

Idaho Employment

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

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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ROGER B. MADSEN, DIRECTOR

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JOB ADS INCREASE IN IDAHO; COMPETITION REMAINS HIGH

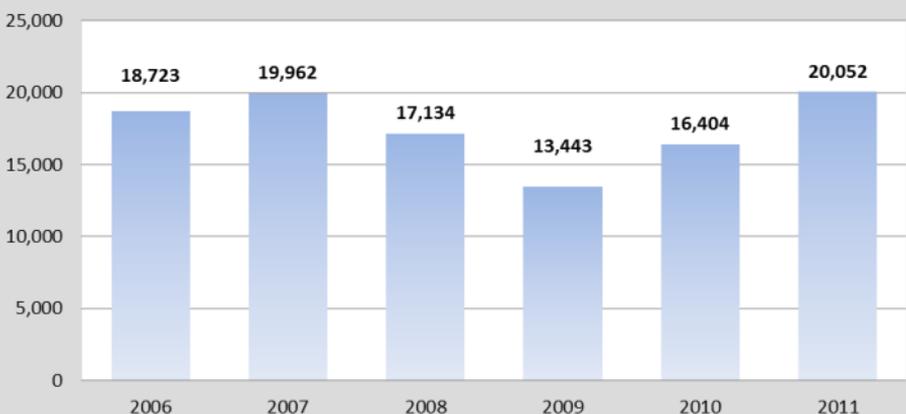
Employers have increased job advertising more than 20 percent in Idaho over the past year, according to statistics compiled by The Conference Board, the New York-based business think tank.

But with the post-recession unemployment still well over 8 percent and the huge number of workers pushed into part-time jobs because they cannot find anything better, competition remains intense for those job openings – half of them averaging paychecks well below the state's average of \$17.25 an hour.

In addition, there is a significant gap between the qualifications required for the jobs The Conference Board lists as being advertised and the qualifications of the laid-off or dismissed workers receiving unemployment benefits.

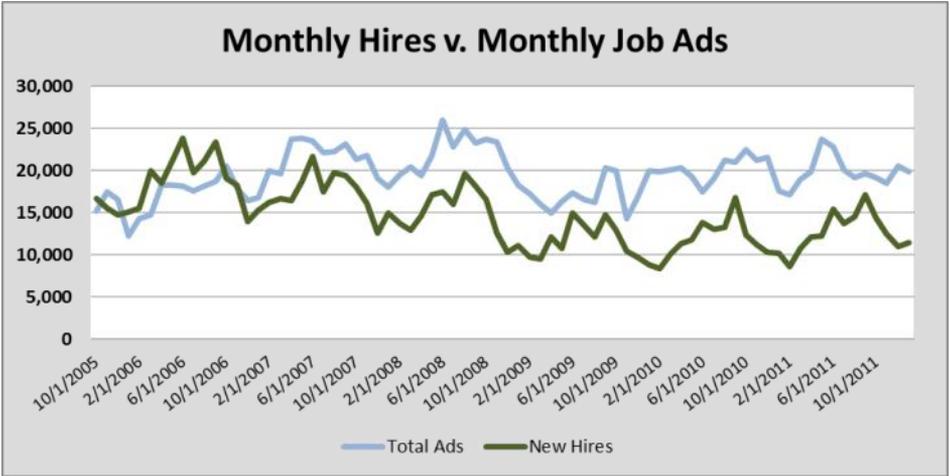
Employers advertised an average of just over 20,000 job openings a month in 2011 compared to an average of 16,400 a month in 2010. But the increase only brought job listings back to the level they were in 2007 when the Idaho economy peaked before the recession officially began that December. Idaho did not begin to feel the brunt of the downturn until midway through 2008.

Average Monthly Job Advertisements



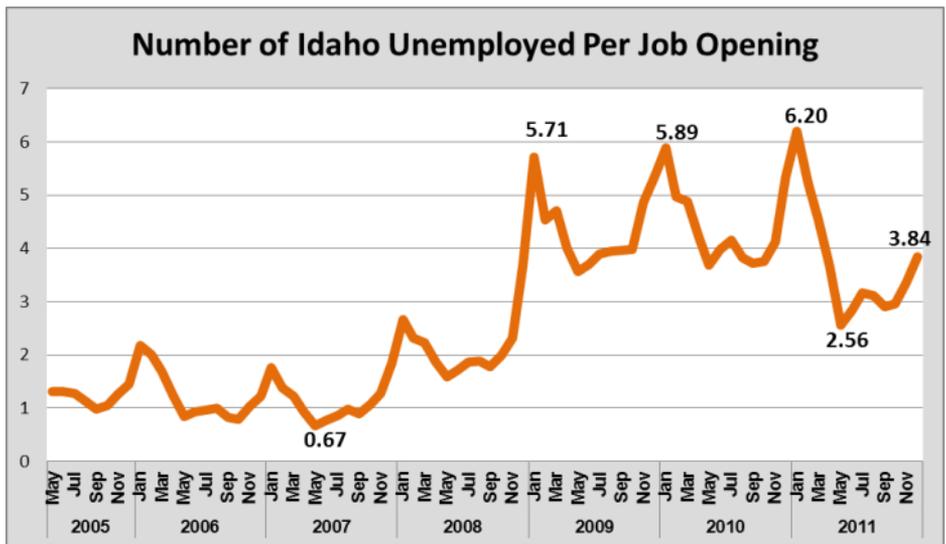
But average monthly unemployment in 2007 was under 22,000 with the total below 20,000 during the late spring, summer and early fall. Average unemployment last year was nearly 70,000 so the pressure was much more intense on the same number of job openings as in 2007.

There were more jobs than unemployed workers before the recession hit. During the expansion that peaked in 2007, employers were hiring more workers each month than they were advertising for. In any number of cases, job openings were never advertised. Some employers were not waiting for people to respond to ads. They went hunting for top workers and hired them away from their current employers.



Those days were long gone by 2011 when there were, on average, three and a half unemployed workers for every job opening. Employers had scores – if not hundreds – of applicants for any opening that occurred.

The ratio of jobseekers to job ads rises to more than five to one when the competition includes the 45,000 workers the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates have had to settle for part-time work because they cannot find the full-time jobs they need and want.



Compounding the problem for the unemployed is that the job listings cited by The Conference Board reflect more labor force churn than new job creation. In 2011 when total job ads averaged 20,000 a month, over two-thirds

of those ads – around 14,000 – were new each month, meaning those jobs were either filled or withdrawn.

The monthly new hire reports the Department of Labor receives from employers responsible for 70 percent of the hiring that goes on in Idaho suggest that most of those jobs were filled. Those employers reported hiring about 12,000 new workers a month in 2011, and the department estimates the non-reporting employers hired several thousand more each month.

That situation is reinforced by the federal government’s Business Employment Dynamics program, which assesses data gathered from the quarterly reports all employers must file with the state showing their employees and the wages they were paid. Those figures show that Idaho generated an average of 13,100 jobs a month during the first half of 2011 from new and expanding businesses, but it lost an average of 11,300 a month from closing and contracting businesses.

In most cases, especially in the first half of 2011, most if not all of that new hiring involved workers who already had jobs moving to better jobs rather than unemployed workers finally getting back to work.

While employers hired workers during every month of 2011, averaging more than 12,000 new hires a month last year, the change in total nonfarm jobs averaged just 450 a month in 2011 and there were three months – January, October and December – when the number of nonfarm jobs actually declined from the month before.



Based on the job advertisements in January, The Conference Board was able to characterize the occupational categories of over 15,000. Based on the average wage determined by the Idaho Department of Labor’s annual Occupational Employment and Wage report, the average wage for 7,500 of them was \$14 an hour with over 2,000 paying less than \$12 an hour.

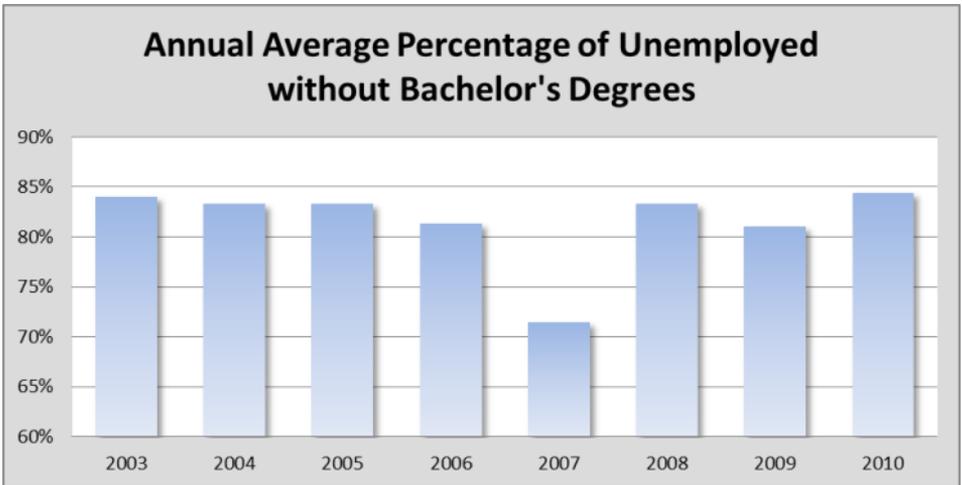
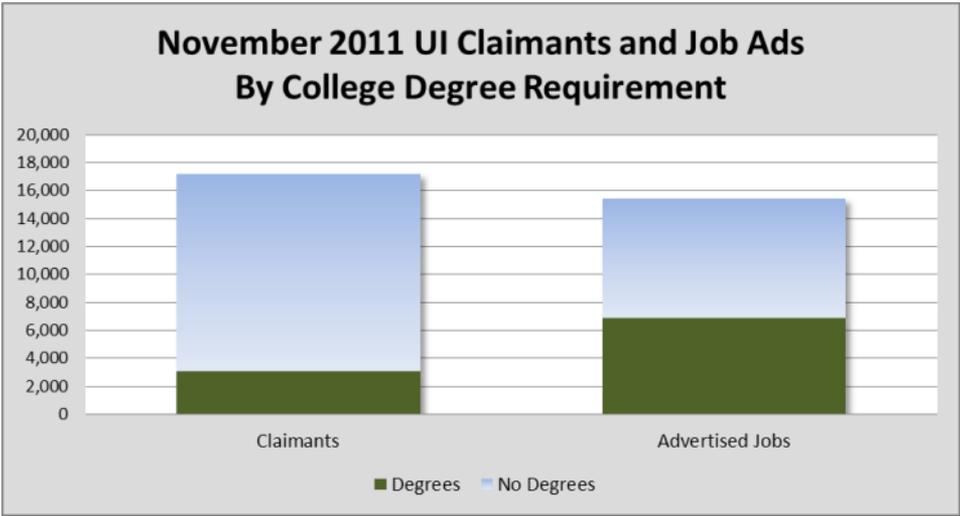
The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that the wage earner for a family of four has to make at least \$18 an hour to support the family without any government assistance. Fewer than 40 percent of Idaho’s jobs pay that wage.

Those jobs and about a thousand more advertised in January required at most long-term on-the-job training. About 88 percent of the workers receiving regular state unemployment insurance benefits in January – around 20,000 – had college degrees and would be qualified for those jobs.

The nearly 7,000 advertised jobs that paid substantially more – an average of nearly \$30 an hour – generally required college degrees or beyond, but only 12 percent – fewer than 3,000 – had the education to meet those requirements.

This does not include the 14,000 workers receiving federally financed unemployment benefits – although their educational attainment could follow that of the regular benefit claimants – or the 28,000 other job seekers, who are not receiving jobless benefits.

However, the federal Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment indicates nearly the same high level of all unemployed – whether receiving benefits or not – are without a bachelor’s degree. From 2003 through 2010, the profile shows over 80 percent of unemployed workers had no bachelor’s degree. The only exception was 2007, the peak of the expansion, when 71 percent of the unemployed had no bachelor’s degree.

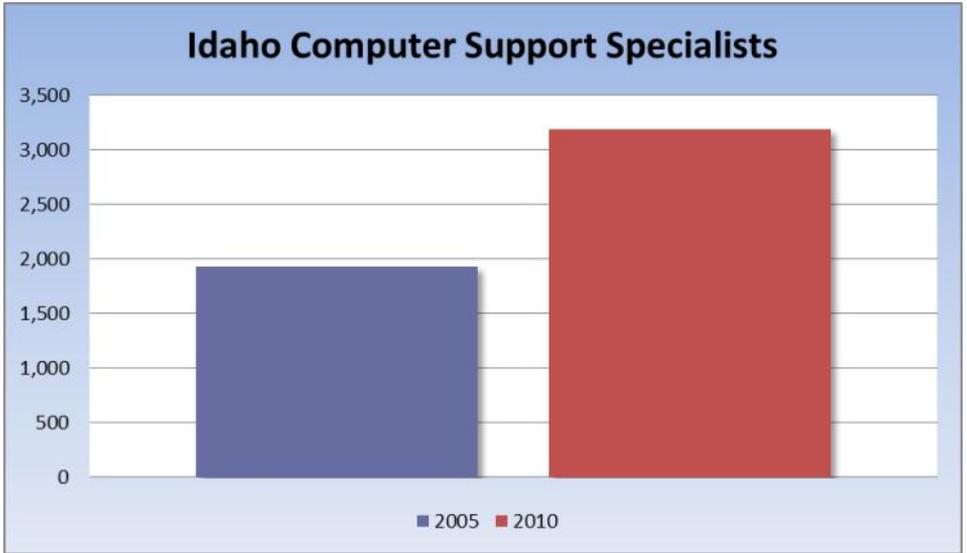


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COMPUTER SCIENCE REMAINS ON HOT JOBS LIST

Careers in computer science are among the hottest Idaho jobs, according to long-term projections by the Idaho Department of Labor. Computer occupations have grown since 2005 in Idaho, despite the drag of the recession, and the department projects continued growth through 2018.

