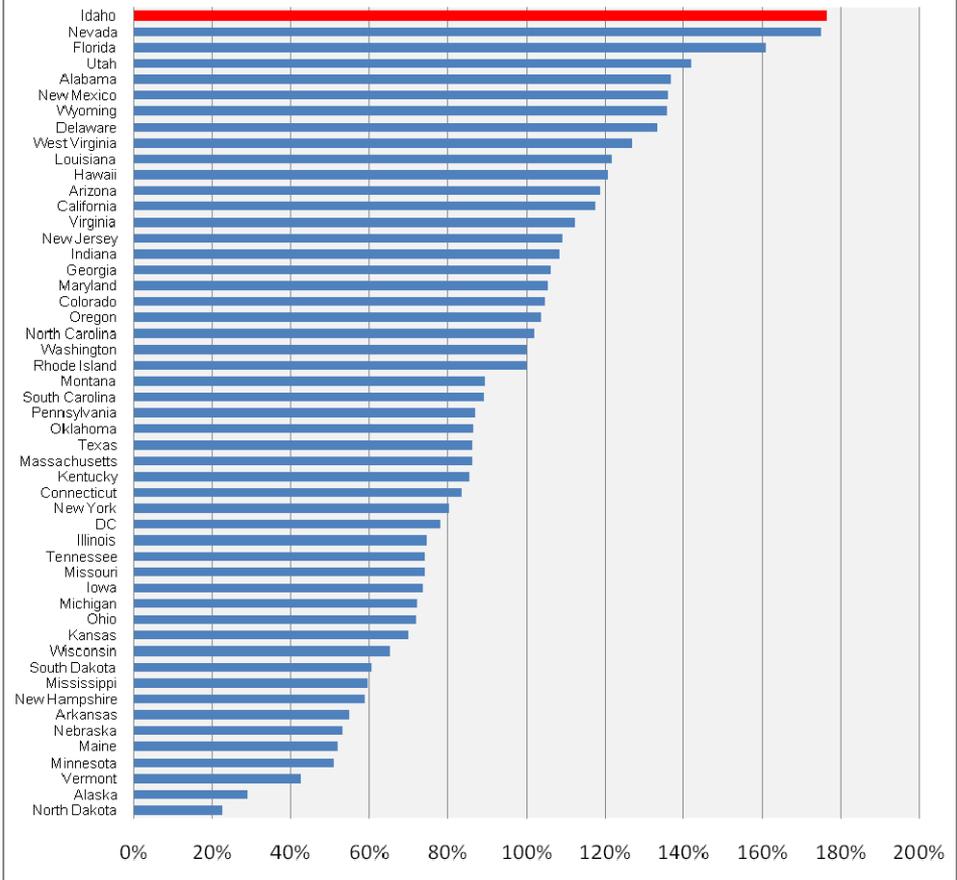
Regular benefit payments hit a record \$224 million in 2008, and Idaho didn't feel the brunt of the recession until the second half of that year.

Idaho broke that record in 2009 with regular benefits totaling over \$400 million, and while the total was down in 2010, it was still the second highest payout ever at \$290 million. More than 116,000 workers received benefits in 2009 and another 114,000 in 2010. In all, over 165,000 workers have received benefits since the recession began – a quarter of the state labor force.

The state had to borrow \$202 million from the federal government to pay benefits through the middle of 2010 when claims finally fell back in line with revenue from employer taxes.

Nearly three dozen states had to borrow from the federal government after their trust funds went broke. It does not look like Idaho will have to borrow any

Change in Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate by State, November 2007 to November 2010



additional money under the current outlook, which does not contemplate the economy slipping back into another recession anytime soon.

Depleting the trust fund and resorting to federal loans pushed employer tax rates to their legal maximum in 2010 – just two years after they were at a record low. Rates will remain at the maximum, and the maximum benefit for workers will stay at its legal minimum for the next five years.

Individual employers will see rate increases and decreases however, as they move among the 14 rate classes based on their experience with unemployment claims. Today’s average effective rate, despite recent large increases, is still below the average effective rates employers experienced from 1983 through 1988.

With anywhere from three to five unemployed workers for every job opening in Idaho over the past two years, new employment is eluding tens of thousands of the people laid off during this downturn.

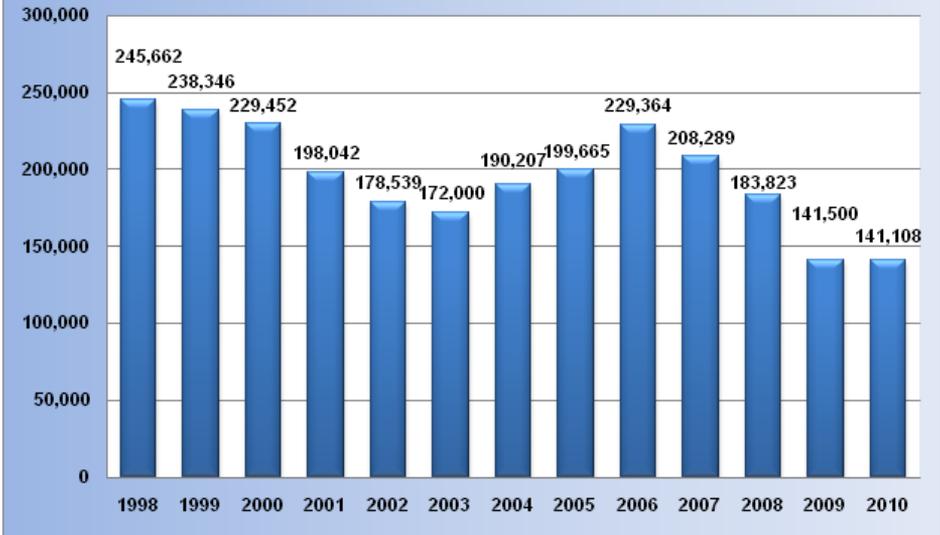
In November, just over 52.9 percent of unemployment claimants exhausted regular benefits of 10 to 26 weeks without finding work – matching the record exhaustion rate of 52.9 percent in May 1983.

Employers were hiring in 2010, but at the slowest pace since they began reporting their new hires in late 1997. Employers hired only 141,100 new employees last year – 400 fewer than the dismal hiring statistics of 2009.

Up until this recession, the lowest level of new hiring was 172,000 in 2003, and the annual average for all those up through 2008 was over 200,000. See Idaho New Hires chart on page 10.

Extended benefits of 28 to 73 weeks, paid by the federal government, have been important to Idaho’s long-term unemployed workers in these conditions.

Idaho New Hires



The state's jobless benefit program helps keep qualified workers in Idaho by providing limited resources so they can continue to pay the rent or mortgage, buy food for their families, clothes for their kids and pay the utility bills.

The hundreds of millions of dollars idled Idaho workers have received over the past three years have gone directly to businesses in their communities, helping many keep their doors open. Economic Modeling Specialists in Moscow estimates that one job is saved for every \$80,000 paid in unemployment benefits.

The millions of dollars in benefits pumped back into Idaho's economy have eased the recession's economic drag.

But they by no means eliminated the financial struggle for idled Idaho workers, whose average benefit was less than \$240 a week last year – about \$6 an hour.

Personal income – the total of all wages, business profits, investment earnings and payments like pensions and Social Security – declined for four consecutive quarters from mid-2008 to mid-2009.

It was the only time in over 40 years that there have been consecutive quarterly declines in personal income.

The average annual wage dropped 4 percent from nearly \$33,900 in 2008 to just over \$32,500 in 2009.

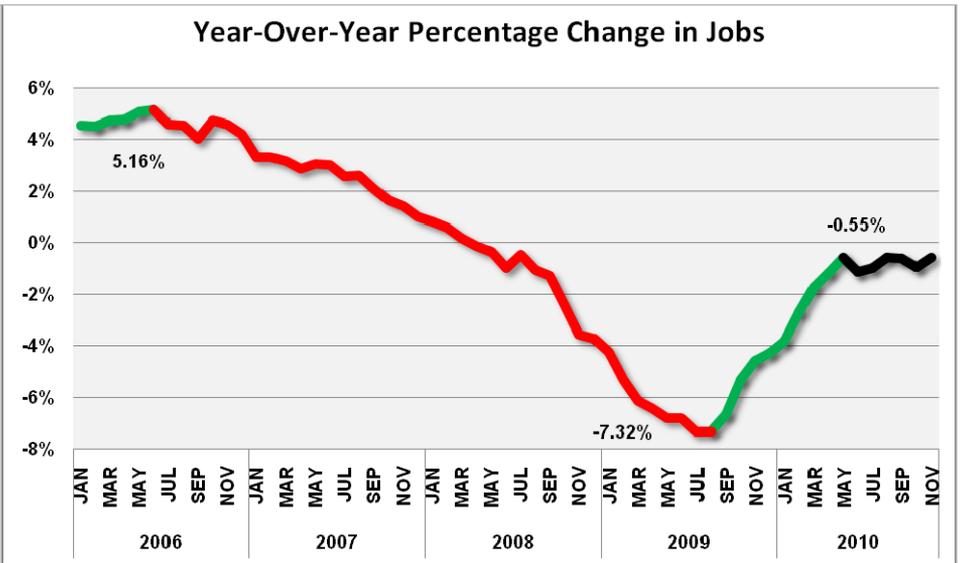
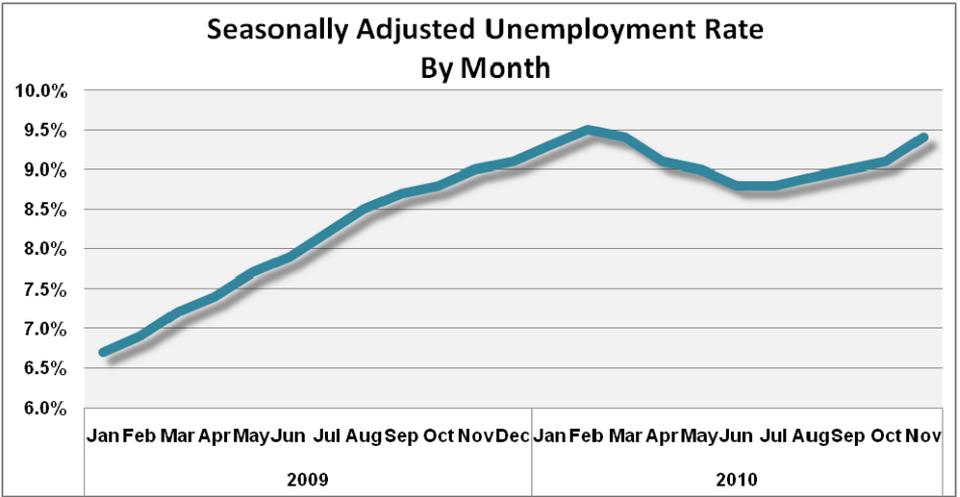
The Census Bureau reported that median household income fell from 2008 to 2009 in 26 Idaho counties and was essentially stagnant in six more.

At the same time, the poverty rate rose in 35 counties. Only seven counties saw their poverty rates decline in 2009 while two held their own against the recession.

Clearly the recession had a much more stinging impact than the department analysts anticipated a year ago. Job growth that was expected to begin in the second half of 2010 has yet to occur, and except for three months last summer, the unemployment rate has consistently been at or above 9 percent.

Idaho fell into this deep recession relatively quickly compared to other states, and it will be slow coming back.

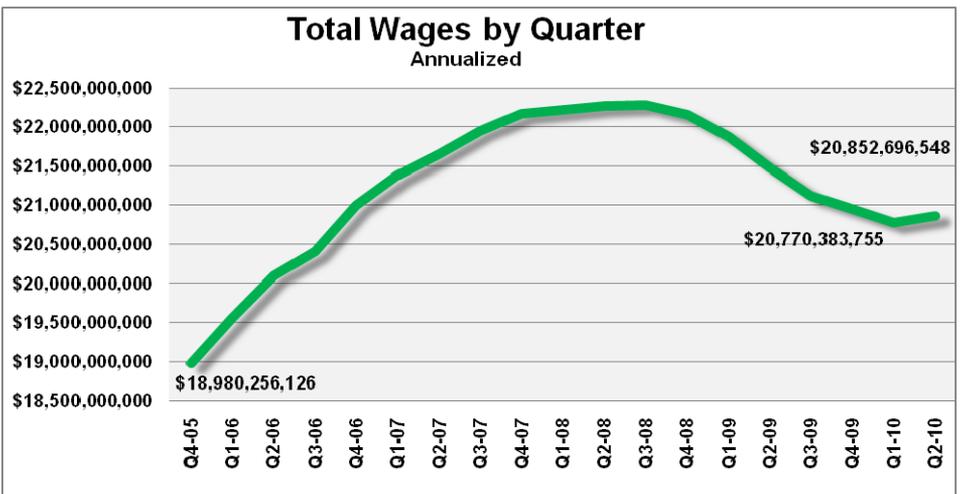
From the time the economy began to lose steam in mid-2006, it took 22 months for jobs to erode to the point the monthly totals fell below the year-earlier levels. Sixteen months later – during July and August 2009 – year-over-year job losses bottomed out at 7.3 percent.



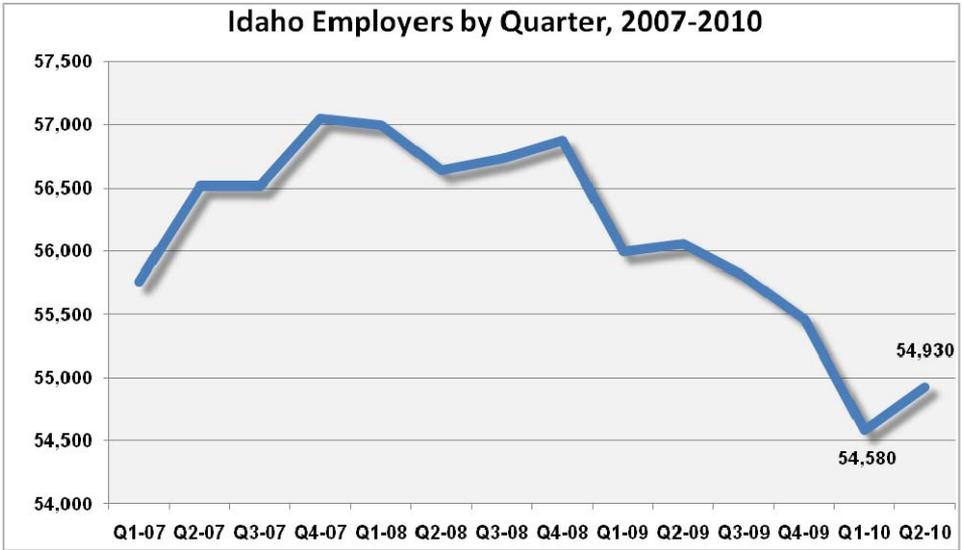
A fairly rapid improvement during the fall of 2009 and winter of 2010 sputtered out last spring, and the economy has been stuck since.

There are, however, some signs that the economy is ready to finally begin moving up.

Last spring total wages, using a four-quarter rolling total, increased after six straight quarterly losses. Obviously it was not the result of hiring.