In 2005 within Idaho there were 1,930 workers employed as computer support specialists. By 2010 that number had jumped to 3,190, a 60.5 percent increase. This is an impressive growth rate considering that it took place during the heart of one of the state's worst economic downturns.



But while the number of computer support specialists was rising, their paychecks were shrinking. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average annual wage for a computer support specialist was \$39,680 in 2005. By 2010, the average wage had fallen to \$39,330.

Still, training to become a computer support specialist may represent a good career prospect in high technology. The Idaho Department of Labor's Career Information System shows computer support specialists remaining in very high demand with job opportunities growing.

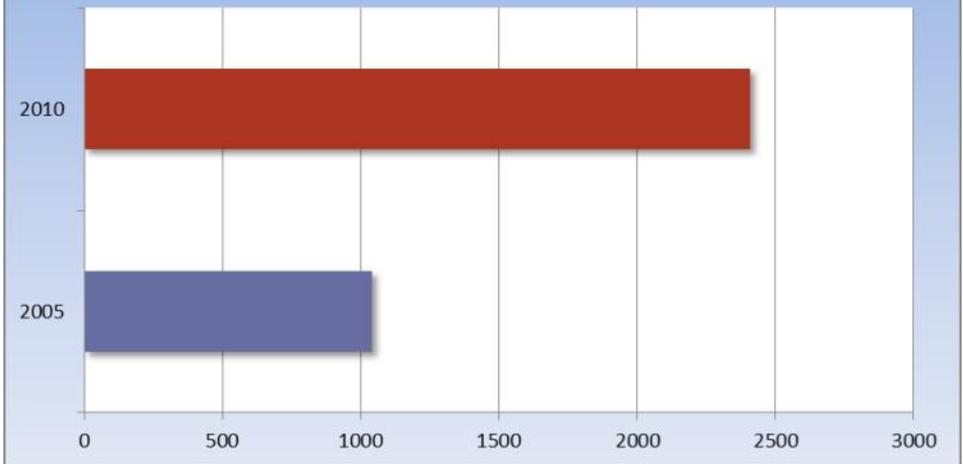
The preparation is not especially lengthy for entry into a high-tech field. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 59 percent of computer support specialists nationwide have less than a four-year degree, and 43 percent have less than an associate degree.

Computer programming is also a rapidly growing occupation. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated there were 1,040 computer programmers in Idaho in 2005. That more than doubled to 2,410 in 2010, a 43.2 percent increase.

As with computer support specialists, wages for computer programmers also fell during the recession, dropping from \$54,630 in 2005 to \$53,020 in 2010.

But unlike computer support specialists, a sizable majority of computer programmers have four-year college degrees. That extra training and education, however, does not always mean that a computer programmer can expect to make over \$50,000 a year – just over \$24 an hour. In south central Idaho, according to Economic Modeling Specialists Inc., the average hourly

Computer Programers in Idaho 2005-2010



wage for computer programmers was \$13.21 in 2011. In southeastern Idaho the average was \$15.58.

But an affordable high-tech workforce could attract new companies to south central and southeastern Idaho, giving a boost to the regional economies and increasing the competition for available computer programmers and other high-tech workers.

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RECESSION AFFECTED AGE GROUPS DIFFERENTLY

There is quite a disparity in the Great Recession's impact by age in Idaho, according to data from the Local Employment Dynamics program of the U.S. Census Bureau.

Idaho's youngest workers – those 14 to 18 years old – bore the brunt of the downturn while Idaho's older workers appeared to hold their own.

Turnover among teen workers remained high through the recession although the rate of turnover eased as young workers began holding on to their jobs as employers tightened their belts and employment openings dwindled.

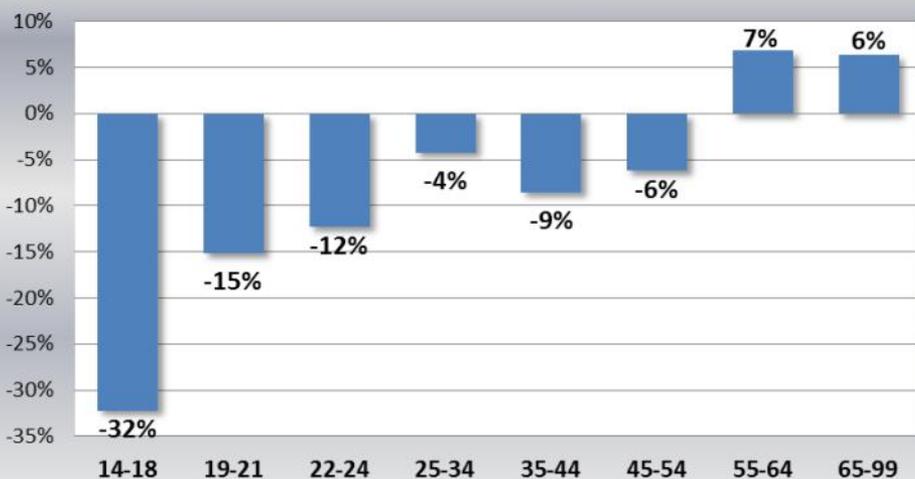
People 55 and older started retiring at a faster pace through the recession. From 2007 to 2010, more firms lost workers in that age group than in any other group. The skills and experience of older workers became even more valued as the economy worsened, and employers made keeping them on the payroll a priority and sought them out when vacancies occurred.

By every indicator, Idaho's oldest and youngest workers were more affected by the recession than any other age group. Teenagers in Idaho lost 35 percent of their jobs while the oldest workers managed to find more employment opportunities even as hiring overall slowed dramatically.

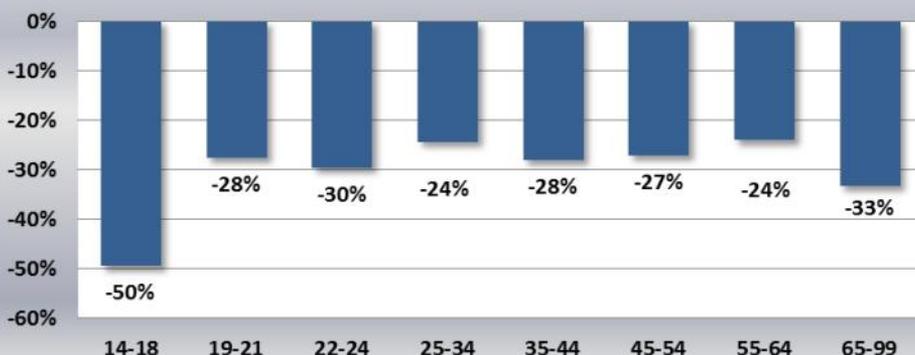
The competition between older and younger workers intensified during the downturn. Older workers were taking jobs that their younger counterparts traditionally held as employers took advantage of what they viewed as a more reliable and experienced workforce.

Nearly half of the Idaho jobs lost to the recession were in construction. The more established construction companies rely more on the most experienced workers in the specific trades. In 2007, the industry labor force was

Change in Employment By Age, 2007-2010



Percentage Change in Hiring by Age 2007 to 2010



heavily concentrated in the 25 to 34 age group. That changed significantly as the housing market collapsed. Most notable was the increase in 55- to 64-year-old construction workers. That group jumped from 9 percent of the labor force in 2007 to 13 percent just three years later. They were the ones who survived the drastic cuts the recession forced on contractors.

There was a similar trend in manufacturing, which suffered the second most job losses in the state – 24 percent – from 2007 to 2010.

Retail trade also saw a decrease during the recession, losing 15 percent of its jobs, followed by accommodation and food services and administrative and support services, both at 9 percent. Each experienced younger workers being replaced by older ones. The accommodation and food services sector — which includes restaurants, bars and hotels — employed the largest contingent of younger workers and saw a significant decline. The number

Idaho Industries Hardest Hit by the Recession

Construction - 48%

Manufacturing - 24%

Retail Trade - 15%

Accommodation and Food Services - 9%

Administrative and Support Services - 9%

of teenagers aged 14 to 18 dropped from 20 percent in 2007 to 12 percent in 2010.

Not only was this share of industry employment taken over by older workers, but also workers just up the age ladder from the teens moved into these jobs.

The job losses the Gen Y'ers, those aged 25 to 34, suffered in manufacturing and construction – and to a lesser degree the 55- to 64-year-old population – forced them into jobs in other sectors even if the paychecks were smaller. Accommodations and food services as well as retail trade were the targets, and because of that those two age groups were the only ones to essentially increase their employment base in the sector.

Percentage Share of Employment by Age, by Sector						
Industry	Age Group					
	14-18		55-64		All Other	
	2007	2010	2007	2010	2007	2010
Construction	3.0	1.4	9.4	13.1	87.5	85.5
Manufacturing	1.4	0.9	12.5	15.5	86.1	83.6
Retail Trade	7.0	4.1	11.1	12.8	81.9	83.1 ¹
Accommodation and Food Services	19.5	12.2	4.9	5.7	75.6	82.1 ²
Administrative and Support Services	3.5	1.9	9.5	10.7	87.0	87.4

¹signifies the shift from younger to older workers

²signifies the shift of 25-34 into the retail trade and accommodation and food services industries

It is increasingly difficult for younger workers to find jobs, so toughing it out in one of the worst recessions Idaho has seen may be a valuable life lesson for teenagers inadvertently victimized by the downturn. It can provide focus and insight so they can make conscientious decisions about their employment and career futures.

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1st Quarter 2011 Idaho Data Released

GAINS, LOSSES RESULT IN MORE JOBS THAN PREVIOUS YEAR

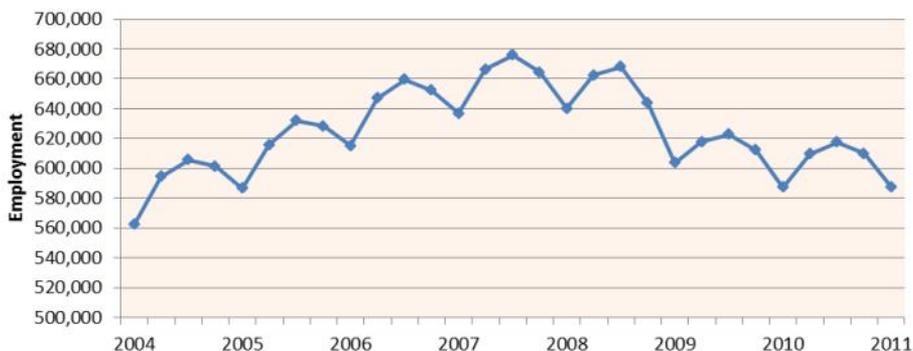
EMPLOYMENT

The Idaho economy passed a new landmark on the road to recovery in the first quarter of 2011. The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages showed employment averaged 587,410 in the January-March quarter, down from 609,874 in the fourth quarter due to seasonal losses in many sectors. In spite of the seasonal loss, the total was 212 jobs above year-earlier levels.

But it was the first time in three years that there was a year-over-year increase in total jobs. This followed five quarters of the over-the-year job deficit narrowing before finally closing. The gain in the private sector was substantial enough to offset a continuing year-over-year deficit in government jobs.

There was still a year-over-year gap in goods production – which is less than a fifth of all jobs – although the gap closed from 1.9 percent to just a half percent below the first quarter of 2010. The crossover came in private service sector jobs, which moved from fractionally below year-earlier levels in the last quarter of 2010 to 0.15 percent above in the first quarter of 2011.

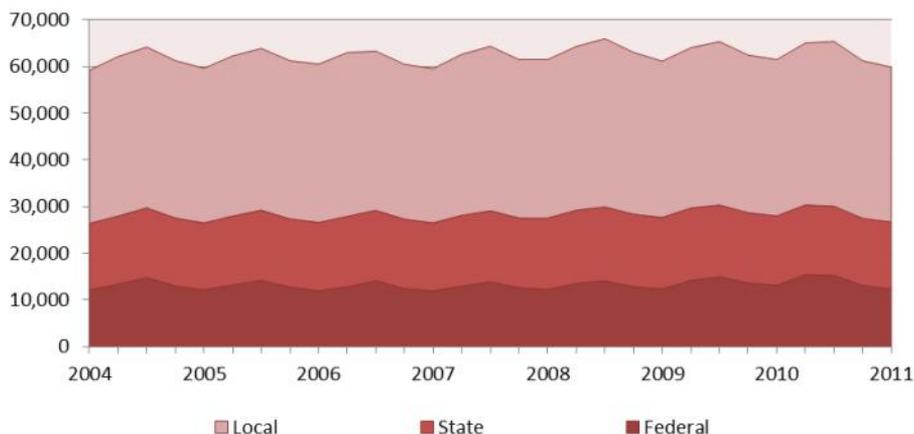
Idaho Average Quarterly Employment 1Q 2004-1Q 2011



Private-sector jobs totaled 477,141 in the first quarter. That was down over 21,000, or 4.3 percent, from the fourth quarter but 3,370 jobs, or 0.7 percent, ahead of the first quarter of 2010. The year-over-year gain was also substantially greater than the fractional 750 increase for the final three months of 2010.

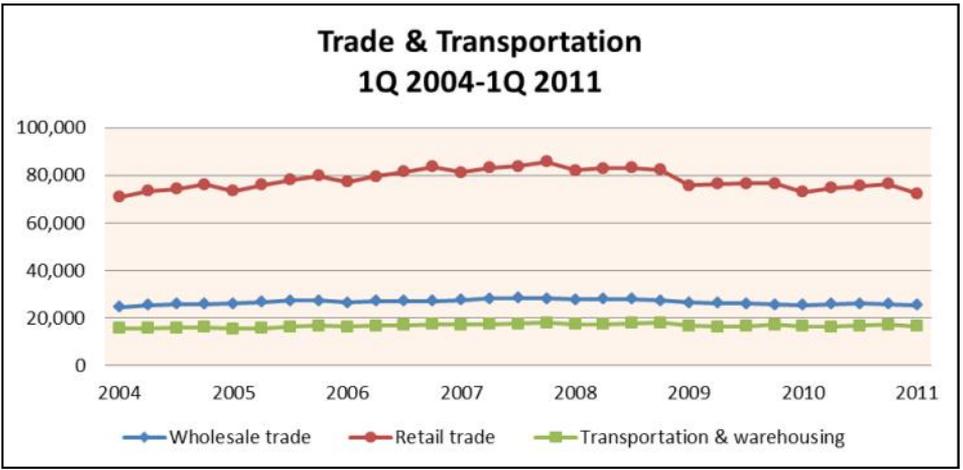
Government including education averaged 110,269 jobs in the fourth quarter, down 1 percent from the prior quarter and 2.8 percent below the first quarter of 2010. The quarter’s loss in government employment was spread across all levels but state education, which gained over 300 jobs from the fourth quarter of 2010. As a whole, state government gained 321 jobs on the strength of those education gains while local government lost 732 jobs and federal government lost 753 jobs.

Public Administration 1Q 2004-1Q 2011

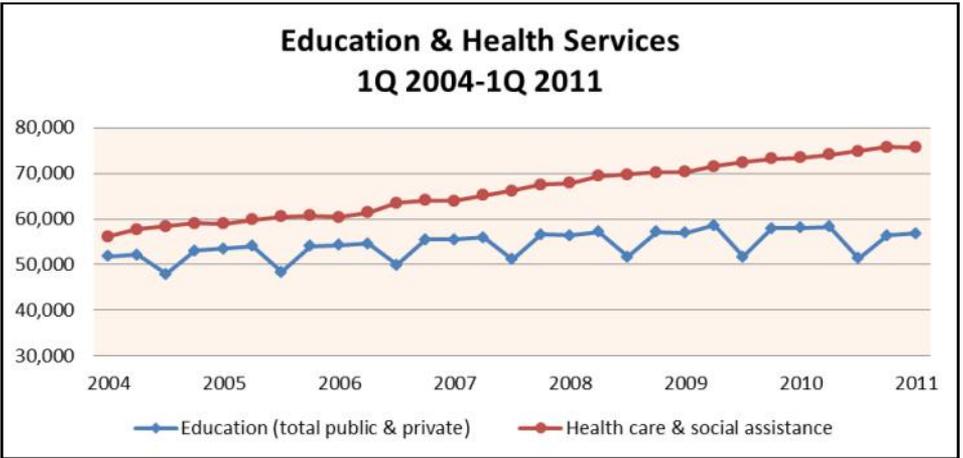


January-March 2011 brought seasonal losses in retail jobs – over 4,000, or 5.2 percent – from the fourth quarter to total 72,429 jobs. That was 581 below the first three months of 2010 so the over-the-year deficit edged upward, from 0.2 percent to 0.8 percent.

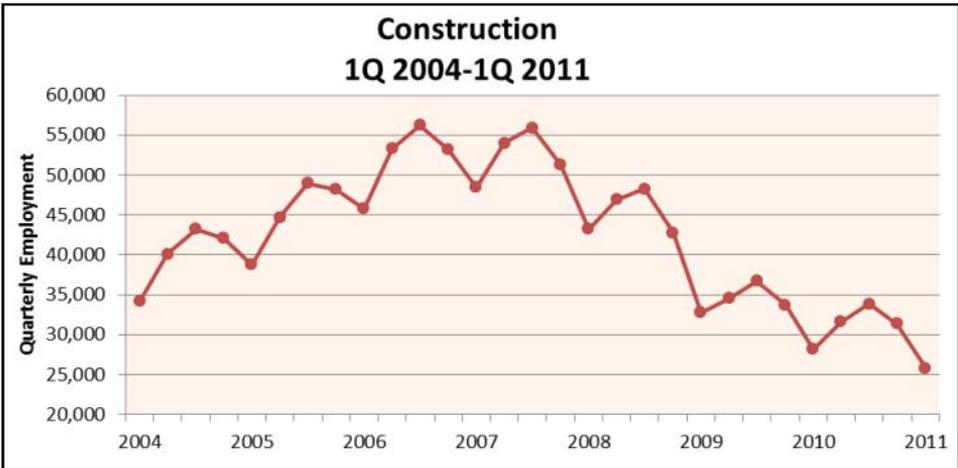
Five retail subsectors saw first quarter employment levels higher than the year before. Transportation and warehousing posted a modest 4 percent quarterly decline but remained 0.7 percent above first quarter 2010. Wholesale trade was 1.5 percent below the prior quarter but 0.6 percent better than the same quarter the previous year.



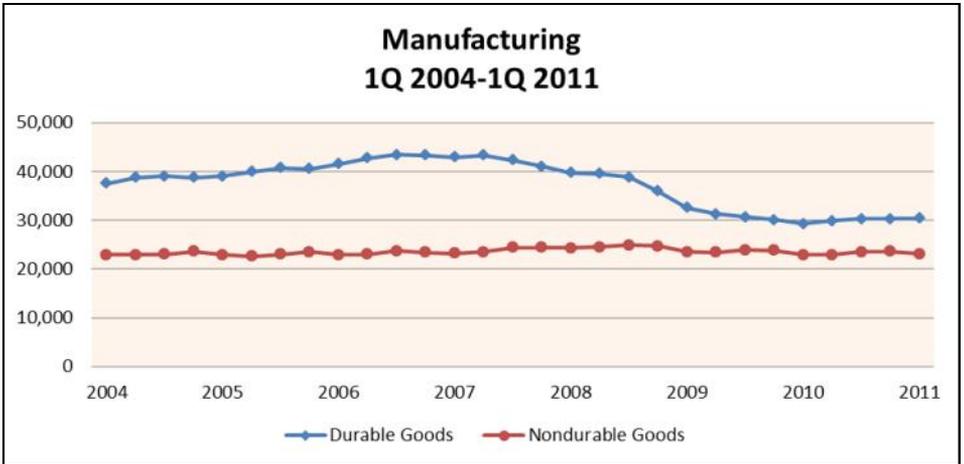
Health care experienced its first quarterly decline in four years, falling a tenth of a percent to 75,679 jobs in the first quarter of 2011. But that was still 3.1 percent ahead of the first quarter 2010. The quarterly decline was limited to ambulatory health care services while hospitals, nursing and residential care facilities and social assistance continued their steady climb.



Construction experienced a seasonal first quarter loss of nearly 5,500 jobs, or 17.6 percent, from the fourth quarter. The year-to-year deficit inched upward after shrinking several quarters in a row, growing from 7.1 percent in the fourth quarter to 8.3 percent in the first quarter. Over-the-quarter losses were felt across all construction subsectors, and employment levels in all subsectors remained below year-earlier levels.

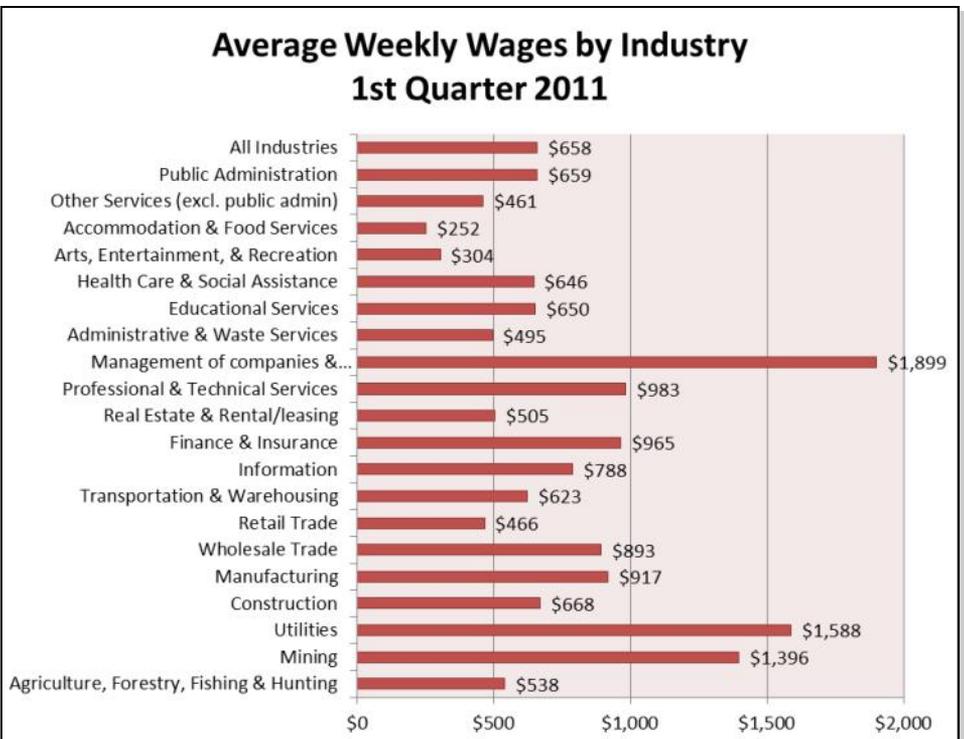


Manufacturing employment crept downward by 400 jobs from the fourth quarter to the first, a seasonal decrease of 0.8 percent. This followed three straight quarters of gains in manufacturing – the first significant increases since the beginning of the recession. The over-the-year manufacturing job gap had disappeared in the fourth quarter with the same number of jobs at the end of 2010 as in 2009. This positive trend continued in first quarter 2011 with manufacturing jobs 2.6 percent ahead of a year earlier. Over the year durable goods jobs rose 3.9 percent in the first quarter while nondurables were 1 percent higher. This was the first over-the-year gain in nondurables since the end of 2008. Eight manufacturing subsectors experienced over-the-year gains.



WAGES

During the first quarter of 2011, Idaho’s average weekly wage for all industries was \$658, down \$74 from the previous quarter. The lowest wages were reported in accommodations and food services at \$252, a \$9 decrease from the fourth quarter, and leisure activities at \$304, a \$113 decrease. Company



management continued to pay the highest wage at \$1,899 a week. Utilities followed at \$1,588, and mining came in at \$1,396.

Total wage levels saw a seasonal decrease from the fourth quarter of nearly \$780 million, or 13.4 percent. Total wages in the first quarter were 4 percent higher than the first quarter of 2010 – the fourth year-over-year increase in total wages since the fourth quarter of 2008.

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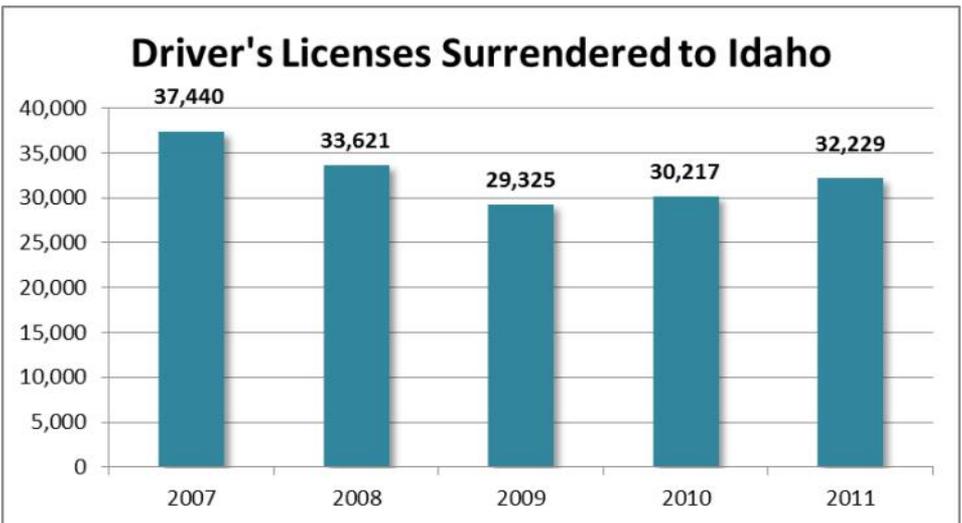
IDAHO'S IN-MIGRATION PICKING UP

An America that had been on the move for generations has been marching in place for much of the last five years. When the housing bubble burst, it put the kibosh on the ability of many Americans to just pick up and move to the next opportunity or the warmest clime.

Plunging home values – and home equity – left many with little choice but to stay put until the market improves, and that can depend on a lot of things – the quality of the neighborhood, its foreclosure participation, curb appeal, maintenance and upkeep and the state of the local economy. South central Idaho did not have a swell of housing activity like many metropolitan areas in the West saw in the mid-2000s so it did not suffer to the same degree when the market crashed.

But there are some signs that Americans may be on the move again, and they are coming to Idaho.