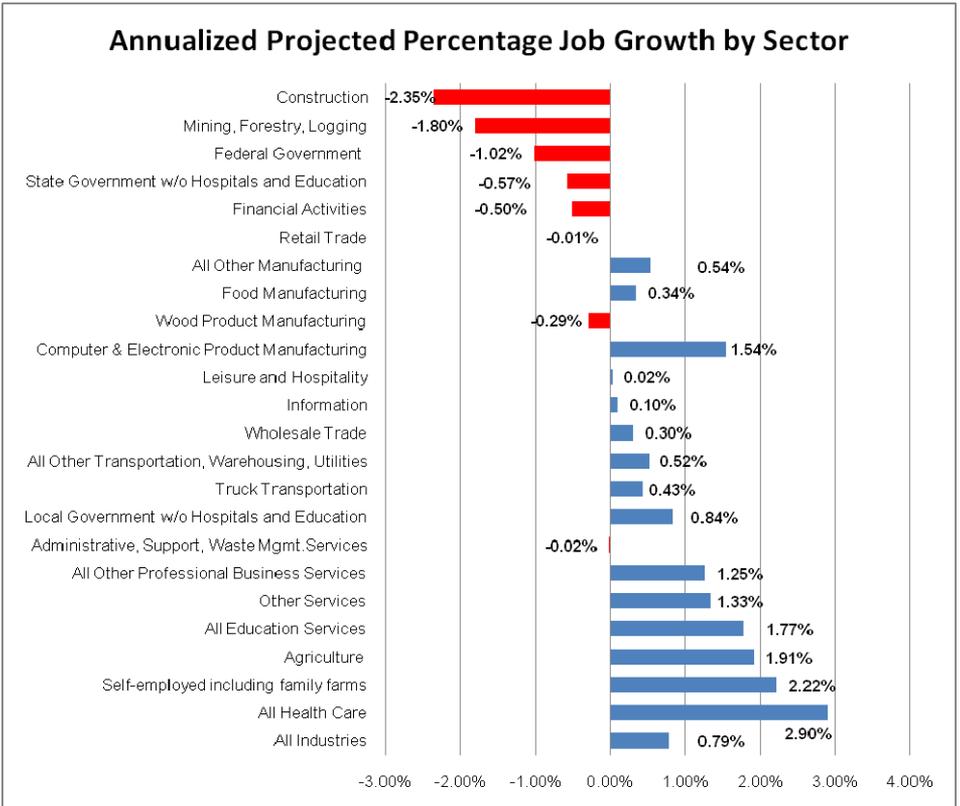
Employers appeared to have begun restoring the hours they cut to cope with the recession and rewarding some remaining employees for taking on extra responsibilities.



The number of employers also took its first significant upturn this spring since the end of 2008. The net increase was only modest – just a few hundred. But it is an indication of returning optimism about the future and prospects for turning a profit.

Still there has been no change in the projection that Idaho’s nonfarm job total will not return to prerecession levels until 2014, and the recovery of construction, which drove Idaho's expansion from 2004 through 2007, is still 15 to 20 years away.

The outlook is for growth but limited growth.



Through mid-2012 Idaho's job growth on an annualized basis will be about eight-tenths of a percent - 10,000 jobs over the next 18 months starting this spring or early summer.

Construction and financial services traditionally linked to construction remain extremely weak spots in the Idaho economy. The recession's impact on the tax structure - and the politics surrounding it - will mean fewer government jobs.

Manufacturing - another source of good-paying job growth following the 2001 recession - has stabilized outside wood products and is expected to provide fractional growth.

Sluggishness will continue in the administrative and support services sector that relies on business expansion for its growth, and retail trade will hold its own as consumers continue to adjust to what many believe is a new - and more reserved - economic reality.

Population growth drives job increases in education and health care - the only two Idaho sectors that rode out the recession without losing ground.

Idaho's slow job growth will continue to prop up the unemployment rate. The rate in 2009 averaged 8 percent. The only higher rates since the current statistical method was adopted in the mid-1970s were during the 1980s double dip recession - 9 percent in 1982, 8.8 percent in 1983 and 8.1 percent in 1986.

Adjusted for the state's fiscal year, the rate in Fiscal Year 2010, which ended last June, was 8.6 percent. Since unemployment is a lagging indicator, the average rate for FY 2011 could hit 8.9 percent before beginning to recede in the Fiscal Year 2012, dropping to around 8.3 percent.

While subject to revision as more statistical information becomes available, the jobless rate will remain high, especially compared to the record low rates Idaho experienced in the months leading up to the recession.

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

ED EFFORTS ADD BRIGHT SPOT TO SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

While the economic picture so far in 2011 is rather grim, southeastern Idaho sees some promise with Project 60 - Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter's statewide initiative to increase Idaho's gross domestic product from \$51 billion to \$60 billion. Project 60's three-point plan to strengthen the state's rural and urban communities includes fostering systematic growth, recruiting new companies and selling Idaho's trade and investment opportunities internationally.

Idaho's December unemployment rate of 9.5 percent was higher than the nation's for the first time in more than nine years, matching the February 2010 rate and stopping just as tenth of a point short of the record in February 1983.

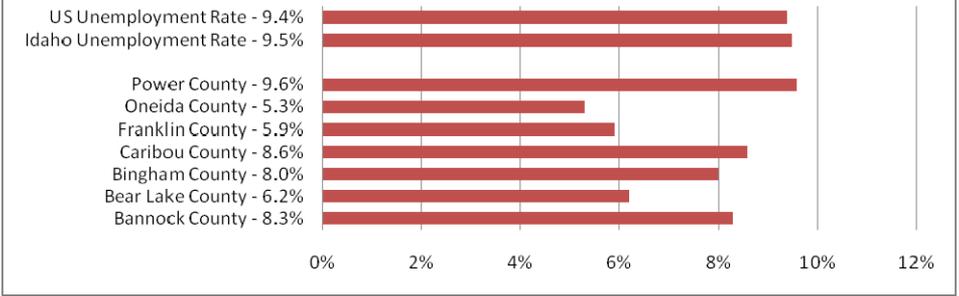
While the state's southeastern region is lower at 8 percent in November, some counties continue to suffer serious unemployment.

Project 60 fosters systematic growth by providing better mechanisms for technology transfer from Idaho's universities and the Idaho National Laboratory to the commercial sector and strives to build the skill and talent level of Idaho's work force.

The plan's domestic recruitment is a grassroots effort to use state business owners and executives to promote Idaho to business leaders in other states and even overseas. No one can speak more convincingly about the opportunities Idaho offers business than those who have already succeeded in Idaho.

Project 60 uses direct foreign investment not only to bring money to the state, but new ideas and people as well. Idaho uses the EB-5 Program, which

SE Idaho County Unemployment Rates*



*Idaho Department of Labor data. National and state unemployment rates for December 2010, county rates for November 2010.

allows wealthy foreign nations to invest \$500,000 that creates at least 10 jobs in return for a visa allowing them to stay in America.

Beyond that Project 60 has fostered greater cooperation and communication between local government, community economic development organizations and the state. The Idaho Department of Labor has been a key partner in Project 60 and has worked closely with state and local officials to promote economic development throughout the state.

The impact has been positive in southeastern Idaho. The new Allstate call center in Chubbuck, which will create at least 500 new jobs, is result of Project 60. Expansions and additional hiring at Hoku, Premier Technologies and On Semiconductor all bode well for the future of high technology in the region. The new positions created at these four companies will create another 700 to 800 jobs in other sectors of the local economy.

Firms are attracted to southeastern Idaho in large part by the quality of the region's work force. The Idaho Department of Labor is working with other organizations through the Regional Workforce Innovation Team to enhance that work force even more.

The team serves Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, Caribou, Clark, Custer, Franklin, Fremont, Jefferson, Madison, Oneida, Power and Teton counties. Support comes from the U.S. Department of Labor's Regional Innovation Grant program through the Idaho Department of Labor.

The team is focused on improving the region's prosperity through targeted economic and work force development strategies. Eastern Idaho's future prosperity is tied to its residents having access to high paying employment opportunities.

Science and technology are expected to provide most of those high paying career opportunities, and the skills and education of southeastern Idaho's work force will determine the economic future of the region.

The regional team provides business and educational organizations a forum on the educational and training needs of the region's future generations. Much of its efforts are focused on promoting science, mathematics, engineering and technology based education for students.

The regional team and Project 60 both promise to provide a brighter future for Idaho, representing the valuable contributions the Idaho Department of Labor is making to southeastern Idaho's economy.

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

CASINO PROJECT MAY BRING GREEN JOBS TO MONTPELIER

Casino gaming and hotels are not usually associated with green jobs or environmentally friendly practices, but the two could come together through the efforts of Triad Resorts.

Early in 2008 Triad Resorts bought 33 acres of land in the Montpelier Industrial Park for manufacturing modular rooms for the proposed Spanish Bit Casino and Resort in Jackpot, Nev.

The casino would feature: 600 rooms; a spa; a 120,000-square-foot full-scale casino, restaurants, retail shops, a 40,000-square-foot indoor water park, an 80,000-square-foot events center with maximum capacity of 5,000 for rodeos, concerts, poker tournaments and other major events; and an outfitter station to provide guests various outdoor recreational activities.

The modular rooms Triad hopes to build for the casino are not ordinary. They would be certified LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

Triad planned to manufacture rooms for other projects as well. The recession has gotten in the way, but Amy Bishop, the economic development director for Montpelier, estimates the plant, when completed, will provide up to 200 new jobs for the area. Triad is currently seeking venture funding before it begins construction of its facility, Bishop said.

LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification system established by the U.S. Green Building Council to provide building owners, architects and contractors with a concise framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design practices, construction techniques and environmentally friendly operational solutions.

A key aspect of LEED design is an open and transparent process where the technical criteria proposed by the council are publicly reviewed during an approval process. All 20,000 members of the council have the opportunity to comment and make suggestions regarding a proposed design.

The council's Green Building Certification Institute subjects members, before they join the organization, to a rigorous certification process involving their knowledge of green building and design practices.

The institute provides training and examinations leading to certifications as a LEED Accredited Professional and LEED Green Associate. It also acts as a third-party certifier for LEED projects.

In the United States and worldwide demand for LEED certified buildings is growing. Over 14,000 projects, representing over a 1 billion square feet of building space, have received LEED certification in the United States and 30 other nations. The council predicts major growth in green construction and design practices in the coming years.

Bishop says that Triad Resorts hopes to develop a chain of motels called "EcoStay." The lodging will use LEED approved designs and be cost competitive with chains such as Motel 6 and Super 8. Given EcoStay's green friendly design, Triad hopes it will have a wide appeal to travelers who are concerned about environmental issues.

Information on LEED design or the council is at <http://www.usgbc.org/>.

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

MORE CHILDREN IN POVERTY IN SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO

New Census Bureau statistics show an increase of 683 school children living in poverty in south central Idaho's 21 school districts.

The Census Bureau found that most school districts in south central Idaho and statewide experienced an increased rate of poverty among public school students during the 19-month recession that ran from December 2007 through June 2009.

A family of four – two adults and two children – with an income of \$21,756 or less is considered living in poverty.

But the economic deterioration in terms of children living in poverty was greater in south central Idaho than the state as a whole. The region had 17.5 percent of school-age children living in poverty in 2009, up from 16.3 percent in 2006, while statewide it was 16.4 percent, an increase from 13.9 percent in 2006.

There are cases where traditional parental roles have reversed after fathers lose their jobs and mothers who have worked in the home or held part-time jobs have had to become the main breadwinner. In cases involving a mother who has been out of the work force for some time, their lack of experience, specific job skills or education have resulted in much smaller paychecks than the family was living on before.

The higher regional poverty rate could be expected in south central Idaho because of its rural makeup and typically limited composition of jobs. Urban areas offering more industrial jobs and larger employers have traditionally provided higher wages than rural areas.

Five of the school districts in the region had participation rate above 100 percent, indicating that more kids are attending the schools than the Census Bureau estimated were living in that district. This is likely a result of those districts being perceived as having certain advantages or being more convenient. Most school districts allow additional students although there are usually caps that limit their overall number.

The two charter schools in Twin Falls and the one in Gooding were not included because they were not operating in 2006. North Valley Academy in Gooding siphoned off a large number of students although the district began recovering in the 2010-2011 school. Superintendent Heather Williams said up to 75 new students enrolled when their families moved into the community, many without jobs, to live with or near other family members as the recession wore on.

School aged children in south central Idaho as a percentage of the total population has grown throughout the recession by 16.4 percent regionwide. Over half the school districts have a greater poverty rate than the average, and only one district has seen its school-age poverty rate drop. Bliss School District's rate dropped nearly two percentage points as its enrollment sank from 170 in 2006 to 156 in 2009.

In small groups such as Bliss, any minor movement can trigger significant percentage swings. The largest rate increase was in the Camas School District – a swing of 64 percent as the number of students in poverty rose from 14 to 23. More significant was Kimberly where an increase of 50 students living in poverty translated into a jump of 48.1 percent.

Experts have concluded that poverty adversely affects children's ability to learn, leaving those living in poverty more likely to drop out of high school compared to students from better circumstances. See charts on pages 17-18 showing enrollment, population and poverty data by south central Idaho school districts.