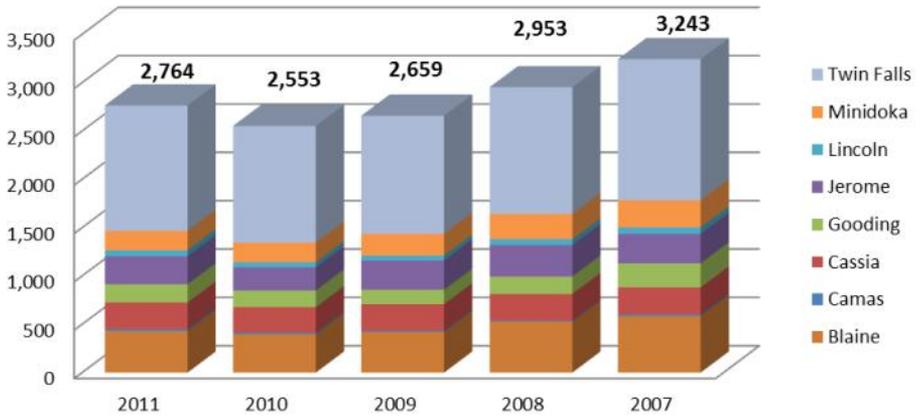
The number of driver's licenses from other states that are being surrendered to the Idaho Division of Motor Vehicles for Idaho licenses is rising again.



In-migration bottomed out in 2009 when license surrenders dropped below 30,000. They have been slowly increasing since.

South central Idaho experienced a similar slump except it did not bottom out until 2010 at fewer than 2,600. The rebound last year was up to nearly 2,800. Surrenders topped 3,200 in 2007 before the recession began digging into Idaho. Ada County with the largest population attracted the most newcomers, averaging 8,600 a year through the recession and into the recovery. License surrenders hit 9,000 in 2011.

South Central Idaho Driver's License Surrenders



Regionally, Twin Falls County experienced the greatest in-migration over the five-year period with 6,500 driver's licenses surrendered, fluctuating from nearly 1,500 to 1,200 in 2010. Blaine County followed at 2,361 over the five years, again slipping below 400 in 2010 before rebounding in 2011.

South Central Idaho Driver's License Surrenders

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	Average
Blaine	431	396	421	528	585	472
Camas	19	18	13	11	17	16
Cassia	275	263	274	276	280	274
Gooding	190	173	149	180	248	188
Jerome	289	240	305	326	307	293
Lincoln	63	53	50	60	67	59
Minidoka	199	203	224	260	279	233
Twin Falls	1,298	1,207	1,223	1,312	1,460	1,300
Total	2,764	2,553	2,659	2,953	3,243	2,834

The only county in the region that seemed unfazed by the recession was Cassia, where license surrenders remained steady over the five years.

Utah residents accounted for more surrenders in Cassia and Minidoka counties than any other state, mirroring the activity in most eastern Idaho counties, likely linked to the high density of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints headquartered in Utah.

Source of Driver's License Surrenders Statewide

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	Total
California	5,752	5,674	5,679	6,451	8,093	31,649
Washington	5,400	4,763	4,398	5,271	5,629	25,461
Utah	2,795	2,823	2,846	3,066	3,391	14,921
Oregon	2,774	2,611	2,510	2,915	3,176	13,986
Nevada	1,641	1,443	1,426	1,661	1,826	7,997
Arizona	1,637	1,505	1,465	1,712	1,882	8,201
Colorado	1,139	1,111	892	1,071	1,116	5,329
Montana	1,064	1,080	1,091	1,268	1,390	5,893
Texas	1,038	965	910	1,039	1,127	5,079
Florida	701	669	582	692	840	3,484
Total	23,941	22,644	21,799	25,146	28,470	122,000

The states with the greatest exodus to Idaho remained relatively constant through the recession and into the recovery. The top 10 were relatively consistent through the south central part of the state as well. Blaine was the only county with a high degree of New York and Florida transplants. Gooding pulled from Arizona and Nevada. California topped the list in all but Camas, Cassia and Minidoka counties. The Panhandle attracted many Washingtonians across the border due to its proximity and free interchange of labor, trade and socio-political ideologies for some.

CALIFORNIANS

The only county without any California impact was Clark in 2007 and 2009. This county saw only 61 driver's licenses surrendered during the five-year period. Its population in the 2010 census was just 982, down 40 from 2000.

It appears that even during the recession, Idaho was appealing to many looking for opportunities to work, recreate or retire to enjoy its geographic diversity.

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INDUSTRY MIX IMPORTANT TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

The industrial composition of a local economy can be important to local governments and economic developers searching for new businesses. Many industries benefit from close proximity to one another. At the same time, a diverse industry base makes a local economy more resilient to shocks that effect specific market segments.

Achieving economic diversity that maintains strong industry focuses is the ultimate goal. The question is how close has the Boise metropolitan area come to reaching it.

Metropolitan Statistical Area	2010 Population	% Change since 2000	2010 Nonfarm Employment
Fresno, Calif. MSA	930,450	16.4%	279,800
Colorado Springs, Col. MSA	645,613	20.1%	246,100
Boise City-Nampa, Idaho MSA	616,561	32.6%	251,700
Ogden-Clearfield, Utah MSA	547,184	23.6%	191,900
Spokane, Wash. MSA	471,221	12.8%	204,000
Reno-Sparks, Nev. MSA	425,417	24.1%	190,000

Source: 2010 Census, Current Employment Statistics

The five western metropolitan areas chosen for comparison had 2010 populations ranging from 425,000 to 930,000 and nonfarm jobs from 190,000 to 280,000, placing the Boise metro area in the middle on both counts. Boise, however, had greater population growth since 2000 than any of the five.

The Ogden metro area had a noticeably lower nonfarm employment total compared to the other metro area relative to population.

The Boise metro area comes off as fairly diverse with trade, transportation and utilities containing the largest portion of nonfarm jobs followed by government. In three of the metros – Fresno, Colorado Springs and Ogden – gov-

2010 Nonfarm Employment

(in thousands)

	Fresno	Colorado Springs	Boise	Ogden	Spokane	Reno
Total Nonfarm	279.8	246.1	252	191.9	204	190
Mining, Logging and Construction	12.1	12.1	13	11.6	10	9.4
Manufacturing	24.9	12.5	22.2	20.4	14.4	11.1
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	54.9	37.6	48.9	36.1	40.4	42
Information	3.6	7	4.3	2	2.8	2.4
Financial Activities	13.3	15.4	13.2	8	12	8.8
Professional and Business Services	26.8	39.8	37.4	20.8	20.9	24.2
Education and Health Services	40.2	29.2	38	23.3	40.1	22
Leisure and Hospitality	26.7	29.7	22.5	17.7	18.7	34.1
Other Services	10.1	14.6	9.1	5.6	9.1	7
Total Government	67.2	48.2	43.2	46.3	35.7	29
Federal Government	10.7	12.7	6.2	19.9	4.7	3.7
State Government	10.5	4.6	12.8	5.8	10.7	9.7
Local Government	46.1	30.8	24.3	20.6	20.3	15.6

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

Change in Nonfarm Industries 2007-2010

	Fresno	Colorado Springs	Boise	Ogden	Spokane	Reno
Total Nonfarm	(26,600)	(14,900)	(25,300)	(10,500)	(13,800)	(33,900)
Mining, Logging and Construction	(9,100)	(5,300)	(10,200)	(6,400)	(4,200)	(12,000)
Manufacturing	(3,200)	(4,500)	(9,000)	(2,800)	(4,500)	(3,500)
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	(5,500)	(3,500)	(5,800)	(2,400)	(3,700)	(6,500)
Information	(600)	(900)	(400)	0	(400)	(400)
Financial Activities	(2,000)	(2,200)	(1,700)	(800)	(1,300)	(1,300)
Professional and Business Services	(3,200)	(1,200)	(3,500)	(1,700)	(2,100)	(5,000)
Education and Health Services	1,300	2,700	4,900	2,600	3,500	1,400
Leisure and Hospitality	(1,500)	(1,400)	(2,600)	(100)	(2,100)	(6,000)
Other Services	(900)	(500)	1,100	(400)	(100)	(300)
Total Government	(2,000)	1,900	1,900	1,300	1,200	(400)
Federal Government	1,100	1,600	400	700	100	300
State Government	(100)	500	(600)	(200)	(100)	100
Local Government	(2,900)	(200)	2,100	800	1,200	(800)

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

ernment was their largest employer. Ogden had a very high number of federal jobs compared to the other areas.

The most recent recession also affected each metro area differently. Overall, Reno saw the largest decline in jobs, losing over 15 percent of its nonfarm employment. The majority of this loss was caused by a sharp decline in construction. While every area also recorded a sharp decline in this sector, Reno lost over half the construction jobs it had in 2007.

In terms of percentage of statewide nonfarm employment, the Boise metro was the next hardest hit followed by Fresno. Both had large construction declines as the housing bubble burst — 44 percent in Boise and 43 percent in Fresno. Boise also recorded a sizable loss in manufacturing. Unlike Reno, though, Boise had sizable gains in education and health services, which added almost 5,000 jobs since 2007.

Boise was also the only market to see a private industry other than health care grow between 2007 and 2010. Other services, a collection of service-based industries not categorized elsewhere, grew by over 1,000 jobs. While not seeing additional growth over the recession, Ogden did not record a loss in the information industry.

Location Quotient for 2010, Based on the U.S.						
	Fresno	Colorado Springs	Boise	Ogden	Spokane	Reno
Mining, Logging and Construction	0.903	1.026	1.078	1.262	1.023	1.033
Manufacturing	1.003	0.572	0.994	1.198	0.795	0.658
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	1.034	0.805	1.024	0.992	1.044	1.165
Information	0.617	1.365	0.820	0.500	0.659	0.606
Financial Activities	0.807	1.062	0.890	0.708	0.998	0.786
Professional and Business Services	0.744	1.256	1.154	0.842	0.795	0.989
Education and Health Services	0.955	0.789	1.004	0.807	1.307	0.770
Leisure and Hospitality	0.950	1.201	0.890	0.918	0.912	1.786
Other Services	0.879	1.445	0.881	0.711	1.087	0.898
Total Government	1.387	1.131	0.991	1.393	1.011	0.881

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

Location quotient is useful in comparing the industries of different regions. The table above shows each metro area’s location quotient for 2010 relative to the nation. A quotient greater than one shows an industry that has a higher concentration in that area than nationally. Supersectors like manufacturing and financial activities include a wide range of industries that make them less suitable for this comparison, but they did give an indication of the kinds of components each metro economy has.

The Boise metro area has a very even distribution. Only four supersectors have a higher concentration than the nation. The most highly concentrated for the area is professional and business services, but metro Boise comes in second behind Colorado Springs.

The other metros show a few stronger industry concentrations. Colorado Springs has the highest concentration of information and other services jobs. Ogden has a high concentration of mining, logging and construction jobs, and Reno is high in leisure and hospitality jobs as would be expected. As far as government employment goes, Ogden and Fresno have relatively high location quotients.

Compared to other metro areas in the West with similar population, metropolitan Boise does not show any highly concentrated industry sectors, at least at the supersector level. A more precise listing of industries would see specialties emerge, but overall the area is very balanced compared to the others. If any one industry sector were to be highlighted as a regional strength, it would be in professional and business services, which contains a multitude of enterprises from call centers to engineering firms.

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UNEMPLOYMENT RATE CALCULATED BY ALTERNATIVE METHODS

The Current Population Survey, conducted monthly by the U.S. Census Bureau, provides much of the data used by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics to determine monthly unemployment rates.

But the rates publicized each month at the state and national levels are just one of what the government calls Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization – a title that would only be fashioned by economists. These measures are produced at the state level on a four-quarter moving average with the annual rates for 2011 recently published.

What is seen as the official unemployment rate is actually the third of the six rates calculated in this series. Known as U-3, this rate announced monthly counts as unemployed anyone who is not currently working but has looked for work sometime in the last four weeks. The first two rates are U-1 for persons unemployed 15 weeks or longer and U-2 for persons who have lost their jobs or completed temporary jobs. They express unemployment more narrowly than the U-3 or official unemployment rate, which adds new entrants to the labor force who are looking for work to the ranks of the unemployed.

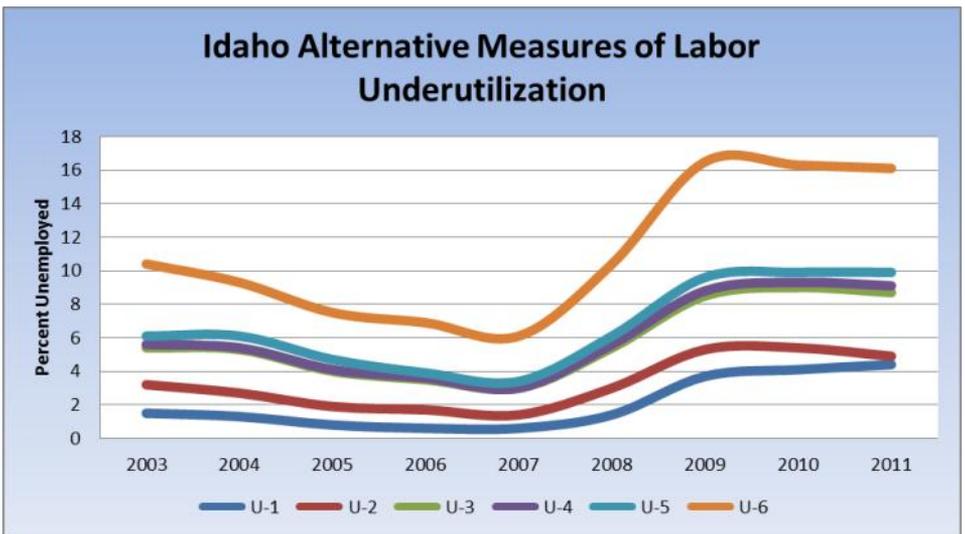
The definition of unemployed or underemployed becomes broader in the subsequent rates, U-4, U-5 and U-6.

Historically high rates were found in every measure in 2010. By 2011 most rates saw improvement. Two exceptions were U-1 measuring the long-term unemployed and U-5, which are called marginally attached workers. This group combines people who have not looked for work in the last four weeks because they do not believe they can find work – they are added to the officially unemployed to make up the U-4 rate – with other marginally attached workers, who have not looked for work in the last four weeks but for other reasons than frustration with the job market.

The U-6 rate measures the number of workers stuck in part-time jobs because they cannot find full-time work.

The U-1 rate increased by three-tenths to 4.4 percent as the number of workers unemployed for 15 or more weeks increased from 30,700 to 33,800. The number of all marginally attached workers increased from 7,500 in 2010 to 10,400 in 2011 but left the U-5 rate unchanged at 9.9 percent.

Idaho Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization						
Unemployed as Percent of Labor Force						
Year	U-1	U-2	U-3	U-4	U-5	U-6
2003	1.5	3.2	5.4	5.6	6.1	10.4
2004	1.3	2.7	5.3	5.4	6.1	9.3
2005	0.8	1.9	4	4.1	4.7	7.5
2006	0.6	1.7	3.5	3.6	3.9	6.9
2007	0.6	1.4	3	3	3.4	6.1
2008	1.4	3	5.4	5.6	6.1	10.4
2009	3.7	5.3	8.5	8.8	9.6	16.5
2010	4.1	5.4	9	9.3	9.9	16.3
2011	4.4	4.9	8.7	9.1	9.9	16.1



DISCOURAGED WORKERS

A portion of the marginally attached workers include discouraged workers – workers who have quit looking for jobs out of frustration. In 2006 and 2007 there were only 400 discouraged workers statewide – by 2010 that number had increased to 3,100. The escalation persisted in 2011, bringing the total number of discouraged Idaho workers to 3,400 – a 750 percent increase from 2007. More discouraged workers were added in 2011 but at a much slower pace than before.

LAI D OFF

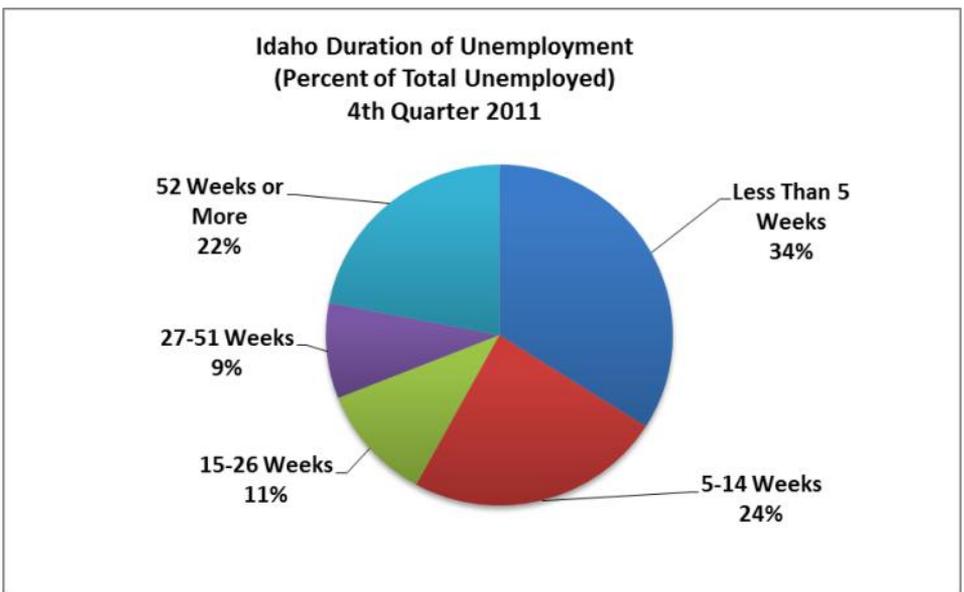
The number of Idaho’s laid-off workers was 264 percent higher in 2011 than 2007. According to the Idaho data from the Current Population Survey, there were 10,400 laid-off workers throughout the state in 2007. Between 2007 and 2008 the number of laid-off workers increased by 118 percent from 10,400 to 22,700. The peak came in 2010 at 41,100. Since then the number has fallen to 37,800, the lowest since 2008.

INVOLUNTARY PART-TIME WORKERS

Idaho’s number of involuntary part-time workers held steady between 2004 and 2007, ranging between 20,700 and 22,800. The onset of the recession brought a rapid increase in employers cutting back hours until 2009 when 52,600 Idahoans were working part-time for economic reasons. Since then the number fell to 47,800 in 2011, still 130 percent higher than in 2007. This is reflected in the U-6 unemployment rate which has increased from 6.1 percent in 2007 to 16.1 percent in 2011.

UNEMPLOYED AT LEAST 15 WEEKS

It is common for the duration of unemployment to increase when labor markets are troubled by relatively low demand for workers coupled with an excess supply of workers without jobs. In January 2012 over 41 percent of the nation’s unemployed had been looking for jobs for over 26 weeks. The most recent estimates for Idaho indicate 31 percent of the unemployed have been looking for work longer than 26 weeks. The Current Population Survey data for Idaho estimated there were 4,300 Idahoans looking for work longer than 14 weeks in 2007 – a number which increased to 33,800 in 2011. Since 2007, the pool of unemployed workers has grown with little relief. It appears the obstacles to employment for the long-term unemployed are high, and returning to work becomes harder as the weeks pass – a situation some are beginning to call “chronic unemployment.”



LABOR FORCE, EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

With upticks on many of the underlying numbers behind these alternative measures, three important areas showed improvement that allows most of the alternative measure rates to decrease. Current Population Survey estimates showed a decreasing number of unemployed, an increasing number of employed and a growing labor force. The number of unemployed increased from 22,800 in 2007 to a peak of 67,800 in 2010 before decreasing in 2011 by 2 percent to 66,500. Between 2007 and 2011 the total number of employed fell by over 6 percent with slight increases in 2010 and 2011.

It is the third year since the recession was officially declared over, and labor markets are finally showing consistent signs of recovery.

Idaho Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization

Annual Average	Unemployed 15+ weeks	Laid Off	Discouraged Workers	All Marginally Attached	Involuntary Part-time Workers	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
2003	10,300	22,200	1,300	5,200	29,400	683,600	646,600	37,000
2004	9,200	18,900	1,100	5,900	22,800	704,600	667,300	37,300
2005	5,700	14,300	1,200	5,400	20,700	742,700	713,000	29,700
2006	4,800	12,900	400	2,700	22,600	758,900	731,900	26,900
2007	4,300	10,400	400	3,100	20,800	765,000	742,200	22,800
2008	10,900	22,700	1,200	5,400	32,500	756,300	715,300	41,100
2009	28,100	39,900	2,400	9,200	52,600	752,600	688,400	64,200
2010	30,700	41,100	3,100	7,500	49,500	756,300	688,500	67,800
2011	33,800	37,800	3,400	10,400	47,800	763,600	697,200	66,500
% Change 2010-2011	10.1%	-8.0%	9.7%	38.7%	-3.4%	1.0%	1.3%	-1.9%
% Change 2009-2010	9.3%	3.0%	29.2%	-18.5%	-5.9%	0.5%	0.0%	5.6%
% Change 2007-2011	686.0%	263.5%	750.0%	235.5%	129.8%	-0.2%	-6.1%	191.7%

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PORT OF LEWISTON PROMOTES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Port of Lewiston not only is responsible for Idaho's lone seaport but also is charged with enhancing the economy of the Lewiston area. Its primary mission is job creation through intermodal transportation, international trade and economic development. As an intermodal transportation hub, the port provides shippers access to "the three R's" - river, rail and roads. The port participates in many international trade missions, hosts foreign visitors and ships a large number of products overseas. Economic development includes the port's properties, business incubator buildings and business parks. The port works with the economic development organization Valley Vision to provide space — either existing properties or new buildings — for businesses that want to move to or expand in the Lewiston area.

BUSINESS PARKS AND INCUBATORS

Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories opened its new plant in January on land acquired from the port. The port helped develop Nez Perce Terrace, a 183-acre planned-unit development running from the Nez Perce Grade to the Gun Club Road. The area includes a Home Depot. In partnership with Lewiston's Urban Renewal Agency, the port helped develop roads, utilities and other infrastructure in its 45-acre business and technology park in Nez Perce Terrace. That produced the ready-to-build site Schweitzer Engineering purchased. About 18 acres of port-owned land remain in the development adjacent to the 25 acres sold to Schweitzer.

South of the airport, the Southport development is home to several operations including an ATK-CCI/Speer manufacturing plant, a Department of Juvenile Corrections facility and Bentz Boats.

Business incubator buildings in the riverfront area called Northport, where the port has its headquarters, house Clearwater Canyon Cellars, Clearwater Converting and Seekins Precision Machine among others. Clearwater Canyon Cellars makes wine using locally grown grapes. Clearwater Converting is involved with the paper industry. Seekins employs 10 skilled workers and some very sophisticated computer numeric control machines to make scope rings, sling rail systems, magazines and billet lowers for rifles. It has a growing reputation for its high quality.

The Clearwater Economic Development Association, the economic planning organization for north central Idaho, and the Northwest Intermountain Manufacturing Association share space in the port's headquarters building.

Immediately north of Northport, the Harry Wall Industrial Park includes the new Nez Perce County Jail, EKO compost facility and the city's transfer station.

Altogether the port has 29 tenants in three parts of Lewiston.

"I suspect Lewiston would have neither ATK nor the new Schweitzer Engineering facility if we didn't have a port district that was able to purchase land, prepare it and promote development," Idaho State Rep. John Rusche recently said.

CONTAINER SHIPPING

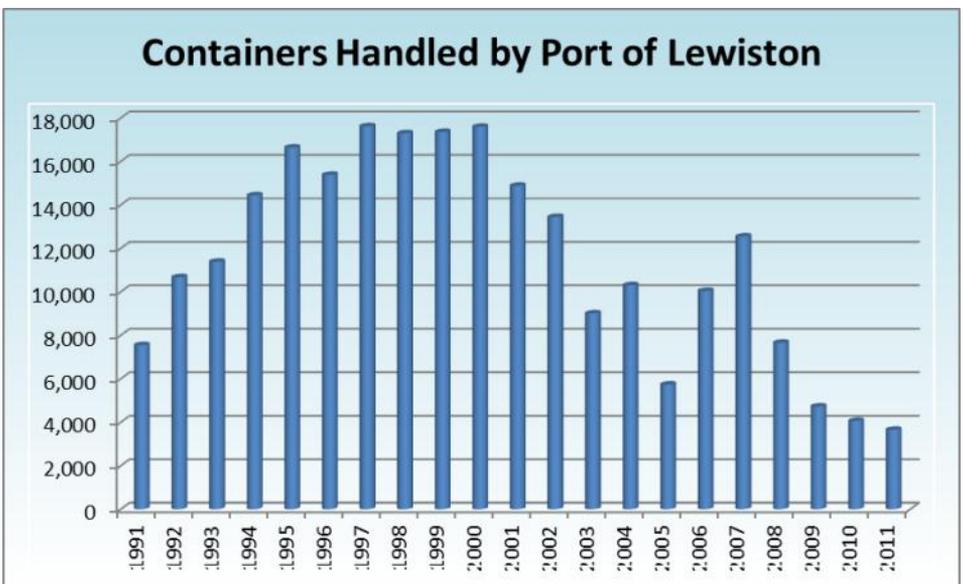
Two other ports — Clarkston and Wilma, north of Clarkston — operate in the Lewis-Clark Valley, but Lewiston is only port providing container shipping.

The port's top priority is to double the size of its container dock. The addition of a 150-foot dock would allow two barges to unload or load at the same time, and it would allow the port to take advantage of future opportunities to expand shipments. The expansion is expected to cost \$2.9 million. If the Nez Perce Tribe approves the permit, the project could begin soon. The tribe's approval is required by the Army Corps of Engineer to meet its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Barge traffic is temporarily suspended as it normally is this time of the year. The annual three-week closure of the barge system began March 6. The closure allows routine maintenance on the locks.

Shipping at the port has fallen in recent years due to the recession and the economy's sluggish recovery as well as problems at the Port of Portland. In 2009, the port handled 393 containers a month. The following year, it handled 338. In 2011, it averaged 304 containers a month. The three-month closure of the Columbia-Snake river system for extensive lock repairs was a major contributor to last year's decline.

Recent volumes are below the break-even point of 400 containers a month needed to generate sufficient revenue to cover expenses. Other services the container yard offers, such as container repair for shipping lines and



container inspection for steamship lines or shippers, covered the revenue gap.

Lewiston's trend for outbound containers is similar to the trend at Portland, which handled about 100,000 containers per year in the last three years, compared with more than 200,000 in each of the six prior years.

MEGALoads

With container shipping down, the Port of Lewiston has found additional revenues through megaloads – enormous loads that are moved to Lewiston by barge and then require special permits to move on highways.

The largest source of megaloads has been the Imperial Oil shipments of Korean-made modules for a processing plant under construction in the Kearl Oil Sands of Alberta, Canada. The port netted more than \$500,000 from Imperial Oil megaloads in the 12 months through last June. It also paid expenses of \$396,233 because of the megaloads. The largest expense was a security force that at its peak numbered 19. The port received additional revenue in the current fiscal year although less than in the prior year. The net revenues will be used for infrastructure that supports job creation.