*[Jan Roeser@labor.idaho.gov](mailto:Jan.Roeser@labor.idaho.gov), Regional Economist
(208) 735-2500 ext. 3639
More on page 17*

District	2009 Total Population	2006 Total Population	2009 5-17 Population	2009 % of Total Population	2006 5-17 Population	2006 % of Total Population
Blaine County School District 61	22,328	21,501	3,581	16.0%	3,506	16.3%
Bliss Joint School District 234	811	810	147	18.1%	143	17.7%
Buhl Joint School District 412	9,837	9,361	1,844	18.7%	1,745	18.6%
Camas County School District 121	1,109	1,088	162	14.6%	164	15.1%
Cassia County Joint School District 151	21,203	20,844	4,985	23.5%	4,803	23.0%
Castlefjord School District 417	1,598	1,517	367	23.0%	348	22.9%
Dietrich School District 314	684	658	181	26.5%	155	23.6%
Filer School District 413	6,831	6,532	1,449	21.2%	1,396	21.4%
Gooding Joint School District 231	6,245	6,236	1,346	21.6%	1,297	20.8%
Hagerman Joint School District 233	2,302	2,282	402	17.5%	383	16.8%
Hansen School District 415	2,188	2,102	496	22.7%	475	22.6%
Jerome Joint School District 261	17,662	16,725	3,742	21.2%	3,499	20.9%
Kimberly School District 414	5,464	5,190	1,259	23.0%	1,187	22.9%
Minidoka County Joint School District 331	20,226	20,016	4,416	21.8%	4,301	21.5%
Murtaugh Joint School District 418	1,215	1,142	303	24.9%	284	24.9%
Richfield School District 316	998	973	244	24.4%	215	22.1%
Shoshone Joint School District 312	2,719	2,653	586	21.6%	524	19.8%
Three Creek Joint Elemen. School District 416	85	83	11	12.9%	11	13.3%
Twin Falls School District 411	48,143	45,726	8,500	17.7%	8,009	17.5%
Valley School District 262	3,373	3,202	775	23.0%	727	22.7%
Wendell School District 232	5,039	5,041	1,104	21.9%	1,071	21.2%

District	2009 Enrollment	2006 Enrollment	Change	% Change	% of 5-17 attending School 2009	% of 5-17 attending School 2006
Blaine County School District 61	3,316	3,175	141	4.4%	92.6%	90.6%
Bliss Joint School District 234	157	170	-13	-7.6%	106.8%	118.9%
Buhl Joint School District 412	1,317	1,326	-9	-0.7%	71.4%	76.0%
Camas County School District 121	160	159	1	0.6%	98.8%	97.0%
Cassia County Joint School District 151	5,191	5,059	132	2.6%	104.1%	105.3%
Castlefjord School District 417	307	299	8	2.7%	83.7%	85.9%
Dietrich School District 314	250	197	53	26.9%	138.1%	127.1%
Filer School District 413	1,375	1,405	-30	-2.1%	94.9%	100.6%
Gooding Joint School District 231	1,144	1,318	-174	-13.2%	85.0%	101.6%
Hagerman Joint School District 233	384	419	-35	-8.4%	95.5%	109.4%
Hansen School District 415	407	422	-15	-3.6%	82.1%	88.8%
Jerome Joint School District 261	3,613	3,354	259	7.7%	96.6%	95.9%
Kimberly School District 414	1,420	1,369	51	3.7%	112.8%	115.3%
Minidoka County Joint School District 331	4,116	4,067	49	1.2%	93.2%	94.6%
Murtaugh Joint School District 418	252	229	23	10.0%	83.2%	80.6%
Richfield School District 316	209	222	-13	-5.9%	85.7%	103.3%
Shoshone Joint School District 312	611	580	31	5.3%	104.3%	110.7%
Three Creek Joint Elemen. School District 416	6	4	2	50.0%	54.5%	36.4%
Twin Falls School District 411	7,636	7,336	300	4.1%	89.8%	91.6%
Valley School District 262	641	676	-35	-5.2%	82.7%	93.0%
Wendell School District 232	1,062	1,120	-58	-5.2%	96.2%	104.6%

More on page 18

Name	2009 Related Children 5-17 Living in Poverty	2006 Related Children 5-17 Living in Poverty	% Change	Annual Average % Change	2009 Poverty Rate	2006 Poverty Rate
Blaine County School District 61	348	281	23.8%	7.4%	9.7%	8.0%
Bliss Joint School District 234	14	16	-12.5%	-4.4%	9.5%	11.2%
Buhl Joint School District 412	292	283	3.2%	1.0%	15.8%	16.2%
Camas County School District 121	23	14	64.3%	18.0%	14.2%	8.5%
Cassia County Joint School District 151	994	921	7.9%	2.6%	19.9%	19.2%
Castleford School District 417	88	84	4.8%	1.6%	24.0%	24.1%
Dietrich School District 314	56	45	24.4%	7.6%	30.9%	29.0%
Filer School District 413	225	213	5.6%	1.8%	15.5%	15.3%
Gooding Joint School District 231	314	278	12.9%	4.1%	23.3%	21.4%
Hagerman Joint School District 233	55	41	34.1%	10.3%	13.7%	10.7%
Hansen School District 415	123	120	2.5%	0.8%	24.8%	25.3%
Jerome Joint School District 261	785	598	31.3%	9.5%	21.0%	17.1%
Kimberly School District 414	154	104	48.1%	14.0%	12.2%	8.8%
Minidoka County Joint School District 331	849	778	9.1%	3.0%	19.2%	18.1%
Murtaugh Joint School District 418	69	64	7.8%	2.5%	22.8%	22.5%
Richfield School District 316	25	22	13.6%	4.4%	10.2%	10.2%
Shoshone Joint School District 312	70	61	14.8%	4.7%	11.9%	11.6%
Three Creek Joint Elementary School District 416	2	2	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	18.2%
Twin Falls School District 411	1,392	1,335	4.3%	1.4%	16.4%	16.7%
Valley School District 262	164	126	30.2%	9.2%	21.2%	17.3%
Wendell School District 232	225	198	13.6%	4.4%	20.4%	18.5%

POVERTY ON RISE IN NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

Hard times have pushed many north central Idahoans into poverty.

The number of the region's residents living below poverty jumped 7.5 percent, from 16,330 to 17,600, according to statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau. That jump was smaller than the national increase of 9.3 percent and less than half Idaho's 16.6 percent increases – an indication that the recession's toll on the region was less severe than most other areas in the country.

But the region's poverty rate was relatively high to begin with, and even with the more moderate increase during the recession north central Idaho continues to have a poverty rate higher than the nation and the state.

About 16.8 percent of the region's residents lived in poverty in 2009 compared to 14.3 percent of all Americans and 14.4 percent of all Idahoans. Latah County's especially high poverty rate stems from the high proportion of young adults living there. Many college students live below poverty, and other young adults also are more likely to be poor than older adults.

Percent of Population Living Below Poverty

	2009	2008
United States	14.3%	13.2%
State of Idaho	14.4%	12.5%
North Central Idaho	16.8%	15.7%
Clearwater County	16.5%	15.9%
Idaho County	21.0%	18.7%
Latah County	18.4%	20.7%
Lewis County	15.2%	14.2%
Nez Perce County	13.7%	12.9%

Poverty was up among all age groups. The economic turmoil pushed many young adults and their children into poverty. Young adults and teens have higher unemployment rates than older adults and are more likely to hold jobs that are part-time or seasonal. The number of north central Idahoans who

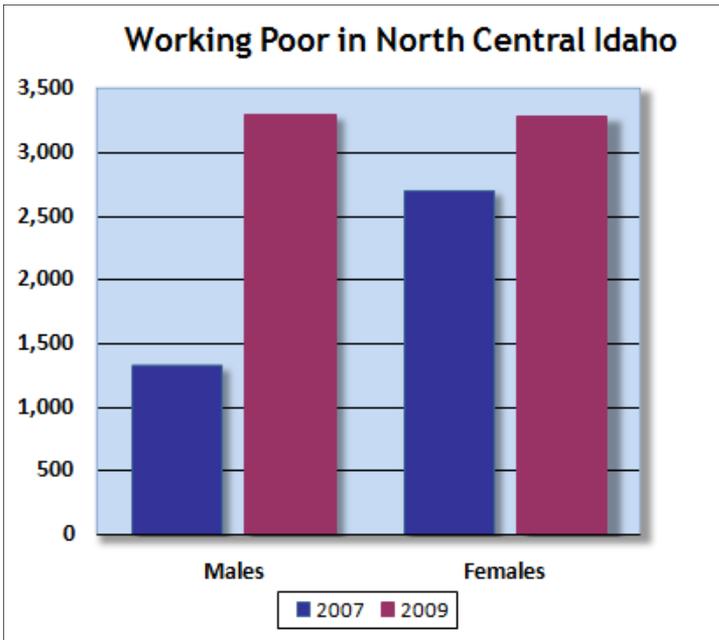
Percent of Age Group Living Below Poverty

	North Central Idaho		State of Idaho		United States	
	2009	2007	2009	2007	2009	2007
Under 18 years	25.5%	19.0%	18.1%	15.9%	20.0%	18.0%
18 to 24 years	44.0%	39.6%	26.3%	22.9%	23.8%	21.1%
25 to 44 years	16.1%	10.3%	14.0%	11.0%	13.0%	11.5%
45 to 64 years	9.0%	8.6%	8.4%	7.3%	9.5%	8.5%
65 years and over	6.5%	6.3%	8.3%	8.0%	9.5%	9.5%

lived in poverty and worked only part time soared 32.3 percent from 5,906 in 2007 to 7,814 in 2009.

Hard times affect the youngest most strongly. One of four children in north central Idaho was living in poverty in 2009.

Men in especially high numbers joined the ranks of the working poor – people with jobs but whose income is still below the poverty line. The loss of construction and forest products jobs affected men more than women. Unemployment rates for young men, in particular, increased much more steeply than for young women.



With high unemployment and economic uncertainty persisting, many more north central Idaho residents slipped into poverty in 2010.

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

LEWIS-CLARK PORTS DEAL WITH TEMPORARY SHUTDOWN

Barge traffic on the Snake and Columbia rivers shut down Dec. 10 for 14 weeks as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers makes major repairs on dam locks on the Columbia River. It is the longest shutdown in the history of the Columbia-Snake river system. The system typically shuts down for two to three weeks each March for routine maintenance. Winter was chosen for the long shutdown, because it is the slowest season for barge traffic. This year's much-needed repairs are expected to keep the system running for another 50 or 60 years.

The Port of Lewiston, the only container port in the Lewis-Clark Valley, is the most affected port there. Activity has slowed for some tenants of the Port of Wilma. The Port of Clarkston, which hosts cruise boats, does not normally have any boats dock this time of the year, so expects no impact.



Aerial view of Northport at the Port of Lewiston. Photo: Port of Lewiston.

The lock closure has caused a few layoffs at the three Lewis-Clark ports. TGM Investments, a transfer specialist located at the Port of Wilma normally employs anywhere from two to 24 people to load and unload barges, trucks, railroad and storage facilities. Its projects include unloading chips and sawdust for Clearwater Paper, shipping logs for Potlatch and helping move large equipment off barges. During the lock closure, only one employee remains. About 100 of Tidewater Barge Lines' 200 employees will be out of work for 10 to 12 weeks during the closure. In addition, some will be working reduced hours. Tidewater employs about a dozen people in the Lewis-Clark Valley.

Although shippers had plenty of notice and expected to ship products before the closure, a late harvest, followed by rain in Portland and high winds on the Snake and Columbia rivers, hampered efforts to barge grain from Lewiston to Portland ahead of the closure. Some captains won't allow their vessels to be loaded when any rain is falling because the moisture might affect the quality of the grain. Farmers who didn't ship before the closure will be trying to haul during planting season after the locks reopen this spring. They also may face road restrictions during the spring thaw that may prevent hauling.

The Port of Lewiston is helping shippers — and keeping its crew of seven working — by providing railroad transportation during the shutdown. Its container revenue is expected to fall 40 percent in the fiscal year ending June 30 despite the rail shipments as rail capacity isn't adequate to handle normal December-March container volume. It's more expensive to ship by rail, and the port does not have rail infrastructure sufficient to handle the same volume by rail as it handles by barge. Given some shippers' preference for avoiding the Port of Portland, Lewiston port manager David Doeringsfeld said the return of rail service to the port opens the door for longer term opportunities to use the rail service for container transport to the Puget Sound and other ports.

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

WSU BUDGET CUTS AFFECT BOTH SIDES OF STATE LINE

An emergency session of the Washington Legislature cut an additional \$7.5 million from Washington State University's budget for the year ending June 30. It was the third cut in this budget — \$13.5 million by the legislature last spring and another \$11.2 million by the governor in the fall.

Over the past 18 months, Washington State has lost 34 percent of its state funding while educating 25 percent more students at pre-2000 budget levels. Some of the budget cuts have resulted in reducing expenditures on equipment, catering, telephones and supplies. But now the school is bracing for more cuts in the next budget year as the state grapples with a projected \$5 billion shortfall.

The university may not be able to make further cuts without major restructuring, eliminating many programs and laying off personnel. The governor is proposing another 23.8 percent reduction in state appropriation to WSU in the coming biennial budget.

The school's budget troubles are having a chilling effect on retailers and service providers on both sides of the border — by reducing consumer spending power and creating uncertainty about the future of the local economy. Lower consumer spending means reduced sales tax collections for Whitman County and the city of Pullman. Helping to offset the budget cuts is the higher enrollment, which increases the size of the consumer population. The continued expansion at Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories along with rising farm income has also helped ease the impact.

Washington State's cuts may also jeopardize public transportation on both sides of the border. The school has proposed the elimination of its \$70,000 annual subsidy for the Wheatland Express shuttle between Pullman and Moscow. Started by the two universities in 1992, the hourly bus between the two campuses is free for students and costs \$2 for other riders.

Washington State's elimination of the subsidy not only would end the service, but it also would take away matching funds required to get the federal grants used to run Moscow's bus service. Valley Transit uses the subsidy, a \$70,000 subsidy from the University of Idaho and \$14,000 in annual fares to secure \$407,000 in federal grant money.

In a letter sent in December to a Washington State task force about the shuttle subsidy, Valley Transit Executive Director J.R. Van Tassel said the loss of matching funds could be crippling in maintaining eligibility for federal funds.

"What exists now in the Palouse is an intelligent, integrated, inter-community system that is maturing. What would remain would be two presumably damaged systems that would take years to restore." Van Tassel said the demand for Moscow bus service is rising and more routes are needed.

The University of Idaho also expects to deal with large budget cuts during the current legislative session, which is dealing with a \$340 million budget shortfall.

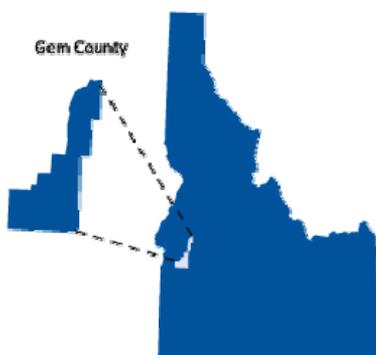
Kathryn.Tacke@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*
(208) 799-5000 ext. 3984

GEM COUNTY YEAR IN REVIEW

The year 2010 saw a significant increase in labor activity within the borders of Gem County. To put it in perspective, from the spring of 2007 to the spring of 2009, Gem County's employment covered under Idaho's unemployment insurance system declined by 11.7 percent from 3,400 to 3,000. By spring 2010, average employment had rebounded, increasing to 3,126. The majority of the increase can be attributed to the opening of the Emerald Forest Products mill, which hired around 50 people. In fact, the opening of the mill impacted the county unemployment rate by dropping it nearly 2 percentage points in May from the previous month.

As with the rest of Idaho, Gem County lost most of its employment in the construction industry, which is not likely to recover for some time. Retail was another sector that declined in Gem County, losing 60 jobs to fall to 290.

While the unemployment rate did not appear to move much compared to 2009, industries that showed year-over-year gains in employment grew three times as much as the employment-gaining industries from the year before. Also, industries that declined in 2010 did so at a much slower rate than in



2009. Declining industries employed only 64 fewer people than the year prior compared to a decline of 400 from 2008 to 2009. Overall, gains in employment outweighed declines in Gem County.

Of the 6,200 people employed who live in Gem County, only 27 percent work within the county itself. The remaining 73 percent work in one of the surrounding counties. The majority commute to Ada and Canyon counties for work. That being said, the continual high unemployment rate in Gem County despite the increasingly healthy economic activity that occurred in the county through 2010 indicates the unemployed primarily consist of commuters who live in Gem County and work in surrounding counties.

The majority of the unemployed commuters worked in construction, many as carpenters, electricians or truck drivers. Manufacturing also represented a large number of the unemployed in Gem County, where more than 85 unique occupations were affected and no one occupation seemed to dominate.