The last two Imperial Oil shipments traveled from the port up U.S. Highway 95 to Interstate 90 in early March. Originally Imperial Oil had planned to ship more than 200 loads along U.S. Highway 12, which runs through Orofino, Kamiah and Kooskia to the Montana border. The first of 34 immense loads of equipment arrived at Lewiston by barge in the fall of 2010 but was stranded there by legal protests and an environmental review in Montana. So Imperial cut the loads in two so it could send them up U.S. Highway 95 instead. The remaining loads have been shipped to other ports.

Up to 300 people worked to halve the loads at the port. Most of the workers were from out of state so they kept motels and restaurants filled for about six months.

Only one Imperial Oil megaload traveled on U.S. 12. It was a test module to show that the two-lane road could accommodate the rigs. Planned as a three-night trip, the transport took more than two weeks because of weather delays and a power outage. It remains parked near the state line since Montana hasn't granted it permits to travel.

At this time, the port is not working with any companies on transporting any oversized loads on U.S. Highways 95 or 12 in the near future. "I believe that future oversized cargo going through the Port of Lewiston will consist of three to six units, maybe three or four times a year," Dave Doeringsfeld, port general manager, said. Future projects could include anything from wind turbines headed for Wyoming to equipment for lumber mills in Montana to components for projects in North Dakota.

BUDGET

The Port of Lewiston's annual budget exceeds \$2 million with \$450,000 coming from Nez Perce County property owners and the rest from port operations including rent of port-owned office space. It employs seven people at its container yard and a few more at its offices.

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LEWISTON AIRPORT UNDERTAKES ITS LARGEST EXPANSION EVER

The Lewiston airport is in the middle of its largest project since the Works Progress Administration built it in the early 1940s. Intended to accommodate growth and provide opportunities for businesses development, the initial phase of the project was made possible by a \$3.2 million funding package put together by the Clearwater Economic Development Association that included a \$1.94 million Economic Development Administration grant and a \$500,000 Rural Community Block Grant.

Contractor M.L. Albright of Lewiston began working last May on an industrial park at the south side project. To prepare 80 acres that includes the park and areas for a new runway and apron, over a million cubic yards of basalt rock had to be removed. Now installation of water, sewer, gas and electric lines is drawing to a close. The last part of the park's development— paving an access road and seeding the ground — will start in a few weeks.

Next is aviation infrastructure. The Federal Aviation Administration approved Riedesel Engineering's plan and specification, clearing the way for bids in what could be up to \$3 million worth of taxiways, aprons and lights. Construction on a 3,000-foot-long, 50-foot-wide taxiway and the 1,200-foot-long, 230-foot-wide apron should commence shortly after a bid is accepted.

The airport authority will be looking at national and regional trends to identify potential commercial targets and develop a master plan for the area. It is contracting with a nationally known airport planning firm – Chicago-based Ricondo and Associates – to create a plan for developing the south side. The plan would determine what types of tenants should be allowed and how they should be divided based on factors such as market conditions. While businesses involved with flying will be most interested in the industrial park, other types of businesses also could fit there. At full build-out, the park is expected to create about 250 jobs.

Valley Vision, the economic development organization that recruits businesses to the Lewiston-Clarkston area, will market the project, looking for businesses that want to move there. The goal is to get the south side ready for its first tenant by this fall.

An airport plays a vital role in a region's economy. The staff at the state Aeronautics Division hired The Airport Technology and Planning Group Inc. from Cincinnati, Ohio, to determine just what an airport was worth. The resulting report about the economic impact of airports in Idaho concluded that the Lewiston-Nez Perce County Regional Airport is an economic engine that creates some 650 jobs in the region with an estimated payroll of over \$13.2 million every year. Add to that the direct goods and services airport businesses buy in the region plus the additional economic activity all that spending generates and the annual injection into the regional economy totals almost \$38 million.

Access to airports reduces transportation costs and saves time, and many businesses would never locate in an area without an airport. In addition, visitors arriving through the airport spend millions of dollars in the local economy.

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NEW DAY MORE THAN A WORKPLACE FOR ITS EMPLOYEES

Work is more than a paycheck or a way to pay the bills.

Author Gretchen Craft Rubin, in her book the “The Happiness Project,” found that work is key element in human well being.

Terry Fredrickson, the chief executive of New Day Products and Resources in Pocatello, hopes his organization connects those two. Fredrickson is the leader of New Day, an organization that provides employment to 120 individuals with developmental disabilities and to thousands since it opened in 1971.

New Day provides a varied line of products and services including custom tee-shirts and jackets, Idaho State University licensed products, furniture, buttons, even auto detailing – and Fredrickson believes something more important,

“We are a community here,” Fredrickson said. “Our employees form friendships and feel like they are part of the larger Pocatello community.”

Indeed New Day is more than just a work place. Employees can take advantage of an adult living center attached to the work area, a library, computer lab and even a meditation room.

An important mission is career development. Fredrickson said the people who work at New Day are “more than employees, they are clients and our friends.” With this philosophy in mind, the organization offers classes in how to apply for work and job search skills.

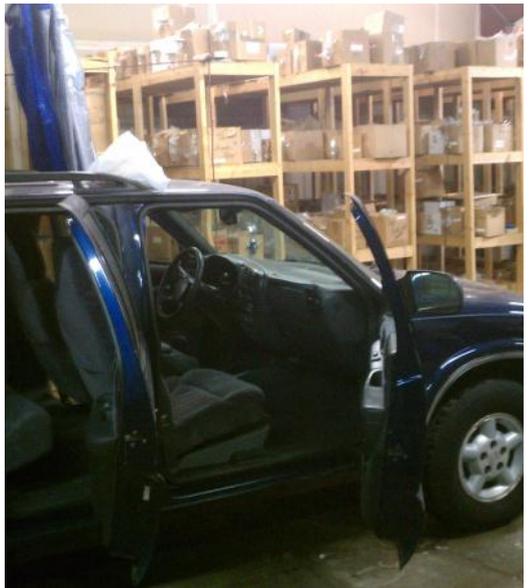
“Our employees, when they see someone out in the community wearing one of our shirts or even a button, they get excited, they take pride in their work and that they are contributing to the community as whole through their labors,” he said.

Recently the employees at New Day were excited by the addition of a special new customer. One of the presidential candidates ordered a large quantity of campaign buttons. The staff at New Day are very proud that their product will be passed out across the country on the campaign trail.

One area of tremendous success has been the car detailing business.

“Several of the local auto dealers and repair shops come to New Day to hire our workers,” he said. “Our program provides these individuals a valuable career opportunity.”

Besides improving the lives of individuals, New Day is reducing the burden on taxpayers. A study published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that the lifetime cost to support a person who has mental retardation is just over \$1 million. But when those individuals work full time, the taxpayer’s burden is reduced.



Car detailing is one of the occupations New Day participants can learn.

Fredrickson said about 70 percent of New Day's participants work full time, not including those who have left the organization to seek more lucrative employment opportunities.

New Day also has a positive impact on the local economy. According to data from ESMI of Moscow, the jobs New Day Products brings to Pocatello create about 160 additional local jobs in areas such as manufacturing, real estate, health care, construction, food services, government, financial services and transportation.

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The Census Bureau's website has a great link — QuickFacts -



<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>.

QuickFacts provides the latest census data for the state, counties or cities. From there you can access more detailed information. Click on the link above, pick a state, then select a county or city and find the latest data quickly and easily.

CENSUS FUN FACTS: MARCH: Women's History Month

National Women's History Month is rooted in the March 8, 1857, protest women from New York City factories staged over working conditions.

International Women's Day was first observed in 1909, but it was not until 1981 that Congress established National Women's History Week during the second week of March. In 1987, Congress expanded the week to a month.

SOME FACTS ABOUT WOMEN AND HISTORY

- There were 157 million women in the United States, according to the 2010 Census. The number of males was 151.8 million.
- There were 85.4 million mothers of all ages in the United States.
- Eighty-one percent of women 40 to 44 had given birth in 2010, down from 90 percent in 1976.
- Five million women were stay-at-home mothers nationwide in 2010.
- The median annual earnings of women 15 or older who worked year-round, full time, was \$36,931 in 2010, unchanged from 2009.
- An estimated 30.7 million women 25 and older had bachelor's degrees or more in 2010 compared to 29.2 million men. Women had a larger share of high school diplomas and equivalents, associate, bachelor's and master's degrees. More men than women had a professional or doctoral degree.
- About 46.2 percent women citizens 18 and older voted in the 2010 congressional election, while 45 percent of their male counterparts cast a ballot, and 66.6 percent of female citizens reported being registered to vote.
- An estimated 58.6 percent of women 16 and older – 71.9 million women – participated in the labor force in 2010.
- Of those, 40.6 percent worked in management, professional and related occupations, compared with 34.2 percent of employed men.
- There were 205,500 active duty women in the military on Sept. 30, 2010 – 38,700 officers and 166,800 enlisted.

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

NORTHERN IDAHO

Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- A bill that would have allowed voters to decide on creating dry port districts for freight-handling facilities was rejected by the Idaho Legislature's House Revenue and Taxation Committee. The bill was intended to create jobs and attract businesses by allowing dry ports to be created like other Northwest states do. The district would have had modest property taxing authority.
- Providence is preparing to install customized health records technology developed by Madison, Wisc.-based Epic Systems Corp. at all of its hospitals, medical clinics and Providence-owned physician practices in Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Montana and California. In all, the effort involves upgrading the health records systems at 27 hospitals and more than 400 clinics including Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center & Children's Hospital, Providence Holy Family Hospital and a number of other medical facilities and physician practices in the Spokane area.
- The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation have agreed to accept a \$193 million settlement from the federal government for decades of mismanagement of tribal trust funds and income-generating assets. In 2005, the Colville Tribes sued the federal government, alleging mismanagement of payments from timber sales, agriculture and grazing leases and mining claims on tribal trust lands. The income was supposed to be invested on behalf of the Colville Tribes, but the tribe never received an accounting of the money. The settlement ranks among the largest payouts in Indian trust-mismanagement cases in U.S. history. Some of the settlement will be used to restore tribal forests and rangeland on the 1.4 million-acre reservation. A portion will be distributed to the tribes' 9,000-plus members through ongoing per-capita payments.
- Itron Inc., the big Liberty Lake, Wash.-based maker of energy-management equipment and systems, announced two new contracts to install utility metering networks in Australia and Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan project will provide 400,000 smart-payment gas meters to SOCAR Azeri Gas Production Union, a division of the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan. The project in Australia's Port Douglas, Queensland, will deploy a water-metering system for the local government that manages the area's water supply.
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has awarded Indian Housing Block Grants totaling \$6 million to three tribes in north-eastern Washington. HUD awarded about \$2.4 million to the Spokane Indian Housing Authority in Wellpinit, \$3.5 million to the Colville Indian

Housing Authority in Nespelem and \$100,000 to the Kalispell Indian Community in Usk. The funds will benefit low-income families living on Indian reservations or in other communities.

BENEWAH COUNTY

- The Coeur d'Alene Tribe's new radio station, KWIS 88.3 FM, is on the air. The educational public radio station received its construction permit and initial approval from the Federal Communications Commission in 2008 and was given three years to begin broadcasting. The station features local artists and musicians and will broadcast cultural content intended to help preserve the traditions and oral history of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. KWIS, pronounced "kwee-ss" means "to be called" in the Coeur d'Alene language. The radio station's signal is broadcast to approximately 8,000 households.
- The Coeur d'Alene Tribe made a \$5,000 donation to the St. Maries school district to support educational programs. A law passed in 2002 by voters requires the tribe to contribute 5 percent of its annual net gaming income to education programs and schools on or near the reservation. The district has not yet decided in what area to spend the money.
- The St. Maries Hospital has scheduled its grand opening for March 31.
- Accelerated Construction was awarded the \$125,420 contract to install a 12-inch water line near Potlatch. The project was expected to cost \$150,000. The city's share is approximately \$112,000. Potlatch Corp. will pay the rest.
- The 2012 World Jet Boat Races are April 14-15. The races received special use permits from both Benewah and Shoshone counties. The United States has the opportunity to host the world jet boat races every four years, and the local economic impact is expected to be substantial. Organizers expect 40 teams of four to 20 members to participate. In addition, the local race committee expects up to 5,000 spectators for the event. At the 2011 Canadian World Race, each race team spent an estimated \$1,000 per day on food, lodging and other items.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

BOUNDARY COUNTY

- The Hall Mt. Volunteer Fire Association received a \$20,000 check from TransCanada in January to finish the Hall Mt. No. 3 station, which was started in 2007. The second floor will have training space, a multi-agency command center and an office for Chief Brad Lowther. There are also plans to add a small kitchen and bathroom.

BONNER COUNTY

- The Bonner Community Food Center has moved to a building next to United Parcel Service. The new facility has an additional 1,700 square feet.
- Northland Communications is bringing fiber optics to downtown businesses in Sandpoint. The new network will dramatically increase bandwidth for local businesses. Establishing a high-speed Internet network in Sandpoint has been a goal for community leaders, businesses and resi-

dents the past several years. The Bonner County Economic Development Corp. is also spearheading a project to establish a fiber optic network in the most populated areas of the county.