PROSPECTS FOR 2011

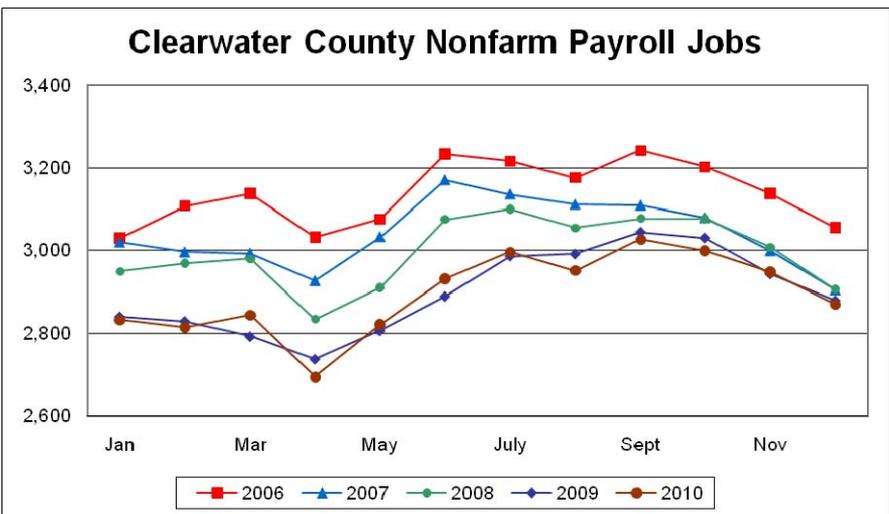
The labor market inside Gem County continues to see improvement. However, with the majority of its work force commuting into surrounding counties, Gem County is likely to see elevated unemployment levels through the end of 2011. Many of the unemployed commuters were employed in the construction and manufacturing industries, which were devastated throughout Idaho and the nation by the Great Recession. Available jobs in these industries are few, and job seekers in Gem County must compete with the several thousand job seekers from the other four counties in the Boise metropolitan area - Ada, Boise, Canyon and Owyhee. The construction industry and certain areas of manufacturing are expected to further decline through 2011, which means many unemployed workers in these industries may need to change gears in their search for employment, possibly obtaining education or training in an area slated to grow such as health care.

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

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO – 2010 IN REVIEW

CLEARWATER COUNTY

Economic conditions in Clearwater County were stable in 2010. Nonfarm payroll jobs remained unchanged at about 2,900 between December 2009 and December 2010. The county’s unemployment rate ranged between 14 percent and 17 percent just as it did the year before. Unfortunately, high unemployment is nothing new. In all but five of the last 20 years, the county’s rate has been in the double-digits.



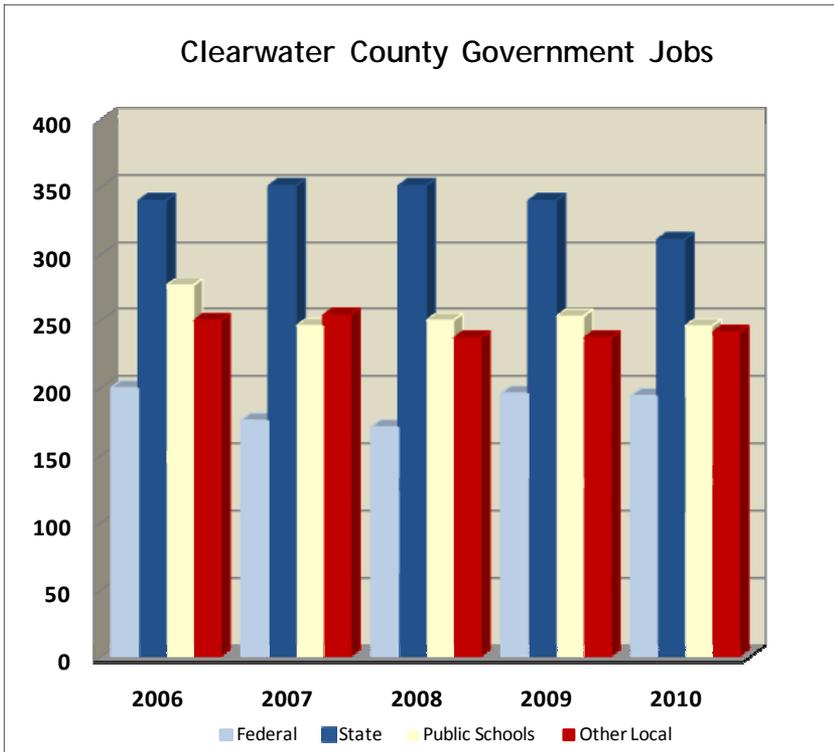
Population likely fell below 8,000 from 8,043 in 2009 as some families moved out to look for work. That continuing decline and the downward pressures nationally on construction kept construction employment around its 2009 low. In the last two years, stimulus-funded road and federal project construction offset some of the job losses.

Persistent unemployment depressed retail activity. January-September taxable sales fell 3.3 percent from \$33.9 million in 2009 to \$32.8 million in 2010 after a 13.3 percent drop the year before. December retail employment fell 5.7 percent from 273 in 2009 to an estimated 257 in 2010.

The tourism sector had a disappointing year. Both visitors and residents reduced their spending at restaurants and hotels. Leisure and hospitality jobs fell 5.7 percent to 198 in December 2010 from 210 a year earlier. Hotel-motel receipts, which had increased in 2008 and 2009 despite the economic downturn, were down 9.4 percent from January through October 2010 compared to the first 10 months of 2009.

Declining tax revenues caused state and local governments to reduce employment and freeze pay in 2010. The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare closed its local office and reduced employment at the state mental hospital in Orofino. The state prison also lost jobs. State government employment was down 29 to 311 from December 2009 and local government dropped 17 to 504.

Federal employment at the Dworshak hatcheries and the Forest Service provided some stability – about 180 year-round workers and another 60 during the summer. In addition, the 2010 census temporarily boosted federal employment during the spring and early summer.



But in enduring another gloomy year, the county laid the foundation for a brighter future:

- Moving ahead with a proposed biomass plant to burn wood waste for electricity to be sold on the grid. Excess steam would be used to heat the state prison next door. It will provide 25 jobs, generate additional revenue for the local timber industry and reduce costs at the prison, increasing pros-

pects it will remain open. With a plan in place the county will seek funding for construction of the plant.

- Averting closure of Dworshak State Park, allowing the county to retain its reputation as a boater's paradise along with an estimated \$2.5 million in tourism and a key to attracting recreational manufacturers such as SJX Boats to the area. Park revenues were up 3 percent in 2010, and last fall WiFi access became available, making the park even more attractive. This year the county will seek grants to replace, repair and enhance dock facilities.



Dworshak State Park. Photo: www.visitidaho.org.

- Securing Pierce as a candidate for a National Guard Youth Challenge program, a boot camp-style school for high school dropouts that would employ more than 60. The Department of Defense should decide in the next few months if Pierce lands the program.
- Improving both telephone service and Internet access. First Step Internet is building a network of microwave towers to extend high-capacity Internet service throughout the region. The Nez Perce Tribe is extending its fiber-optic broadband network, helping Orofino and Ahsahka improve Internet and cell phone service. And Frontier Communication is bringing broadband access to half the homes in Orofino and high-speed Internet to Weippe.
- Securing \$1 million through the Clearwater Basin Collaborative to restore forests and streams in the Nez Perce and Clearwater national forests. More money is likely to follow over the next nine years, creating over 300 jobs. The collaborative plans to thin fire-prone forests, obliterate old logging roads, restore habitat for fish and big game and treat noxious weeds on 1.4 million acres in the Selway and Middle Fork of the Clearwater river basins. Some of the thinning and other work will produce commercial timber to feed local mills. The collaborative wants Congress to designate much of the Clearwater National Forest a recreational area, which would make the area a destination and attract support for visitor centers, trails and campgrounds that directly benefit the local economy.
- Completing a \$9.6 million upgrade on 26 miles of county highway through the Clearwater National Forest from Orofino to State Highway 11 above Pierce.



Clearwater National Forest Photo: U.S. Forest Service

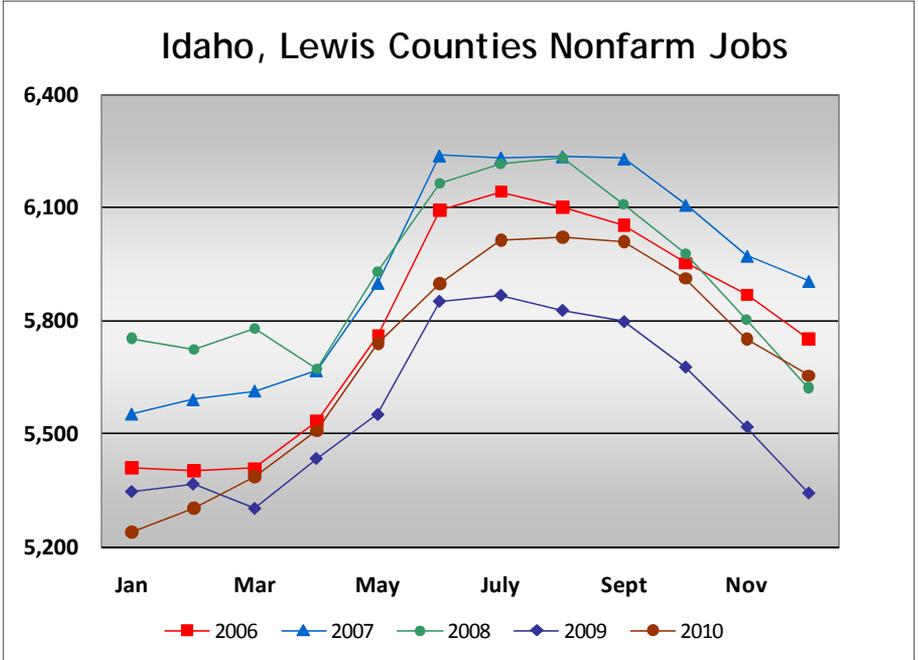
- Developing with \$1.4 million through the Idaho Department of Fish and Game the 55-acre Deyo Reservoir west of Wieppe with a boat ramp, two peninsulas for better fishing access, a parking lot, a drive-through loop, a picnic pavilion and enhanced wetlands.
- Celebrating the city of Pierce's sesquicentennial throughout 2010. Idaho's first gold discovery was in 1860 in Pierce. The sesquicentennial attracted visitors while reminding the county of its rich historical heritage and endurance.

IDAHO AND LEWIS COUNTIES

The two-county economy showed strong signs of a budding recovery in 2010.

Nonfarm payroll jobs grew an estimated 5.2 percent between December 2009 and December 2010, recovering over a third of the jobs lost to the recession. Both counties grew at roughly the same rate.

Lewis County did not experience significant job loss during the economic downturn, but Idaho County's December employment still was down 7.2 percent, about 330 jobs, from three years ago. The greater job loss and the slightly faster population growth in Idaho County explain why its unemployment rate was 12 percent in November while Lewis County's unemployment rate was half as high.



Although high unemployment has forced some people to move out of Idaho County, retirees and people who work in the Lewiston-Clarkston area have been moving in. Their population likely rose by a couple hundred residents in 2010 to about 19,400.

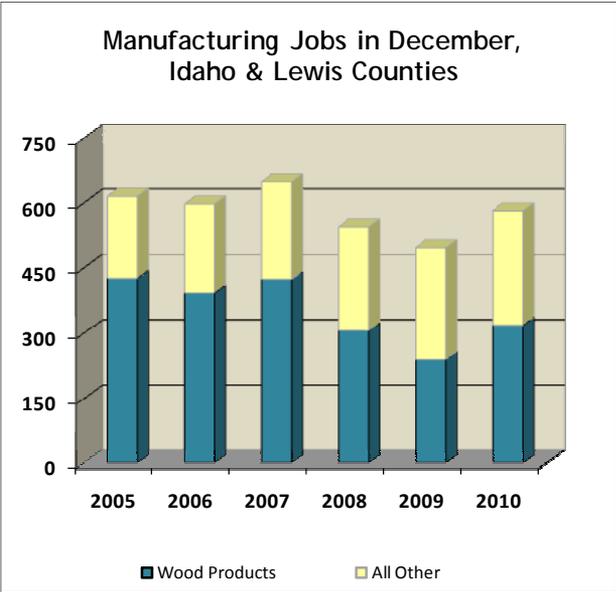
Forest products, the major source of job losses since 2007, started to turn around in 2010. Wood products manufacturers added about 70 jobs between the end of 2009 and the end of 2010. Existing mills recalled a few workers as lumber prices rose above the dismal lows of 2009. Kamiah's Three Rivers Mill, which closed in November 2008, reopened as Blue North Forest Products in August. By November, the mill employed more than 50 people. With area mills increasing production, loggers also increased their work. Logging employment ran about 9 percent above its 2009 level. Despite the signs of recovery, the counties have lost one-quarter of the wood products and logging jobs they had in 2007.

Other manufacturers held their own in 2010, increasing employment about 2 percent. They have bucked the national downtrend in manufacturing, growing 16 percent in the last three years. With orders rising above the low levels of 2009, some manufacturers added jobs. Idaho Sewing for Sports near Grangeville hired seven new workers as it took more orders for chairlift seat covers for ski resorts and added a new product line, protective gear and train-

	December Nonfarm Jobs	
	Idaho County	Lewis County
2005	4,339	1,258
2006	4,473	1,278
2007	4,532	1,373
2008	4,286	1,337
2009	4,002	1,342
2010	4,204	1,451

ing suits for law enforcement officers. Given the long-term prospects for growth, other manufacturers with a payroll of 260 could surpass wood product manufacturing's 320 payroll in the next few years.

The Clearwater Economic Development Association is developing a business park on the site of the old sawmill site in Craigmont. Ende Machine & Foundry will open there in the next few weeks with three employees and prospects for up to 20 in the coming years. Providing a local option for regional manufacturers, who have relied on foundries in the eastern U.S. or in China, Ende will reduce costs, enhance quality and improve timeliness. Craigmont is pursuing a



\$500,000 community development block grant to expand the business park's infrastructure to attract more tenants.

January-September taxable sales rose 3.2 percent from \$13.6 million from the first nine months of 2009 after falling 23.1 percent between 2007 and 2009. Retail employment increased 5.2 percent to 700 in December 2010. Higher wheat prices this harvest lifted farm spending from depressed 2009 levels. The big-ticket segments of the retail sector added the most jobs in 2010, making up for the huge losses areas like appliances, furniture and motor vehicles took in 2007 and 2009. For the first time in more than a dozen years, Grangeville has a department store with Larson's opening in the old Miller Hardware building last summer.

Leisure and hospitality grew marginally at just 1.3 percent to 395 jobs in December. Most of the gains came at restaurants. Local residents had a little more money to spend. The fire that razed Ernie's Steakhouse in Grangeville offset the gains by 20. Hotel-motel receipts declined marginally at 1.3 percent to \$4.4 million during the first 10 months in 2010. Several projects could expand the counties' tourism potential:

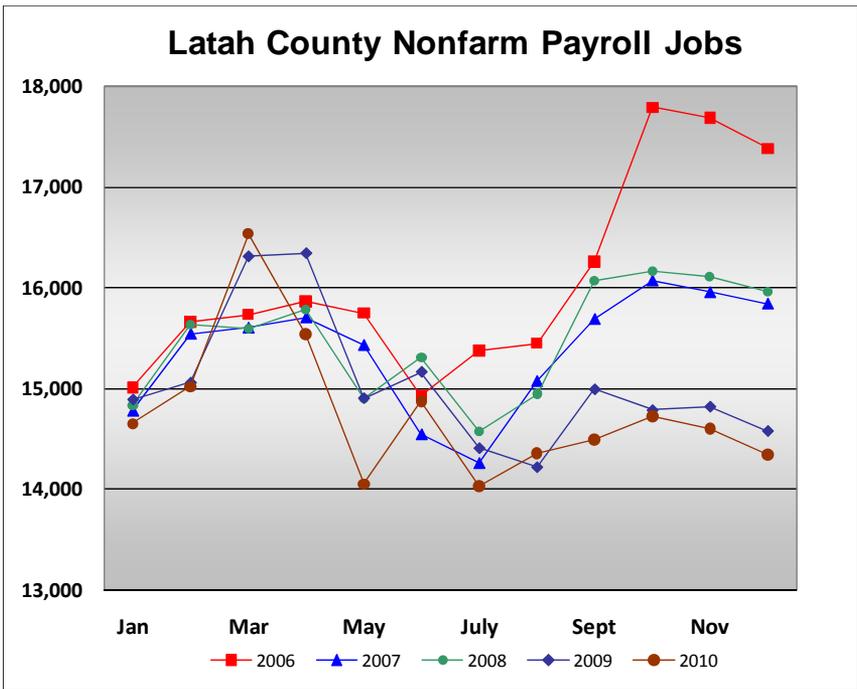
- A coalition including Idaho, Lewis and Nez Perce counties, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Idaho Transportation Department and bicyclists is exploring the feasibility of turning the 67-mile abandoned train track between Grangeville and Spalding into a biking and walking path. The rails-to-trail project includes high wooden trestles that fascinate many rail enthusiasts.
- The Benedictine Monastery near Cottonwood, which already offers a museum and spirit center for conferences and spiritual retreats, opened a bed and breakfast.
- Snowhaven Ski Area near Grangeville made several improvements to its hill last winter.
- Riggins is exploring ways to fund a proposed whitewater park with structures on the Little Salmon River for kayaking, boogie boarding and fishing and a city park that overlooks the river.
- Record-setting runs of steelhead during the last two years have brought many anglers to the region.

The economies of Idaho and Lewis counties also benefited from:

- Idaho County moving forward with improvements at the Grangeville airport to spur economic development. An Automatic Weather Observing Station was installed to provide real-time meteorological data, enhancing the ability of planes to land in Grangeville. The airport's largest customer, the U.S. Forest Service, has wanted improved weather information for its smoke-jumper operations there. Major runway reconstruction to allow larger planes into Grangeville is planned, and additional hangar space is needed to accommodate expansion of Anderson Aeromotive, an airport tenant that repairs aircraft from all over the United States.
- The Framing Our Community partnership between the Bureau of Land Management and a community development organization, creating jobs in Elk City through restoring forest and watershed areas and reducing fire hazards. Local businesses will use some of the saw logs, pulp and slash. Other biomass will be set aside as future feed stock for the proposed Elk City cogeneration plant.
- The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture granting the Clearwater Basin Collaborative the \$1 million to restore forests and streams in the Nez Perce and Clearwater national forests just as Clearwater County is benefiting.
- Nezperce securing a new library that is also used as a community center and is three times larger than the old library built in 1911.
- Cottonwood completing a \$350,000 renovation of the community hall.
- Grangeville beginning a \$5.8 million upgrade of its wastewater system that will be completed this year.
- Riggins spending \$1.8 million to increase the efficiency of its 30-year-old sewer plant and bring it up to current standards.
- Kamiah's \$3.8 million water treatment plant and improved distribution system.
- The Payette National Forest's receipt of \$1.2 million in stimulus funds to widen and surface portions of Warren Wagon Road in Idaho County and recondition Goose Lake Road between Idaho and Adams counties.
- The Kooskia National Fish Hatchery's allocation of \$1.25 million to improve infrastructure.
- The governor's emergency disaster declaration following torrential rains that caused flooding and more than \$3 million in damage to roads and bridges in Idaho County and over \$100,000 in Lewis County. The Federal Emergency Management Agency announced that it would pay 75 percent of the flood repair costs in both counties.
- St. Mary's Hospital's new medical clinic in Grangeville and Syringa Medical Center's outpatient clinic in Grangeville for veterans as a satellite of the Veterans Affairs medical center in Walla Walla, Wash.

LATAH COUNTY

Latah County's economy continued to decline in 2010 with nonfarm jobs falling 1.7 percent to 14,342 in December 2010. The unemployment rate rose from 6.9 percent in November 2009 to 8.9 percent the following November. The budget problems at the University of Idaho and Washington State University have curtailed job opportunities in the area and made local retailers and service providers nervous about the impact further budget reductions might have. Fortunately, growing private-sector employment in Latah County and Pullman, Wash., and rising farm income probably will offset the university losses in 2011.



The county's economy relies heavily on the University of Idaho. In 2009, the University of Idaho accounted for 36 percent of all payrolls in the county. Budget cuts reduced the school's employment by a few hundred in 2010. Job losses would have been larger if not for the surge in enrollment during the last two years. This fall, enrollment on campus was 7 percent higher than in fall 2007. Enrollment increases also offset budget reductions that curbed the university's overall community spending while adding about 200 new residents to the community in 2010, bringing the county's population to about 38,200.

Campus projects buoyed construction employment, which had fallen 29.1 percent from 2006 through 2009 to just 416. The sector held steady in 2010 with an overhaul of the Kibbie Dome's exterior, a \$9 million reconstruction and interior renovation of the Dan O'Brien Outdoor Track and Field Complex and the new north entrance to the campus that ties into the \$3.8 million restoration of Paradise Creek by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Technology transfer from the university produced about 360 manufacturing and professional service jobs in Moscow over the last 10 years, and the school plans to increase its transfers. In 2010, several companies were looking at expansion in the next few years. EcoAnalysts was awarded its largest contract – a five-year deal with the Environmental Protection Agency for national aquatic bioassessment services for wetlands, lakes and rivers and streams. The company won an earlier EPA contract to assess coastal waters. GoNano Technologies in Moscow signed with a national chemical distributor that could potentially generate new customers for its nanosprings and won a National Science Foundation grant to continue developing carbon capture and recovery technology. TerraGraphics, an environmental engineering firm based in Moscow, has been involved in dealing with a major health crisis in Nigeria while BioTracking LLC, which can confirm pregnancy of cattle and wildlife through blood samples, is expanding its markets. A new company, IVUS Energy Innovations, made a strategic alliance with a fast-growing catalog company that has expanded sales of its environmentally friendly, ultrastrong flashlight to police departments.

Improved conditions in the lumber market helped wood products manufacturers recover some jobs lost during the worst of the downturn, and other manufacturers held their own. The county's largest manufacturer, Bennett Lumber's Princeton mill, recalled workers laid off in 2009, returning employ-

ment to 150. Northwest River Supply of Moscow, which makes and distributes kayaks, rafts, life jackets, wetsuits and related gear and clothing, added more than a dozen workers this fall, raising its employment to 100.

Latah County wants to expand manufacturing. Potlatch is assessing the viability of a light industrial park along the Palouse River. Mike Meehan, founder of Biketronics, hopes to create a nonprofit to spur creation of small manufacturing companies in the region. The Idaho Fab Lab, which would be located in the Biketronics plant, would feature an area where entrepreneurs could use manufacturing equipment. It also would offer safety training and entrepreneurship classes. Moscow's economic development department, the Idaho Department of Commerce and TechHelp are working with Meehan to realize his vision. Moscow plans to build a 65-acre light industrial park that would have space for 780 jobs.

Moscow has greatly increased its economic development efforts. In 2010, it began rezoning property to make it easier for businesses to move to the city. It wants to expand Alturas Technology Park and is working on a large mixed-use development centered on a former grain elevator in the blighted area along an abandoned railroad between the university and downtown. Moscow got a \$475,000 brownfields grant to clean up former industrial sites along the railroad corridor and a \$143,000 grant to improve the 1912 Center, a multi-purpose community center.

Nearly 600 Latah County residents work at fast-growing Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories in Pullman, Wash. The high technology company that makes devices for the utility industry plans to build a 70,000-square-foot center at its Pullman campus and hire another 150 to put payroll at 1,500.

The Idaho Land Board granted i-minerals inc. a 29-year lease to build a mineral-processing plant near Bovill. If the company earns the required permits, construction is expected to start in 2011. It plans to mine feldspar and quartz in open-pit mines near Bovill, where it would employ about 70 people.

December retail employment fell 4.1 percent to 1,785 over the year solely because of Walmart's closure to reopen in Pullman. Strong population growth and a profitable agricultural sector pushed taxable sales up 8.1 percent to \$125.3 million for the first nine months of 2010 but remained below their peak of \$134.4 million in the first nine months of 2007. A Spokane developer opened a small strip mall on the Pullman Road in Moscow. Walmart tentatively plans to expand the old Moscow store by 25,000 square feet and reopen it as a supercenter in about a year. The move to Pullman is likely to affect Moscow retailers since some people who might have combined trips to Walmart and other Moscow stores may now shop more in Pullman.

Tourism showed weakness as the county hosted fewer conferences, visitors spent fewer dollars and local residents cut back eating out. Leisure and hospitality employment fell 3.3 percent to 1,753 in December 2010. Hotel-motel receipts were off 9.5 percent to \$6 million in the first 10 months of 2010.

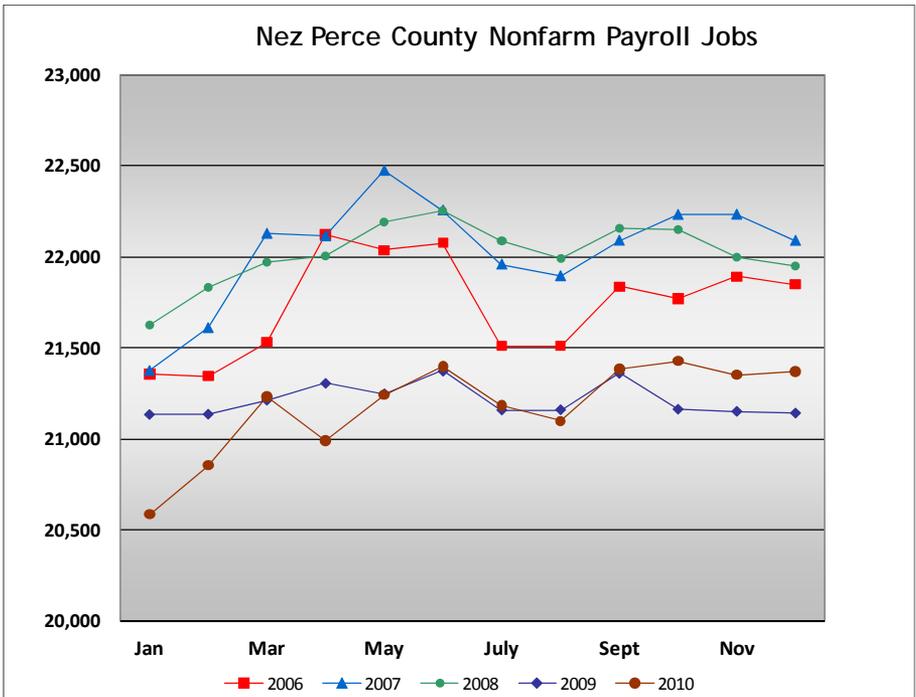
The county made strides toward improving mobility in 2010. For the first time in 20 years, regular bus service links Moscow and Coeur d'Alene and serves Potlatch. The Moscow city bus system expanded services to the weekend. Moscow received a \$1.5 million federal grant to build an intermodal transit center linking services to city public transit, Moscow Valley Transit, the University of Idaho's Vandal Shuttle and intercity bus service from Northwestern Trailways and Wheatland Express. In addition, it will provide access for taxis, vanpools and carpools. The Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport served over 12 percent more passenger in 2010 than it did the year before. It plans to spend up to \$50 million to renovate its runway in the next few years, making the airport more useful for commercial, corporate and charter planes.

Telecommunications also improved in 2010. Potlatch Telephone Co. based in Kendrick received more than \$2.6 million in federal stimulus funds to bring high-speed DSL broadband service to unserved populations in the Kendrick-Juliaetta area. First Step Internet, a Moscow-based Internet service provider, got a \$2.4 million broadband infrastructure grant to improve Internet and telephone service throughout north central Idaho. It will boost high-speed Internet capacity by at least 10 times in Bovill, Deary, Elk River, Potlatch, Princeton and Troy and establish a second licensed greater capacity, high-speed Internet path between Moscow and Lewiston. The new system also will provide redundancy, allowing rerouting if one section of the network goes down.

Frontier Communications is spending \$1.2 million on high-speed Internet access in rural communities in Latah, Clearwater and Whitman counties. The broadband access will run through households' existing landlines. During the next couple of years, it expects to bring broadband to Viola, Moscow Mountain and other rural communities.

NEZ PERCE COUNTY

Lewiston is seeing the first signs of economic recovery as it prepares to celebrate its sesquicentennial. After falling 4.3 percent in the two previous years, Nez Perce County nonfarm payrolls grew 1.1 percent to 21,370 by December. The county's unemployment rate in November was 6.9 percent, marginally higher than 6.8 percent in November 2009. The number of employed residents rose 1.5 percent between November 2009 and November 2010, but the labor force increased slightly more, causing the unemployment rate to edge up.



With Nez Perce County on the mend, Asotin County in Washington, largely a bedroom community for Lewiston, also saw slightly higher employment push the jobless rate down.

With some of its neighboring counties showing growth, Lewiston, a regional hub for transportation, retail, medical services, entertainment, government, wholesale trade and professional services, saw fractional growth in several sectors. The county's taxable sales rose 0.4 percent to \$221.2 million in the first three quarters of 2010, and consumers appeared to have boosted their holiday spending above 2009 levels.

The recession and problems in the national housing market reduced the number of people moving into the counties for the second straight year. Nez Perce County may have added 320 to its population, rising to just under 40,000.

With the population rising and several major construction projects in Lapwai and Lewiston, construction employment rose between 5 percent and 8 percent. The city of Lapwai and the Nez Perce Tribe broke ground on a \$4.5 wastewater treatment plant and are investing another \$1.5 million in 30 miles of pipes and interceptors from Spalding to Sweetwater. A \$3.7 million federal grant financed an activities center at Lapwai High School. A 72-unit apartment complex is going up in Lewiston along with a second Les Schwab tire center, which will employ a dozen. Several projects revitalized downtown Lewiston. Major remodeling occurred at the Towne Square Mall and retail property across the street. The West Main Street Enhancement Project added a lighted pathway at Kiwanis Park, a landscaped area with large sculpture to welcome people to Lewiston and a new skateboard and bike park. Kenaston Corp. built an office building, and the Lewis-Clark State College Center for Arts & History restored its gallery that was damaged by fire two years ago. Masonic groups such as the Shriners will be meeting soon in a recently refurbished temple next to U.S. Bank. The former Lewiston Inn and Suites, now Cedars Inn, was completely renovated.