KOOTENAI COUNTY

- The Idaho Department of Labor and the Post Falls Chamber of Commerce are hosting a reverse job fair on March 21. About 300 students are expected to participate in the fair, which has become a popular event in recent years. Each student selects a career or profession, researches it and then is interviewed by a person in that career or profession during the fair. The fair provides high school seniors a chance to explore a wide range of careers.
- Parkwood Business Properties of Coeur d'Alene and KVC Development of Spokane are building a \$7 million Marriott SpringHill Suites hotel just east of the Holiday Inn Express hotel in Coeur d'Alene. With construction to start this summer and be completed next spring, the 70,000-square-foot, four-story hotel will include 118 suites with king- and queen-size beds, an indoor pool with a children's play feature, a Jacuzzi and two patios, one with a splash pad and one with two gas fire pits, overhead heaters and a built-in barbecue. A three-hole putting green will flank one patio behind the hotel.
- The Coeur d'Alene Resort, as part of its 25th anniversary last year, reopened its first floor to the public Wednesday after a two-month remodel. The 35,000-square-foot makeover includes new décor for the lobby and the Dockside Restaurant, more space for the fitness area and an expanded Whispers bar and lounge.
- A group of northern Idaho investors and soccer parents has formed North Idaho Sports Complex LLC to develop a 16-field soccer complex near Hayden. The facility would be used primarily by the Coeur d'Alene Sting Soccer Club, which has about 25 teams and 370 youth players, but the company plans to open the fields to other community sports groups as well. The Sting hosts a tournament each May that draws about 4,000 players from several states and Canada, generating a \$1.1 million economic impact. The business hopes to begin construction this spring or summer so the fields are ready for play in spring 2013.

SHOSHONE COUNTY

- Equity Mining LLC of Bellevue, Wash., holds an unpatented gold mining claim in the Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District in Shoshone County. That means Equity owns the mineral rights to a placer deposit there but would lease the land from the U.S. Forest Service. The proposed project, near the historic community of Delta about 15 miles north of Wallace, would create a half acre of surface disturbance. It would have three onsite employees, and the test-pit operation would last up to one year.



Subsequent to public comments, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency drastically reduced the scope of its proposed \$1.3 billion clean-up of historic mining waste in the upper Coeur d'Alene River basin. Under the original plan, the work could have lasted up to 90 years. EPA's new plan would cost \$740 million and finish in about 30 years. One of

the biggest cost savings in the new plan was scrapping a \$300 million liner for 10 miles of the Coeur d'Alene River's South Fork. The liner would have kept clean and polluted water from mixing, but the design posed engineering challenges. The number of old mine and mill sites slated for cleanup also dropped from 340 to 197 in the new plan. Some of the sites were in remote drainages east of Wallace, and they appeared to have a lesser impact on water quality.

- U.S. Silver Corp. repurchased more than 3 million of its common shares that will be retired from circulation. The company has nearly 61 million common shares. Gordon Pridham, the executive chairman of U.S. Silver, said that with “a cash balance in excess of our planned needs, an expected continued strong silver market and management's belief that the current stock price does not reflect the underlying company value, we feel that this share buyback program is a very prudent investment for the benefit of shareholders.” U.S. Silver did a five to one reverse stock split effective Jan. 30 that consolidated every five shares into one share, but no value was lost. The decision was made because the company applied to trade on the New York Stock Exchange Amex, which requires the minimum price of \$2 per share. Before the stock split, shares were trading between 45 cents and 50 cents.
- Colorado-based Galena Mineral Resources Group has signed an option agreement to purchase 100 percent of the long– closed Bunker Hill mine, comprised of 434 patented mining claims covering about 5,700 acres.
- A fire at the Sunshine Mine prompted 24 people to be laid off at the beginning of March, according to reports. A fire that began Feb. 14 was still smoldering on March 1 in a few places. The blaze originated on the 3,100 Level of the mine and a dozen contracted Redpath employees were immediately evacuated, and ventilation systems were shut down. Seals were put in place at the source of the fire, and three fire doors on the 3,100 Level and one on the 2,700 Level were closed. Crews closed the doors at the top of the Jewell Shaft and sealed them. Crews have been limited in their ability to safely enter the mine. According to the report, there were 44 people employed at the mine at the time of the fire. They were working on various topside projects, including digitizing historical data and repurposing some of the older building for future projects.

OPENINGS

- Craft Cravens, a gift store, in Post Falls
- Sudden Shine, a car detailing business, in Coeur d'Alene
- Joey T's Taste of Chicago in Rathdrum
- Alice's Grill in Coeur d'Alene
- Kathryn's Portrait in Coeur d'Alene
- Eyeguys Optical in Hayden

LAYOFFS

- Twenty-four workers at Sunshine Mine

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NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis and Nez Perce counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

NEZ PERCE TRIBE

- The Nez Perce Tribe and the Idaho Transportation Department plan to build a rest stop at the top of the Winchester Grade at the tribe's Camas Express convenience store. The project, which will begin this spring, will expand the convenience store, build a 24-hour rest stop with bathrooms and showers and widen the turn lanes on both sides of U.S. Highway 95. The department is providing \$300,000 for the rest area and turn lanes. It is also partnering with other groups in other parts of the state to create rest stops. Camas Express will expand the gas station to sell diesel fuel and add a rest area with extended spaces for tractor-trailers that travel U.S. Highway 95.
- The Nez Perce Tribal Housing Authority received a \$1.1 million grant in February from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to maintain its affordable housing units. The annual grant has been dwindling in recent years.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

CLEARWATER COUNTY

- The Clearwater Community Foundation – cooperating with several local agencies, organizations and the Idaho Foodbank – opened Lifeline Food Bank in Orofino on Feb. 27. Lifeline offers a permanent replacement for the mobile food bank that Idaho Foodbank brought to the community every month for the past several years. It is open on Mondays and Fridays.
- State Hospital North in Orofino and State Hospital South in Blackfoot will receive an additional \$1.56 million in funding for the 12 months beginning July 1, a 5.5 percent increase. The budget includes money for staff pay increases, \$17,000 for new exterior lighting in Orofino and \$24,000 for safety improvements in the patient seclusion room.
- Clearwater County continues to chip away at the digital divide between itself and more urban communities. The Clearwater Memorial Public Library in Orofino introduced wireless Internet and installed new computers a few months ago. A Better Technology Opportunities Program grant made the new technology possible. Patrons can bring their own laptop or notebook computers and use the wireless Internet throughout the library.
- The Clearwater Tribune will celebrate its 100th anniversary in May. The newspaper came into being when the Orofino Tribune, a newspaper with a Democratic slant that was founded in 1905, merged with the Clearwater Republican. Today the offices of the weekly paper and its 10 employees are across Orofino's Main Street from the original office that was razed by a fire in 1923.

IDAHO AND LEWIS COUNTY

- Kamiah recently unveiled two welcome signs along U.S. Highway 12 at both ends of town, proclaiming Kamiah as a “great place to live, work and play.” The city also installed downtown directional signs and a business directory kiosk in front of the chamber of commerce. The signs and kiosk were financed by a \$14,522 federal Northwest Scenic Byway grant and hundreds of hours of volunteer labor.
- The White Bird City Library began offering high-speed Internet for its patrons on Feb 17. With Wi-Fi connection made possible by Frontier Communication, the library also can accommodate Kindle users and those who wish to bring in their own PCs.
- Elk City, an unincorporated town surrounded by 2.2 million acres of national forest, soon will begin renovating a landmark building. The old community hall was built shortly after fire destroyed much of the town in the early 1930s. For the last dozen years, the building has not been used as a community hall but has housed a secondhand store. Community members wishing to have a community hall again favored renovating the historic hall rather than building a new one. An engineering inspection in October recommended immediate maintenance to preserve the building’s integrity. The first phase, which will stabilize and level the building, will begin this spring. Meanwhile, a local group is developing plans to finance the second phase – restoring the building as a community center for about 500 area residents.
- Prairie High School in Cottonwood is preparing young people to meet the workforce demands of local manufacturers. The school designs its classes in construction, drafting technology, cabinet making and manufacturing by consulting local businesses about the skills they need. In turn, local manufacturers donate critical materials, software and machines for the classes. They also spend time in the classroom, mentor students and offer internships to the students during the summer. They prefer graduates of those classes when they hire. Prairie has participated in the Northwest Intermountain Manufacturers Association’s Solid Works in the High Schools project since the beginning in 2008. They are one of the six north central Idaho high schools engaged in the next level of Solid Works training that will help technology and mathematics teachers use computer-aided design software to teach concepts and build skills. It also expands mentoring and training opportunities with local manufacturers. Despite its relatively small size, Prairie High School is third in the region in providing dual credit courses through Lewis-Clark State College. It offers 12 dual credit courses, which allows a high school student to earn up to 41 college credits. As well as decreasing a student’s time in and cost for college, it gives local businesses a better chance that students will return to the community after college.

LATAH COUNTY

- This spring and summer should be busy for commercial construction in Moscow but remain slow for single-family residential construction. The year began with the completion of the \$5.1 million remodel of the Wal-Mart supercenter. The McDonald’s on Idaho Highway 8 soon will be de-

molished and replaced with an improved building. Fairfield Inn and Suites will build a 73-room hotel at the former Karl Tyler Motors site on Pullman Road for an estimated cost of \$5.3 million. Next door, a 7,500-square-foot AutoZone store will also be under construction. The building department expects to give permits for 20 single-family residences, down from the peak of 80 in 2006. Apartment construction has also been down in the last four years, but several projects are slated for construction this summer.

- The Moscow Urban Renewal Agency started asbestos abatement in February on a building and concrete pad at its property in the Legacy Crossing area. Two old industrial buildings will be demolished, clearing the way for the Hello Walk, the centerpiece for future Legacy Crossing development. The walk will run through the development from downtown to the University of Idaho. The district is expected to support light industry, retail, commercial and high-density residential housing.
- The University of Idaho is renovating the 50-year-old Wallace Residence Center, which provides housing for 1,000 students. Contractors are installing new carpet, furniture cabinets, drapes and paint in the student rooms and refurbishing public lounges. The entire building is receiving electrical upgrades. The project began in the fall of 2011, and will continue for six years. Three floors will be restored each year. Altogether the renovations, which are first major overhaul since the 1980s, will cost \$3 million, which will come from room and board fees. Those fees will not increase because of the renovations. Forty students moved into the first remodeled floor in early March, and construction crews began work on the floor where those students had lived.
- The University of Idaho hosted the Lionel Hampton International Jazz Festival in late February. The four-day event, held every year since 1967, is the largest jazz festival west of the Mississippi. It brings high school students from Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Alaska to learn about and play music. It also draws jazz lovers to listen to the school bands and internationally known artists who perform. Harsh economic conditions in the last four years prevented some schools from sending students. This year, the festival hosted about 6,500 people, down from the 10,000 that normally came for the festival before the recession.
- Moscow Mayor Nancy Chaney said the city is in exceptional shape in her annual state of the city address in February. "Moscow has reason to feel glad - perhaps relieved - even proud, and realistically, optimistic," Chaney said. Businesses are growing, the unemployment rate is well below the state and national averages, construction on both residential and commercial properties has been consistent, foreclosure rates are among the lowest in the state, bankruptcies never hit the region in the waves seen elsewhere in the country and the University of Idaho, despite funding cuts on the state level, remains a "model of excellence" in its research, academics and community outreach efforts, Chaney said. The city received almost \$500,000 in grant awards in fiscal year 2011, for projects relating to youth recreation, emergency communications, historic preservation, public art and two new police officer positions. Work on the Inter-

modal Transportation Center between the University of Idaho campus and downtown continues, as does work on the Legacy Crossing urban revitalization area that will bridge the two areas.

- The University of Idaho has enrolled more new National Merit Scholars than any other public institution in the Northwest, according to the National Merit Scholarship Corp.’s 2010-2011 annual report. To qualify as National Merit Scholars, students must score in the top 1 percent on the SAT and have a high academic grade point average in high school. The scholars have many options for college, and the ability to attract them reflects strong academic programs. Here is how the new National Merit Scholar enrollment breaks down for public universities in the Northwest:

University of Idaho	17
University of Washington	14
University of Oregon	13
Montana State University	10
Oregon State University	9
University of Montana	5
Western Washington University.....	4
Washington State University	3
University of Wyoming	2
Boise State University	1

NEZ PERCE AND ASOTIN COUNTIES

- Lewis-Clark State College plans to spend \$1.9 million to upgrade the Fine Arts Building on its Lewiston campus. Built in 1912 as a dormitory, the building has plumbing, heating, cooling and electrical problems, and its aging classrooms also need refurbishing. “We’re going to upgrade the building and have various office spaces and classroom spaces, and modernize the building ... and get its HVAC up to snuff,” said Lewis-Clark President Tony Fernandez. “And it’s going to be a great addition to the Lewis-Clark State College campus.” The project is scheduled to be completed by the beginning of the fall semester in 2013. After the renovation, the 12,000-square-foot building will house the business division.



Washington’s largest wind farm began producing electricity at the beginning of March on 21,600 acres near Pomeroy, 35 miles west of Lewiston. The \$830 million, 149-turbine project will normally produce enough electricity to power 100,000 homes of Puget Sound Energy customers. The wind farm will employ about 25 people. More than 250 worked there at the peak of construction. Pomeroy residents often make purchases and use professional, medical and entertainment services in Lewiston and Clarkston so the increased income from the wind farm workers and the farmers who are leasing their land to the farm is likely to have some impact in the Lewis-Clark Valley.

- Lewiston Mayor Kevin Poole believes Idaho could greatly expand exports to Liberia. On a two-week trip to the West African nation as a project manager with Riedesel Engineering, Poole learned it needs lots of help with infrastructure following years of civil war. “The trip was really successful. There is definitely a lot of opportunity for the engineering side,” Poole said. “More importantly, there are tremendous opportunities for other businesses and industries in the valley.” On the trip, Poole identi-

fied a huge potential to export peas, lentils, garbanzos and other agricultural products to Liberia, which imports more than half its food. He also envisions opportunities for jet boat builders and other local manufacturers. After consulting with Valley Vision and local business leaders, Poole is organizing a trade mission.