Downtown Lewiston. Photo: *Idaho Department of Commerce.*

Manufacturing employment rose 4.6 percent to 2,808 in 2010. The county's largest employer, Clearwater Paper in Lewiston, restored some jobs at its lumber mill and expanded its paper products division but eliminated or moved some of its executive and administrative jobs. The consumer products division, which makes private label toilet paper, facial tissue and paper towels sold at grocery stores, showed the greatest strength with employment remaining above 1,600. ATK added 170 jobs at its ammunition plant in Lewiston, bringing its employment close to 1,200 at the end of 2010. Extreme Bullet, also based in Lewiston, plans to open near the Lewiston airport in the next two years where it will employ 100 people making bullets and disassembling ammunition made by other factories that did not meet specifications. Jet boat builders in Lewiston and Clarkston received more orders than they did in 2009 and hired 40 workers. They also started a sophisticated initiative to increase exports to Europe, which is expected to lead to a surge in orders this year. Gateway Materials, a Lewiston manufacturer of trailers for transporting boats also participating in the initiative, is expanding production and hired 10. The foundry that will open in Craigmont in January will help the boat builders, Hydraulic Warehouse and some local metal fabricators reduce their costs, which could lead to further expansion. The addition of manufacturing jobs has a large economic impact since manufactures tend to have intricate networks of suppliers and pay high wages and benefits.

Lewiston is waiting on Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories' plan to build an \$11 million manufacturing plant. When it opens next fall, it will employ about 100 people. Schweitzer, which employs 1,600 at its headquarter and manufacturing operations in Pullman, makes digital protective relays that pinpoint the location of problems in power lines and communication systems for utilities and convey information among substations, generating facilities and master control stations.

The county's tourism sector remained anemic but did not suffer the hemorrhages that the national tourism sector has in the last three years. Leisure and hospitality employment rose 2.3 percent to 1,780 at the end of 2010. Both restaurants and hotels added a few jobs. Hotel-motel receipts edged down 1.7 percent to \$7.5 million in the first 10 months of 2010. While the number of visitors was unchanged, they were tight-fisted and spent a little less on extras than they have in the past.

Other sectors saw some payroll expansion in 2010. Logging added about 30 jobs as lumber prices rose above their record lows in 2009. Regence Blue-Shield of Idaho restored most of the 100 jobs it lost at its insurance center in 2009 and was still hiring as 2010 drew to close. The Nez Perce Tribe created about 40 jobs at its headquarters, health care clinic and fish hatchery. Health care providers added 50 jobs elsewhere for total employment just short of 3,000. Life Flight Network, an emergency medical service provider, opened a helicopter base employing 17 people at the Lewiston airport.

Tight budgets forced state and local government to cut about 40 jobs in 2010, most through attrition. Government employment, a lagging indicator, is typically cut later in recessions after tax revenues decline. At that point, the private sector is often starting to recover. Lewis-Clark State College, the largest public-sector employer beside the Nez Perce Tribe, managed to maintain its employment around 860 in 2010 despite reduced state funding. Surging enrollments and the resulting increase in tuition revenue helped offset state budget cuts.

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

Nonfarm Jobs in Nez Perce County

	December			Percent Change	
	2010	2009	2008	2009-10	2008-09
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	21,371	21,142	21,950	1.1%	-3.7%
Goods-Producing	3,671	3,467	3,654	5.9%	-5.1%
Logging & Mining	210	180	189	16.6%	-4.8%
Construction	653	602	818	8.5%	-26.4%
Manufacturing	2,808	2,685	2,647	4.6%	1.4%
Wood Products	268	279	316	-3.8%	-11.7%
Paper Products	1,060	1,040	1,026	1.9%	1.4%
All Other	1,479	1,366	1,305	8.3%	4.7%
Service-Providing	17,700	17,675	18,296	0.1%	-3.4%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	3,929	4,037	4,570	-2.7%	-11.7%
Retail Trade	2,460	2,536	2,970	-3.0%	-14.6%
Wholesale, Transportation & Utilities	1,469	1,501	1,600	-2.1%	-6.2%
Financial Activities	1,737	1,769	1,900	-1.8%	-6.9%
Professional & Business Services	1,090	1,130	1,119	-3.6%	1.0%
Educational & Health Services	3,554	3,517	3,435	1.1%	2.4%
Leisure & Hospitality	1,780	1,740	1,831	2.3%	-5.0%
Information & Other Services	1,369	1,295	1,303	5.8%	-0.6%
Government Education	1,928	1,883	1,906	2.3%	-1.2%
Government Administration	1,514	1,554	1,504	-2.6%	3.3%
Government Tribes	799	750	728	6.6%	3.0%



Area and County Developments

Nonfarm jobs data for the state and labor market areas are posted on the department's labor marketing information website at <http://lmi.idaho.gov/IdahoEconomy/IdahoNonfarmEmploymentForecast/tabid/2445/Default.aspx>
Current labor force statistics for Idaho, counties and selected areas are posted online at <http://lmi.idaho.gov/EmploymentUnemployment/CivilianLaborForceLAUS/tabid/804/Default.aspx>.

NORTHERN IDAHO

Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- U.S. Bankruptcy Court authorized a \$6.5 million deal between American-West Bancorporation and SKBHC Holdings LLC. AmericanWest operates 58 bank branches in Washington, Idaho and Utah and employs 160 in Spokane. SKBHC Holdings will inject as much as \$200 million into the Spokane-based institution.
- The Sirti Foundation awarded two Spokane tech firms \$1.5 million in federal energy grants and loans to help develop new products and create high-paying jobs. Great Northern LLC, one of the recipients, will receive \$100,000 in grants and a \$100,000 loan to showcase power-saving options using geothermal systems. Eight new jobs are estimated to be generated from the Great Northern project. Demand Energy Networks, a Liberty Lake firm, will receive \$100,000 in loans and \$350,000 in grants to improve the design and efficiency of its storage device for creating energy-storage batteries for the power grid. It is intended to provide ways to store energy in batteries then introduce it, on demand, into the power grid.
- Longtime tenant, Western Aviation, takes over responsibility of Felts Field operations. Besides fueling services, Western Aviation will provide maintenance, tie-down and other pilot services and may include a new building.
- North Idaho College offers a new post-secondary certificate program in Electronic Medical Records in Information Technology Support – EMRITS – for individuals with an information technology background. The first 300 students who complete the EMRITS program or the Electronic Medical Records Adoption for Healthcare Practices – EMRA – program will be eligible for tuition reimbursement. Both programs were created with a \$625,000 federal grant awarded to NIC to train health technology professionals. Applicants to the EMRITS program should be Idaho residents who have three years of recent experience in an information technology department, have recently completed an information technology related degree or certificate program or be very close to completion. The 10-credit certificate program is designed to be completed in one semester.
- After extending the deadline three times, Ormet Corp., an Ohio-based aluminum producer, has terminated a tentative agreement to buy the shuttered former Kaiser Aluminum Corp. Mead Works smelter property north of Spokane. Ormet announced in May that it had planned to open the smelter's carbon anode facility if it completed the purchase. It planned to use the anodes produced there to supply its smelting operation in Ohio.

- Itron Inc. of Liberty Lake has won a "smart metering" contract with Italgas, Italy's leading gas supplier, to deliver and install electronic gas-volume converters and two-way communication devices across much of Italy on an estimated 30,000 commercial and industrial gas meters. Itron's meters provide usage readings so utilities can send signals through their two-way systems in near real time to offer different pricing as usage ebbs and flows. In Italy, Itron manufactures gas-metering equipment at Naples, makes water-metering equipment in Asti and has a sales office in Milan.
- Spokane-based Clearwater Paper Corp. purchased Georgia-based Cellu Tissue Holdings Inc. allowing Clearwater to expand production of its private-label tissue products and to diversify into new sales channels. The \$530 million deal creates a company with 14 manufacturing plants in the United States and Canada and annual sales of \$1.9 billion. A 15th plant is under construction in Shelby, N.C.
- Kootenai Area Transit System in urban Kootenai County and the North Idaho Community Express are cancelling its rural presence in Kootenai, Bonner and Shoshone counties as well as intercity travel between Sandpoint and Coeur d'Alene mostly due to lack of local funding. Both systems are owned by the same company. A local match of about 20 percent is generally needed to access 80 percent in federal funds to provide the subsidized bus service. The two systems gave 42,000 rides in Kootenai County in 2009. About 4,000 rides were given in Bonner County during that year and 3,000 in Shoshone County. About 80 Silver Valley residents used the North Idaho Community Express bus each week. With some state funding available, the organizations are currently searching for the right candidate to step in as a service provider. CityLink offers a free bus service, but does not pick up residents at their door.

BENEWAH COUNTY

- Forever Green is celebrating 25 years in business. What began as a Christmas tree farm has bloomed into a full-scale tree nursery. Work on the farm begins in early spring with the filling of wholesale nursery orders. Spring is the busiest season at the farm with as many as 13 employees, mostly all local high school boys, working to get orders filled. By April, all the digging is done and the landscape trees are sold. Then the wholesale orders for Christmas trees arrive. By the end of November, the retail tree lot is open and wholesale orders are done. Forever Green has shipped trees as far away as Toronto, Canada.
- The site of the new Lakeside Elementary is clear and ready for construction. Crews have finished removing the two houses which stood on the property along with several large trees. Petra Inc. of Meridian was the low bidder for the project, which came in approximately \$1 million under budget. The new 47,000-square-foot building, expected to be ready in the fall of 2012, will feature a gymnasium, music stage, multi-purpose room, library, computer lab and administrative offices.
- Heyburn Park, the biggest state park in Idaho, fully supported this year's operations from its own revenue sources. This comes even after \$30,000 was cut from the budget and half of the funding for the seasonal employment was eliminated. In addition to the cutbacks, the park has also raised user fees and has seen a 12 percent increase in visitors this year bringing in an additional \$97,384 in revenue. User fees increased from \$20 to \$23. Last year the park took in a total of \$681,289 in user fees, while this year it brought in \$778,673.

BONNER COUNTY

- Unicep Packaging Inc., a Sandpoint-based packager of gels, liquids and creams, has introduced what it calls the DualDose package, which keeps two components separate until it's time for the product to be used; then the components can be mixed. The DualDose package is helpful when it's important to maintain the freshness or effectiveness of products by allowing their components to be mixed right before they are used.
- Southside Water and Sewer District received an \$850,000 loan from Idaho Department of Environmental Quality for capacity expansion ending its moratorium on new hook-ups. Improvements include an expansion of the district's irrigation zones by using previously designated buffer areas. The district hopes to increase their capacity even further by purchasing additional land to use for irrigation. The no-interest loan is estimated to save the district \$548,244 compared to traditional lenders.
- The North Shore Fiber Optic Alliance project is set to break ground this spring. The project, spearheaded by the Bonner County Economic Development Corporation, focuses on northern Idaho's push to bring high speed Internet to communities in Bonner and Boundary counties. Broadband is a significant economic development tool that enables a business to locate in rural Idaho and compete worldwide.

Subscribers will have access to greater bandwidth and multimedia service. Fiber optics also opens up cloud computing — a system that allows software access and processing to occur remotely by streaming the data over a broadband connection.

The plan is to offer competitively priced fiber-to-the-home connections as a means of kick-starting the service. The project will be financed through a series of bonds. Originating from the Panhandle Area Council, the serviced cities of Dover, Sandpoint, Ponderay and Kootenai will relay the bonds to the anchor service provider. As money from customers begins flowing through the system, revenue will trickle right back to the Panhandle Area Council.

- The biggest provider for Idaho charter schools in the state, the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, granted an end-of-the-year donation to the Sandpoint Charter School along with many other charter schools throughout the state. The \$100,000 check will accommodate next year's expanded student body by assisting in the completion of the unfinished facility.

BOUNDARY COUNTY

- The Wreath Farm celebrates 10 years of business in Bonners Ferry. From their first season in 2000 when they shipped about 1,000 wreaths, the Wreath Farm has since generated such a loyal following that now they ship more than 3,600 handcrafted wreaths worldwide — as far away as Europe and Australia — during their six-week wreath-making season. The business, which operates as a professional landscaping service in the summer, provides 21 employees with jobs during the Christmas season.
- North Bench Volunteer Fire Department in Bonners Ferry has received a total of \$26,100 in grant funding — \$18,200 from the Assistance to Firefighters' grant for the purchase of personal protective equipment or turnout gear. North Bench Fire Department also received a \$7,300 grant from the Idaho Bureau of Land Management to purchase wildland protective equipment, communication equipment and wildland firefighting tools. This will be a significant aid in mitigating, containing and extinguishing fires in the ever-increasing wildland/urban interface areas.

KOOTENAI COUNTY

- After working with the U.S. Air Force global strike command over a three-year test program, Transtector Systems was awarded a \$4.6 million contract for what Transtector calls its advanced "source region electromagnetic pulse electrical surge arrestor" hardened technology that will be used to protect minuteman weapon systems. Surge protection devices designed, developed and manufactured by Transtector Systems are specifically used to protect electrical and communications systems in military vehicles, watercraft, aircraft and facilities.
- Virtual Radiologic, a Minnesota-based company, purchased NightHawk — once one of North Idaho's fastest-rising tech firms — for \$6.50 per share, or about \$170 million. Both companies provide teleradiology services, working with doctors in a number of time zones who remotely look at medical images and provide quick readings of those tests for doctors, clinics and hospitals. It is unclear what will occur with the remaining 70 NightHawk employees working in Coeur d'Alene. The evaluation of which jobs need to be in Idaho or Minnesota was to start after the first of the year.
- Construction of a \$1.2 million lodge at Camp Four Echoes Girl Scout Camp, south of Coeur d'Alene, has begun on an 11,500-square-foot lodge. The project is funded with a \$1.7 million gift from Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories. Their gift will allow the local Girl Scouts to provide more math, science and technology-related training and activities. The regional group, Girl Scouts of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho, serves about 8,000 members and 2,600 adult volunteers annually.
- Hospice of North Idaho is constructing a new inpatient facility on six acres on West Prairie Ave. The new 14,200-square-foot inpatient facility will include 12 patient rooms, a great room, activity room, prayer and meditation space, kitchen and dining facilities. It has also been designed to be expanded to add 12 additional rooms in the future.

SHOSHONE COUNTY

- This January, North Idaho College is offering 19 academic-for-credit classes including adult basic education — leading to a GED — English as a Second Language and work force training opportunities at its Silver Valley Center. As the number of students has grown and cost to travel to Coeur d'Alene has risen, the center has seen increased interest in both traditional, web-enhanced and Internet classes.
- After the Shoshone News-Press office was decimated in the Sept. 23 arson, the daily newspaper had been running printing operations out of an office in Kellogg. The Silver Valley newspaper now has a new permanent location in Osburn.

OPENINGS/EXPANSIONS

- The Grille from Ipanema, a Brazilian BBQ restaurant, in Coeur d'Alene
- The Discount Store — sale of overstock items — in St. Maries
- Survival Enterprises, a wholesale and mail-order seller of long-term-storage food and nutritional products, in Coeur d'Alene
- Mumbly-Peg, a new and used knife and sword retail store, in Hayden
- Coffee to the Rescue espresso stand in Priest River
- J.A. Bertsch Heating and Cooling and Midway Electric moved to St. Maries
- E.L. Internet Northwest is now connecting customers in Boundary County
- Northwest Specialty Hospital in Post Falls plans to open Premier Urgent Care in early January
- Hospice of North Idaho constructed a new inpatient facility

CLOSURES

- Bass Shoes and Clothing and Van Heusen clothing factory at the North Idaho Factory Outlets in Post Falls

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

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

Alivia.Body@labor.idaho.gov, Regional Economist

(208) 769-1558 ext. 3486

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis and Nez Perce counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- High consumption of wheat worldwide raised the price of wheat from \$5.10 in December 2009 to \$8.30 this December. Prices rose dramatically in August when a drought caused Russia to place an export ban on wheat. Canada and Australia also produced less than expected. Not only were prices higher, farmers also enjoyed above-average wheat yields resulting from last spring's ample rainfall. With fuel and fertilizer prices beginning to rise, the break-even prices for wheat producers will be higher in 2011.
- Hay supplies are tight across the Pacific Northwest because cool, wet weather hindered crop growth and harvest this year. It also reduced the quality of alfalfa. The lack of high-quality hay has pushed up prices. While higher prices are good news for hay farmers, they aren't for livestock growers who already are struggling with low prices for their products.
- While farmers' revenues are up, ranchers' remain depressed. The economy continues to dampen consumers' demand for beef. One bright spot throughout 2010 was strong calf prices.

CLEARWATER COUNTY

- Bald Mountain Ski Hill near Pierce opened for the 2010-11 ski season on Dec. 27 though heavy snows a few days later knocked out power lines, forcing the ski hill to close for a week. The 140-acre ski area along the Gold Rush Historic Byway is open every weekend during the ski season, which normally begins in December and ends in March. With a 684-foot vertical drop, Bald Mountain offers terrain for every level of skier and snowboarder. Its 19 runs are accessed by a rope tow and t-bar. There is a small café in the day lodge. The ski area first opened in 1959 for employees of Potlatch Corporation in Headquarters and opened to the public in the 1970s. Today it is managed by the Clearwater Ski Club, a local volunteer group. Free bus rides start in Orofino and pick up residents of Weippe and Pierce.

IDAHO AND LEWIS COUNTIES

- From an office at Prairie High School near Cottonwood, Sheri Daly trains more than 200 students across the state for careers in health care. Students who have completed health courses through the Region 2 Professional-Technical Academy with a B or better have become certified nursing assistants, pharmacy technicians, physical therapy aides and medical clerks. In addition to the online classes, they work with patients at nursing homes, pharmacies and hospitals in their areas. The 10-year-old academy is funded by the state's professional-technical education division. "For the rural areas, this is a big bonus," said Daly. "It opens up a lot of doors for the kids and gives them a chance to go to work. It also gives them a lot of practical knowledge and teaches them professionalism."

- The Bureau of Land Management is making major renovations at the popular Slate Creek Recreation Site. During the renovations, which are expected to last into early August, the campground along the Salmon River 10 miles south of White Bird will be closed. Improvements include new picnic tables, fire rings, cooking grills, concrete pads for picnic tables, sun shelters, an irrigation system and new asphalt for the road and parking area.
- The Riggins area continues to expand mobility options for its residents. The Mountain Community Transit, run by Canyon Area Bus Services, now provides free shuttles five days a week from the Riggins City Park to New Meadows and McCall with regular stops along the way. Free on-demand service is also available to McCall and Grangeville for doctor's appointments and other services not available in Riggins. In addition, Americorp's Disability Action Center Volunteer Drivers Project is now offering free transportation to senior citizens and disabled individuals in the Riggins area who need transportation to doctor's appointments, shopping or other destinations.
- The Nez Perce National Forest plans to restore a 520-foot section of Mill Creek to its natural flow path. It also will stabilize the road. Mill Creek is a tributary of the South Fork Clearwater River between Grangeville and Elk City.

LATAH COUNTY

- The Latah County Zoning Commission approved a conditional-use permit for a Texas-based group to open a sustainable agriculture school east of Deary. The Ploughshare Institute plans to open a school, bed-and-breakfast and campground along Brush Creek Road. The school would teach organic farming, horse farming, cheese making and other artisan skills. Operating from June to September, it would offer classes lasting one to five days each. It would host a maximum of 70 students per week. Students would come from throughout the United States.
- Betty Sawyer, who teaches family and consumer science at Potlatch Junior-Senior High School, received the Leavey Award for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education from the Freedom Foundation. The award recognizes teachers who have developed innovative programs to teach entrepreneurial skills. Sawyer's students operate three businesses: Stitch It Company, an embroidery service; Jump for Life, a jump-rope-making company; and the Snack Company, selling snacks. The students learn about business plans, balancing the books and the fundamentals of retail. The classroom-based businesses support themselves. Sawyer believes more schools should offer professional-technical education that prepares students for careers after high school.
- The Potlatch Corporation recently donated 521 cubic feet of historical archives to the University of Idaho Library. The documents are from Potlatch Forest Inc., the Potlatch Lumber Company and the George Jewett family. They date from the 1890s to the 1990s. The collection reveals how the makeup and extent of area forests changed over time and the technological changes in forest harvesting. George Jewett was a long-time director of Potlatch Corp. and philanthropist who died in 2008.

NEZ PERCE AND ASOTIN COUNTIES

- For the second year in a row, Farmers Insurance Group rated the Lewiston-Clarkston area the safest small metropolitan area in America. Crime rates, extreme weather, risk of natural disasters, housing depreciation, foreclosures, terrorist threats, environmental hazards, air quality, life expectancy

and jobless numbers factored into the rankings. The Lewiston metropolitan statistical area was compared to 137 other metro communities with populations smaller than 150,000.

- To meet the needs of the growing renewable energy industry in southeast Washington, Walla Walla Community College's Clarkston campus is creating a wind energy technology program. The new professional-technical program will prepare students to be wind technicians. Several wind projects in the region, including a 600-turbine Puget Sound Energy project with the Bonneville Power Administration near Pomeroy, will create dozens of jobs in the next couple of years. In the semester that began in January, the Clarkston campus will soon be training people for the short-term turbine construction jobs. Students earning the one-year certificates will have to be willing to move often. An associate's degree could be added to the Clarkston campus in a few years if demand for classes persists. Entry-level wages for technicians and construction workers range from \$15 to \$20 per hour.
- Eight top managers of Clearwater Paper's consumer products division are being transferred from Lewiston to the corporate headquarters in Spokane. Matt Van Vleet, a spokesman for Clearwater Paper, said, "Having all the management team in one place simply makes good sense." The process of consolidating Clearwater Paper's top management in Spokane began more than two years ago, when what is now Clearwater Paper was still a part of Potlatch Corp. Van Vleet said, "Our commitment to Lewiston remains unchanged. We're running our operations in Lewiston like we have for a long time."
- Life Flight recently added a fixed-wing plane at the Lewiston airport. The plane will be used as an air ambulance, when inclement weather prevents use of the company's helicopter or longer distances must be traveled. The helicopter flies patients from accidents within 150 miles of the airport to regional hospitals and Spokane. The new plane expands the transport area to 1,000 miles from the Lewiston base. Transports to larger hospitals often provide more specialized services for some patients. Life Flight, which opened its Lewiston base in April, employs 17 people there.
- ATK laid off many of its employees in Lewiston for two weeks, starting Dec. 20 for maintenance work. The ammunition maker had a similar shutdown in 2009. Employees could use paid vacation leave, including drawing against vacation time they will accrue in 2011.

OPENINGS

- A Les Schwab store in the Lewiston Orchards
- Shot House Coffee and Eve McColloch's Hands of Light, offering massages, opened in the same building across from Pioneer Park in Grangeville
- Tastes of Idaho — featuring specialty foods made in Idaho — in downtown Orofino
- The Yarn Underground, a knitting and spinning supply store on Third Street in Moscow

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

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

Kathryn.Tacke@labor.idaho.gov, *Regional Economist*

(208) 769-1558 ext. 3486

SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

ADA COUNTY

- Clothing retailer J. Crew is coming to Boise in the spring. The location hasn't been announced yet.
- The Boise City National Bank Building has a new owner who has made several upgrades over the past few months. Upgrades includes a new restaurant, Fork, which will open its doors sometime in late February.

ADAMS COUNTY

- Up to 185 jobs could be created if a proposed biomass power plant near Council is built, according to a recent study. Just over 20 workers would be needed to operate the plant, up to 64 seasonal jobs would be created to supply fuel for the plant and approximately 100 construction workers would be hired for building the \$28 million power generating facility. Additional jobs in other businesses would be created due to the increase in economic activity in the area. Approval of the plans is subject to securing agreements with suppliers of biomass and buyers of the electricity produced. Idaho Power told plant officials in December that it would pay 13 percent less per megawatt hour than Adams County officials were hoping for. This unexpected reduction may be enough to derail the feasibility of the Adams County power plant.

CANYON COUNTY

- Home Federal is likely to cut about 20 jobs, or 10 percent of its Idaho work force, by the end of February. The cuts come after Home Federal acquired a failed bank in Eugene, Ore., in early August. The cuts stem from moving headquarters for three divisions to the new Eugene location.

ELMORE COUNTY

- The U.S. Air Force announced in mid-December that it has chosen Mountain Home Air Force Base to host the Royal Saudi Air Force training unit. The SAF will likely arrive toward the end of 2013 and would stay for five years, possibly longer. The training is part of Saudi Arabia's \$60 billion arms deal with the U.S., part of which is the purchase of nearly 100 F-15s and necessary training. An economic impact will be performed simultaneously with an Environmental Impact Statement.

GEM COUNTY

- The city of Emmett continues to make plans to revive an old baseball field off of 12th street. The hope is that new life can be brought to the ballpark through an added playground and RV sites. If the city is successful in obtaining grants from the Idaho Parks and Recreation Department the cost to the city would be reduced substantially, and the new park would open in the fall of 2011.

OWYHEE COUNTY

- The city of Homedale recently got word that there will be \$172,000 in grant money available for repairs and additions to the city's airport, creating up to three jobs.
- Owyhee County ended its fiscal year more than \$6 million in the black. Over the year, the county collected over \$3 million in taxes related to transient property, which includes equipment used in road and other construc-

tion. There were several major road repair projects, as well as the Local Improvement District project in Homedale.

PAYETTE COUNTY

- The Snake River Economic Development Alliance hired Kit Kamo as the group's new executive director. Kamo has been employed by the Department of Commerce since 2005, serving as a business and economic development specialist. The alliance serves Payette, Washington and Malheur, Ore., counties.
- The Security & Exchange Commission filed a complaint against Alternate Energy Holdings, Inc., the company slated to build a multi-billion dollar nuclear power plant in Payette County, stating the company has been manipulating the market through a series of deceitful press releases and other methods.

VALLEY COUNTY

- Tamarack Resort near Donnelly opened its ski area for the first time in almost two years and saw over 900 visitors the first day. Over 70 people were hired by the homeowners association to oversee operations on the mountain, which is expected to stay open through mid-April. Another 30 people were hired by a contractor/vendor. Hiring 100 people for this operation is likely to impact the local economy in a substantial way, where even small shifts in employment can impact the unemployment rate a sizable amount.
- Two lifts at Tamarack may soon find another home. U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Terry Myers has decided to allow Bank of America to sell the lifts, which it owns, to another interested ski hill/resort.

OPENINGS

- Gypsies, a new take-and-bake restaurant opened in Council recently. The store prepares meals for customers who bake the meal in their oven at home.
- The city of Fruitland opened a convenient store – Maverick – in early December. The store maintains an easy-to-access pump for semi-trucks and will employ around 15 people.

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

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

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

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

BLAINE COUNTY

- Retired engineer and former Blaine County administrator Chuck Corwin has designed what may be the lightest foldable kayak yet. His 10-year dream project, known as Alice, measures 12 feet when fully assembled, weighs no more than 10 pounds and is constructed of carbon fiber tubing with a lightweight skin waterproofed with Hypalon. Corwin created it specifically for alpine hikers like himself to carry in their backpacks. The boat has been tested on Alice Lake in the Sawtooth Mountains — its namesake.



Chuck Corwin pictured with Alice on his back, a portable kayak he designed. *Photo: DuckworksMagazine.com.*

Only four boats have been produced so far as the estimated labor time is 300 hours. While not in mass production, Corwin sells the plans for \$100 and estimates materials cost about \$850.

- Developers of the proposed 31,000-square-foot Ketchum Market in the city's light industrial park have pulled their zoning amendment that would have allowed grocery stores in the park. The developers plan to wait for the city's Community and Economic Development Department to study the light industrial park more in depth.
- Sun Valley Resort's Roundhouse Restaurant has returned to serving diners during the winter on Thursdays through Saturdays. Visitors ride the Roundhouse Gondola to the historic restaurant situated about midway up Baldy Mountain. The restaurant dates back to the '40s and was featured in the 1941 movie, "Sun Valley Serenade".
- Timmerman Hill rest area recently reopened after a \$2 million renovation to bring it up to requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The junction's accident count has been noted by the Idaho Transportation Department and will soon be converted to a four-way stop.
- Family connections drew the national spotlight on McClain's Pizzeria of Hailey. On a recent Jimmy Kimmel Live, a late night TV show, Kimmel and guest Ian Somerhalder devoured a margherita pizza flown in from Hailey for the show. Somerhalder, a popular actor on the television series "Vampire Diaries," is brother to owners, Robin Balmer and her husband McClain Balmer. Demi Moore owns the building.

MINIDOKA AND CASSIA COUNTIES

- Idaho Power Co. awarded McCain Foods \$533,302 in recognition of its dedication to and improvement of its large-scale electrical efficiency systems within its potato processing plant. McCain Foods is an Energy Star-rated facility.
- Cassia County commissioners approved two chicken farms that will house 42,000 laying hens each. Both intend to partner with Hy-Line North America's, which will incubate the eggs from the two farms and market those hens.
- The University of Idaho's Cassia County extension office will begin mapping sugar beet varieties grown in the area. The maps track beet seed producers to avoid cross-pollination, which is especially important for the seed market. A growers group will be formed along with an arbitration policy. According to County Commissioner Paul Christensen, "This is a new venture for Cassia County. We haven't had sugar beet seed production before. I think it could work very well with what we're doing."
- The Idaho Department of Labor's Mini-Cassia office in Burley hosted an open house highlighting business services. "We're working to build awareness among the business community that we are here and we do have services for them," Manager Chris Orders said.

GOODING COUNTY

- Idaho Winds LLC wants to sell wind energy and renewable energy credits to California, a move that has to be approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. By state mandate, 20 percent of California's annual energy has to come from renewable sources. That will increase to 33 percent in 2020. More than half of the states and the District of Columbia have adopted renewable energy standards, and several more are considering legislation this year. Idaho does not have renewable energy requirement.

JEROME COUNTY

- B & N Machine Shop is the newest business to open in the large-scale mixed-use development, Crossroads Point. The Jerome Chamber of Commerce with new executive director, Jon Melone, led the ribbon cutting.
- Jerome County commissioners signed the revised ordinance regulating confined animal feeding operations, culminating more than two years of work. The ordinance requires CAFOs to be 300 feet away from any dwelling not associated with the operation and 50 feet from any roadway. The old ordinance required only 30 feet from roads and 300 feet from any property line. The waste area must be 300 feet from property lines and 1,000 feet from other dwellings. The maximum density remains at 10,000 pounds of livestock per acre – usually 10 cows or 200 chickens. A permit is required for operations with more than 75 cows or 1,500 chickens.

TWIN FALLS COUNTY

- The Twin Falls Public Library is undergoing a facelift – new carpet, roofing repairs, new paint and a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. The library’s last remodel was 20 years ago. The city approved \$183,400 toward the project. The library houses the collection of glass negatives taken by Clarence Bisbee, a photographer who was invited to Twin Falls in 1906 specifically to photograph all aspects of the community and surrounding area to promote the region. Nearly 2,500 of the collection’s negatives have been digitally scanned. The popular black and white and sepia photos depict the history of Twin Falls. The library also houses the original blueprints for the Perrine Bridge.

Twin Falls Public Library Trivia

- There are 25,500 library card holders.
- 526,659 items were checked out last year.
- On average, 800 people frequent the library daily.
- The library carries 200,000 books and materials.
- Card holders are allowed to check out 50 items at a time.

(Source: Susan Ash, Director of the Twin Falls Public Library)

- The Wojcik home and acreage in the South Hills, commonly referred to as “Royland” continued its Christmas tradition of lighting up the canyon. The switch is flipped on Thanksgiving and continues glowing bright throughout the holidays with an estimated 100,000 visitors annually, who drive through the display. Approximately 225,000 lights decorate the acre site, complete with a living Mongolian camel from Buhl that visitors can feed carrots. The home’s owners hire 10 workers for set up and bulb replacement throughout the season. Their electric bill jumps by \$2,000 for the month. The South Hills tradition started 20 years ago.
- Artist Gary Stone will restore the community mural on the wall of the Hansen Quick Stop Market. Stone will also head up the fundraising to refurbish the historic mural.
- Two more dairies in Twin Falls County are awaiting approval to install anaerobic digesters. The request from Rock Creek Bettencourt dairy in Filer is being reviewed by the county’s Planning and Zoning Commission. This particular methane digester will be developed and operated by New Energy One LLC and is expected to deliver sufficient electricity for the aver-



Clarence Bisbee, photographer. Photo: Twin Falls Public Library

age power needs of 1,000 homes. Swager Farms Dairy in Buhl is also partnering with New Energy Two based in Middleton for technical expertise in development and operations. The Swager biomass operation is expected to generate 648 megawatt hours of electricity monthly and has signed an agreement with Idaho Power at a rate of \$75.65 per megawatt hour. The rate gradually increases over 15 years to \$128.31 per megawatt hour. Other biomass operations in the area include the Dry Creek Bettencourt dairy in Hanson, the B6 Bettencourt Dairy in Jerome and Double A dairy in Lincoln County. Rick Onaindia, chief financial officer for Bettencourt Dairies, said the true value of the project “is its ability to serve as a model for the Idaho dairy industry for long-term sustainability, both from an environmental and business perspective.”

- Desert View Care Center in Buhl was the Idaho Health Care Association’s 2010 winner of the L. Jean Schoonover Excellence in Caring Award presented by Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. The award acknowledges the team effort exhibited in keeping standards up for care center residents. Desert View employs more than 150. The Idaho Health and Welfare Department has given the gold designation to Desert View two years in a row, and it is considered one of the top facilities in the state. Cindy Riedel was named Administrator of the Year, and Liz Reinhold was named Certified Nursing Assistant for Idaho.
- The West End Senior Center in Buhl received a grant of \$5,157 from the Twin Falls Health Initiative Trust toward assisting with transportation of the 6,000 annual meals that are provided to the elderly either at the center or delivered to their homes by volunteers.
- The Twin Falls School District will attempt to pass a \$7.5 million supplemental levy to assist in a deflated budget. A committee recommended the levy to restore furloughed days to the school calendar — four classroom days and two in-service days. The levy will cost an estimated \$13.48 per year for every \$100,000 of assessed property value. The vote is scheduled for March 8.
- Technology driven Trilogy Network Systems merged with office equipment technology sales leader, Magic Valley Business Systems, to provide greater sales and service to the Magic Valley area. The merger brings customer totals to 3,000.
- Three Creek School hosted an open house to celebrate its expansion. The original 2,100-square-foot one room schoolhouse was built in 1971. The \$240,000 expansion added a 2,600-square-foot multi-purpose room that serves as a gymnasium, cafeteria and community center and includes storage rooms, restrooms and a kitchen. Current enrollment is five students but a baby boom of 15 children under the age of five in the greater Three Creek area will soon change the dynamics of the school.

NEW BUSINESSES

- Epic Ride Cyclery, a full-service retail and repair bike shop, in Twin Falls
- Happy Kamper Cookery, a restaurant with drive-through in Rupert
- Hiland Aesthetics, new laser treatment service, in Burley
- La Quinta Inns and Suites, the national franchise replacing the locally-created Ameritel Inn brand in Twin Falls. La Quinta Inns and Suites offers a national reservation line.
- Heavenly Bites, a new bakery and catering business, in a renovated turn-of-the-century home in Hazelton
- Cucina Gemelli, a classic Italian restaurant in Twin Falls, by the former owners of Papa Hemi’s Hidewayay in Ketchum

CLOSURES

- Magic Valley Christian School in Jerome because of reduced enrollment and donations, affecting 37 students and eight faculty
- Sonic Drive-In of Jerome closed. The two locations in Twin Falls are not affected.
- Smokin' Cowboys in Twin Falls; the Jerome location is still open.

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

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

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

SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

BANNOCK COUNTY

- Nordic Wind Power announced last month that it would be leaving Pocatello in order to consolidate its operations in the Kansas City, Mo., area. Although company officials said Pocatello offered many advantages, including an ideal work force, they felt strongly that it needed to be geographically closer to its customer base. Nordic Wind Power came to Pocatello in 2008, and it was hoped at that time its operations would expand and it would create up to 75 new jobs for the community. Currently, it employs 12 employees at its Pocatello operation.
- In mid-December the Pocatello Convention and Visitors Bureau arranged a tour of local attractions for individuals within organizations who interact with area visitors, providing ideas of what to promote in their work. Tour participants attended exhibits at the Pocatello Zoo, the Green Triangle, the Museum of Clean and Old Town Pocatello. Participating organizations included Roadway Inn, Red Lion Hotel, Bannock Development Corporation, Pebble Creek Ski Area and the Pocatello Visitors Center.

BEAR LAKE COUNTY

- Bear Lake Memorial Hospital last month kicked off an ambitious effort to raise \$3 million from the community to build new patient rooms, nurse's stations and a new intensive care unit. According to Rod Jacobson, hospital administrator, the patient rooms are the same size and design as they were in 1950 when the hospital was built. The hospital has had fundraising success in the past, raising \$500,000 in 1998 to renovate operating rooms and another \$1 million in 2006 to remodel the hospital's nursing home.

BINGHAM COUNTY

- Atomic City is a small community with a large water bill. As the final stages are being completed on the city's new water system, many residents say they are not happy with the cost or the problems the new system has generated. Atomic City tavern owner Phil Stoddard complains that the new water system periodically turns his businesses parking lot into a "virtual lake." Other residents complain about streets that sag at points due to the new system. The old system was replaced because it caused water fluctuations within the community. The new system was designed and installed by the St. Anthony-based DePatco and Rexburg's Edstrom Construction at a cost of \$900,000. Mayor Kelli Isaacs said she will not consider the project to be complete until resident's complaints are addressed.
- The Blackfoot School District is one of 13 Idaho school districts selected to participate in a state pilot program that will make it possible for students

to graduate from high school up to three years ahead of schedule. The Mastery Advancement Pilot Program provides scholarships to attend Idaho public colleges to those students who finish high school early. Students who graduate two years early from high school will receive a two-year college scholarship and a student graduating three years early would receive a three-year scholarship. The program will allow students to either take high school classes ahead of schedule – through the high school or another accredited institution – or test out of classes to earn the credits they need. Those who start the program in middle school could graduate during what should be their freshman year, said Vickie Johnson, a counselor with the school district. School district officials are stilling working out final details.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

- Carol Olsen and Cindy Flint, Sisters from Brigham City, Utah, claimed the \$1 million prize in the Idaho lottery last month. The women, –, accompanied by their mother Donna Flint, arrived at the Idaho Lottery main office with their big winning ticket lottery securely stowed inside a locked, portable, fireproof safe. The sisters matched all five non-Powerball numbers and selected the PowerPlay option to win \$1 million dollar. The winning ticket was sold at La Tienda in Franklin. The sister bought a Powerball PowerPlay ticket worth \$40,000 at the same location in June 2008.

POWER COUNTY

- American Falls was Idaho's capital for a day Dec, 20, 2010. Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter was joined by several state officials at a morning and an afternoon town hall meeting. The governor and state officials fielded questions about education, water rights, living wage, auto liability insurance, teacher compensation, social issues, personal responsibility, eminent domain, federal lands, tribal rights and work force development. Other officials participating included Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna; Asst. Adjutant Brig. Gen. of the Idaho Air National Guard Bill Shawver; Richard Westerberg, chairman of the State Board of Education; Celia Gould, director of the Idaho Department of Agriculture; Dick Armstrong, director of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare; Don Dietrich, director of the Idaho Department of Commerce; Nancy Merrill, director of Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation; Brian Ness, director of the Idaho Transportation Department; Bill Deal, director of the state Department of Insurance; Pat Brown, area supervisor for Idaho Department of Land; Randy Budge, Idaho Fish and Game Commissioner; Mark Gamblin, regional supervisor for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game; John Hathaway, regional director of Idaho Department of Health and Welfare; Bruce Olenick, regional administrator for the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality; Mark Lowe, executive director of the Lava Hot Springs Foundation; and Jill Kleist, manager of the Idaho Department of Labor's Pocatello and Soda Springs local offices. About 200 local residents attended the town hall meetings. The Capital for Day Program is an ongoing effort to bring Idaho government closer to the state's hometowns.

ONEIDA COUNTY

- The Oneida County Hospital is announced in December that it had a new tool in its arsenal to fight cancer. The hospital has acquired a new state-of-the-art colonoscope. Before the arrival of the new equipment Oneida County residents had to travel as far as Pocatello and Box Elder County, Utah, to be examined with the same level of detail. Hospital CEO Todd Winder said the hospital saw the need for this new, upgraded technology and added that the device's high-definition and narrow band imaging will lead to more

accurate outcomes. Colorectal cancer is second highest cause of cancer deaths in the United States. The American Cancer Society predicts that over 55,000 Americans will die from colorectal cancer in 2010.

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

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

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

EAST CENTRAL IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

BONNEVILLE COUNTY

- Idaho National Laboratory is entering the testing phase of a new high-powered X-Ray machine, designed to project high-energy X-rays long distances. This will take search procedures of hazardous materials to a higher level. Shipping containers could be searched for materials like uranium and plutonium from a distance of over 100 feet.
- Idaho National Laboratory researchers have developed a new kind of solar cell, capable of harvesting energy from infrared radiation – even at night. This band of radiation is re-emitted as heat by the earth’s surface after the sun has set. Overall efficiency is expected to be 46 percent – much higher than conventional silicon solar cells that perform at 25 percent.
- Idaho Falls School District 91 set an election to renew the district’s \$6.8 million supplemental levy, which is set to expire next summer. The levy generates 13 percent of the district’s general fund. Much of levy is used to increase personnel to decrease class sizes.
- Bonneville Joint School District 93 voters passed a measure for a \$2.8 million levy. The new levy will replace a \$1.4 levy that was set to expire. Money from the levy will pay for building repairs and technology upgrades.
- A press release by CWI, an Idaho Cleanup Project contractor, announced a work force reduction to begin in January 2011. The announcement outlines plans to lay off 600 workers. The first layoffs will begin in January affecting up to 100 workers, another 100 to 200 workers in June and 200 to 300 in September. Severance pay will be based on whole years of service, to a maximum of 16 weeks of pay. Employees may be eligible for medical coverage under the U.S. Department of Energy Displaced Workers Medical Benefits Program. The work force reduction comes as the company completes cleanup projects partially funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.
- Boise State University’s College of Business and Economics recently published economic impact results for the Idaho National Laboratory, showing 16,133 jobs are created or sustained by the lab on a secondary basis in addition to the over 8,000 lab jobs for a total of more than 24,000. Directly and indirectly, INL operations accounted for more than \$135 million in personal income, corporate income, sales and other taxes paid to the state. The INL report also showed a nearly \$2 billion increase in personal income throughout the state. The findings also showed \$2.5 million in funding for continuing education from INL employers to Idaho colleges and universities.

LEMHI COUNTY

- Formation Metals Inc. announced that its subsidiaries, Formation Capital Corporation and Essential Metals Corporation, will be the sole beneficiaries of \$77.7 million in Federal Stimulus Program Recovery Zone Facility Bonds that were issued prior to their Dec. 31, 2010, deadline. The bond proceeds will be used for development of the Idaho cobalt project. Total capital costs of the project are estimated at \$138.7 million. The cobalt mine project is expected to generate roughly 200 jobs in Lemhi and Shoshone counties as well as additional positions that will be required for construction, which is expected to begin this spring. Cobalt is used in a variety of environmental and high-tech applications that include re-chargeable batteries and aero-space technology.

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

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

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

State of Idaho Data – State Economic Indicators

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

U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE⁽²⁾

9.4 9.8 10.0

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Claims Activities

Initial Claims⁽³⁾ 19,827 20,451 24,667 -3.1 -19.6

Weeks Claimed⁽⁴⁾ 116,504 107,475 148,680 8.4 -21.6

Benefit Payment Activities⁽⁵⁾

Weeks Compensated 97,472 87,349 146,179 11.6 -33.3

Total Benefit \$ Paid \$23,222,932.81 \$20,365,460.37 37,263,974 14.0 -37.7

Average Weekly
Benefit Amount \$238.25 \$233.15 \$254.92 2.2 -6.5

Covered Employers 48,111 48,112 49,232 0.0 -2.3

Total Benefit \$ Paid
During Last 12
Months⁽⁴⁾ \$312,421,065 \$326,462,107 \$362,136,128 -4.3 -13.7

U. S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX⁽²⁾

	Dec 2010	Nov 2010	Dec 2009	% Change Month	% Change Year
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI- W)	215.3	214.7	211.7	0.2	1.7
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	219.2	218.8	215.9	0.2	1.5

**Forecast data

* Preliminary estimate

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

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

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

(5) Includes all entitlements, total liable activities.

Glossary of Labor Market Terms

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Glossary of Labor Market Terms (cont.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
C.L. “BUTCH” OTTER, GOVERNOR
ROGER B. MADSEN, DIRECTOR
51