- St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in Lewiston plans to close the 16-bed nursing home it has operated within the hospital since 1995. The nursing home has been used for patients who need to stay in a nursing home for a short period after a stay at St. Joseph's or another hospital. Typically the nursing home has 12 to 14 patients who stay 12 days. The hospital has been paying a growing subsidy to support the nursing home. Changes in Medicare reimbursements are expected to boost that amount from \$750,000 last year to more than \$800,000 in the present fiscal year. The nursing home is expected to close in the next two to three months. Its 15 employees are being offered similar positions in the hospital.
- The Sears store at the Lewiston Center Mall closed in February. It was one of 79 Sears and Kmart stores that will be closed in 2012. More than 50 people worked there and are receiving special assistance from the Idaho Department of Labor in finding and preparing for new jobs. The optometry shop housed at Sears will remain in Lewiston. Affordable Optics of Spokane will open a shop at Sunset Center by the beginning of April. It will be staffed by the same people who worked in Sears. A former employee of the Sears photography studio recently opened her own studio, Patty Bolen Photography. Sears has advertised for someone to open a "hometown store" to carry its products. Hometown stores are owned by individuals, not the company.
- Clearwater Paper's earnings dropped from \$73.8 million in 2010 to \$39.7 million in 2011 because of the cost of buying Cellu Tissue, a maker of private label tissue, and the end of a federal alternative fuels tax credit that produced \$27 million in 2010. The company earned \$11.5 million in the last three months of 2011, the quarter that the company sold its Lewiston sawmill to Idaho Forest Group for \$30 million. Clearwater Paper has weathered the slow economy well. Demand remained strong for its supermarket-brand toilet paper, facial tissue and paper towels and napkins. But competition should intensify as new factories under construction come on line. After the Spokane-based company sold its 250-employee sawmill, it employs 1,350 in Lewiston.
- Dozens of contractors were preparing in early March for a \$15 million round of maintenance at Clearwater Paper's pulp and paperboard mill in Lewiston. Scheduled to start March 16 and end March 27, the refit will involve a complete shutdown of normal operations. Clearwater Paper employees will work overtime alongside the contractor's 1,200 employees. Thousands of tasks will be performed in the nine days, ranging from replacing circuit boards and examining steam generators, rotors and wastewater systems. Broemeling Steel and Machine in Lewiston has been fabricating items such as catwalks, tanks and bases for machinery since January, and will have a dozen crew members working there. Contractors are not only coming from the Northwest. A German contractor will be working on hardware for the system that generates chlorine dioxide, the

bleaching agent for pulp, while a Chinese contractor will help program and install a new control package for the same system.

- The Lewis-Clark Terminal is acquiring a Lewiston grain elevator and barge-loading facility from Cargill. Until the sale is completed on May 31, it is leasing the bulk grain operation that contains storage space for 900,000 bushels. The terminal – owned by Primeland Cooperatives of Lewiston, Uniontown Cooperative and Pacific Northwest Farmers Cooperative of Genesee – already had 5.7-million bushel capacity. It exports grain primarily by shipping it down the Snake-Columbia river system to the Portland area where it is transferred to ocean-going vessels that take it to destinations around the world. Lewis-Clark Terminal is keeping one of the five employees who work at the bulk grain operation.

OPENINGS

- Hansel & Gretel, a consignment store specializing in children’s clothing, in downtown Moscow
- The Stitchery, offering clothing repair and sewing, in Orofino
- A Valley Medical Center urgent care clinic at Walmart in Clarkston

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SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- Southwestern Idaho will host the highest-ranked women’s cycling event in North America this year. The five-day Exergy Tour is scheduled to begin in Boise on May 24. Stages will also be held in Nampa, Kuna and Garden Valley-Idaho City. While prize money for winning teams has yet to be announced, this will be one of the last chances to qualify for the Summer Olympics in London.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

ADA COUNTY

- Boise State University’s Lincoln Townhomes are getting their first residents. The \$15 million project was the university’s response to rising on-campus housing demand. The rooms rent for more than other dorm rooms but offer a new design choice. Engineered Structures Inc. of Meridian built the townhomes.
- Supervalu announced plans to reduce its staff by 800 nationwide. Roughly 130 employees in Boise will lose their jobs. The layoffs were across several departments, but store level employees should not be affected. The company announced cost-cutting moves throughout the previous year in an attempt to reduce prices and flatten its organizational structure.
- Boise-based eTripTrader has partnered up with Navtech to sell its scheduling software globally. eTripTrader has grown by 46 percent since 2008 and hopes to increase staff this coming year. Currently the payroll is 10.
- The Boise Airport is building a steel, lighted canopy to cover its 355 rental car parking stalls. The \$2 million project was paid for by an extra charge

levied by rental car companies. The canopy will be built in a way that will allow it to be moved if a new concourse is built in the future. The canopy should be complete by July.

- The Boise VA Medical Center is adding a new women’s clinic to its campus. The clinic is slated to open at the end of March and will provide more examination space, a private waiting room and a full-time designated primary-care doctor. Over 2,000 women veterans are enrolled as patients at the hospital.
- Micron bought Intel Corp.’s stake in two wafer factories last month. The \$600 million purchase will help the company expand into products for mobile devices.
- Boise-based WinCo is adding two more stores in Nevada – one in Henderson and the other in Las Vegas. Each store will employ about 200.
- Chick-fil-A will build three new restaurants in Ada County. Two will be in Boise while the third in Meridian. The company said each location will likely hire around 50 employees. The company hopes to have all three stores open by October.



The Public Utilities Commission approved a 20-year sales agreement between Idaho Power Co. and Dynamis Energy for a waste-to-energy project at the Ada County landfill. The plant is projected to have a maximum capacity of 22 megawatts and be operational by February 2014. Unlike other forms of renewable energy, this plant has the advantage of providing power continuously and during peak periods.

ADAMS COUNTY



The Payette National Forest has received a \$2.45 million grant for projects on 800,000 acres ranging from watershed improvements to fish and wildlife habitat restoration. There is no estimate on the number of jobs involved. Adams County has consistently had one of the highest unemployment rates in the state.

CANYON COUNTY

- Southwark Metal Manufacturing will build an almost 80,000-square-foot plant in Caldwell. The Philadelphia-based duct manufacturer is one of the largest in the country. The company plans to start with 30 employees and rapidly increase to 50.
- Sorrento Lactalis announced a \$40 million expansion of its Nampa cheese processing plant that will add 75 jobs and more than quadruple the plant’s mozzarella cheese production. Also, the plant will increase its demand for milk by an estimated 700,000 pounds per day, which will be filled by Idaho dairy operations. Sorrento Lactalis hired Hansen-Rice Inc. to build the plant, and construction is slated to begin this month. The new facility is expected to start operation in 2013.
- A third Walmart store is being planned for Nampa. The proposed 42,000-square-foot building will be a “neighborhood grocery” version selling groceries and limited household goods with a pharmacy.
- The Canyon County Ambulance District is getting ready to build a new facility. The project is expected to cost \$1 million and will house the ad-

ministrative offices, a training facility and the billing division. Construction should begin in three months and be complete by early 2013.



The Idaho Public Utilities Commission approved a 20-year contract between Idaho Power Co. and Riverside Investments for electricity generated from the Fargo Drop project. The \$1.7 million hydroelectric plant is expected to produce up to 1.27 megawatts of electricity, using water from the lower Deer Flat canal near Homedale. The generator should start operating in August.

ELMORE COUNTY

- The county Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously approved the land survey for the proposed Clear Springs Ranch Subdivision, a 200-home project between Interstate 84 and Beaman Road. Local residents have raised concerns about increased traffic and limited water resources in the area.

OWYHEE COUNTY

- The Idaho Transportation Department plans to open a maintenance shed in Murphy later this year. The new shed will give the department better snowplow coverage and customer service in the area. Shed construction should begin July 1 at a cost of \$700,000.

VALLEY COUNTY

- A group of local residents is proposing the creation of a two-year community college in McCall. The McCall College Foundation has made arrangement to use a 5,000-square-foot area in the Park Place Professional Center to house the college. Supporters believe a local postsecondary education option will entice more residents to continue their education. The group has a survey posted online at www.mccallcollege.org to gauge interest in the project.

OPENINGS

- Weiser Classic Candy at Mountain Home Air Force Base
- Dickey's Barbecue Pit in Nampa with 15 to 20 employees
- Texas Roadhouse in Nampa with 100 employees
- Del Taco in Nampa
- Revolve Upscale Resale and Bridal, a consignment store in Boise
- Women's Business Center in Boise
- Café Courier, a restaurant and catering service in Boise
- National Grocers, an organic food store in Boise with 20 employees
- Manufactured & Modular Axle & Tire in Emmett with up to 15 employees

CLOSINGS

- Romano's Macaroni Grill in Boise

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SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO

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

COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

BLAINE COUNTY

- A report by aviation consultants Mead and Hunt estimate 28 percent of those traveling in and out of Sun Valley used Friedman Regional Airport in Hailey. The remaining 62 percent traveled to Twin Falls, Boise, Salt Lake City and Pocatello – an average of 368 passengers a day each way. The estimates were based on online travel services, and more specific data could be accumulated in the future with visitor surveys on Bald Mountain or at the other airports. The unanswered question is whether reliability or price is a determining factor for not using Friedman. An estimated 30 percent of flights in and out of Hailey are diverted because of weather.
- After two years of concerted effort by Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation Executive Director Don Wiseman and adaptive ski instructor Marc Mast, Sun Valley has been selected as the first Nordic Olympic and Paralympic training site nationally. United States Olympic Committee Director of Athlete Services and Programs Alicia McConnell toured the trails around Galena Lodge, the Sun Valley Nordic Center and the Harriman Trail between the Sawtooth National Recreation Area headquarters and Galena Lodge. The community support is a huge selling point, but the community is encouraged to improve its affordable accommodations. A Memorandum of Understanding is being drafted to finalize the deal.
- Sun Valley hosted the National Brotherhood of Skiers – the nation’s largest organization of black skiers and snowboarders with over 3,000 members in 60 clubs. About 500 skiers and an equal number of family and friends attended the conference, spending eight days in the Sun Valley-Ketchum area and spending \$500,000. “We bring a little more swag, a little more attitude, a little color to the slopes,” joked Joseph Menyah, who works for Home Depot in Atlanta. “We’ve got Motown in our earbuds, and we party hearty!” The group was last in Sun Valley 14 years ago, and this is a smaller gathering than other national trips due to the limited number of rooms.



A Picabo rancher and the Nature Conservancy will partner to restore a pond that drains into Silver Creek and has been raising the temperature of the water and negatively affecting trout habitat. Kilpatrick Pond started as a sink hole, and over the years sediment has built up so it now encompasses almost an acre. The sediment will be excavated to create small islands, providing a deeper path to Silver Creek. It is not clear whether a federal grant can be obtained to cover some of the costs.



One of Blaine County’s newest editions to the business community is ORFLO, a biotech company that relocated from Seattle in 2011 to offices that overlook the Friedman Memorial Airport runway. The company’s patented device counts and analyzes cells to a miniscule degree. It has value in cancer and stem cell research and to the dairy industry,

which counts infected cells in milk. Chief Executive Ted Ayliffe was impressed with the skill level of Blaine County's workforce and customer service, based on quick responses to requests for all levels of service. Ayliffe stated ORFLO has seven employees in Hailey, three engineers in Seattle and 13 distributors across the nation.

TWIN FALLS COUNTY

- The First Federal Foundation awarded \$3,500 to the Buhl Public Library for an electrical lighting retrofit.
- Chris Sanders, an Everton Mattress & Furniture Gallery partner, has been named 2012 president of the Western Home Furnishings Association. The group serves nearly 1,000 independent home furnishings retailers in 12 western states.
- Canyon Park North, a multi-use development proposed near the Twin Falls Visitor's Center, is being resurrected by Canyon Park Development LLC, a part of Nielson & Co. The development was originally planned before the recession and has resurfaced recently with a zoning request for the 25-acre site. The development originally included a 10-story hotel with convention center and a retail mix of national chains and small boutiques. Existing retail developments by Nielson & Co. include Canyon Park East and Canyon Park West. Both have attracted consumers from within a 100 mile radius. Former Ameristar Casinos Chief Executive Craig Nielson, who originally headed up the development group, died in 2006.
- A Quinceanera Expo Show was held in Twin Falls, sponsored by the Latino Economic and Development Center of Blackfoot. It featured 20 businesses that supply products and services for the coming of age party, a tradition for 15-year old Hispanic girls. The buying power of the growing Hispanic population is an economic force in south central Idaho. The Hispanic population grew over 70 percent from 2000 to 2010.
- The Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce has won an award at the 11th annual Journal Communications Quality Awards for its magazine, IMAGES Southern Idaho. Chamber President Shawn Barigar said the "human interest stories and outstanding photographs provide a snapshot of our region to inform potential visitors and those considering moving to southern Idaho." There are approximately 10,000 copies sent out annually. "This magazine has an especially strong cover image and cover lines that pull you in, and the design throughout the magazine is exceptional," Journal Communications Publisher and President Bob Schwartzman said. "The content subject matter is diverse and engaging, stories on tourism, iconic restaurants and the region's thriving dairy industry."



The water rights struggle between groundwater users and fish farms with senior water rights has ended with the issuance of a 20-year bond by the State Board of Water Resources so groundwater districts can buy out three fish farms including their water rights. The groundwater

users will no longer face the uncertainty of whether they will be able to use their well water for irrigation, and the remaining fish farms are promised their existing water rights. Water rights were reduced as the Eastern Snake River Aquifer was drained by changes in farming practices and drought conditions.

- Agro Farma, parent company of Chobani Yogurt, has already established itself as a big-hearted company in the Twin Falls area after contributing to the traveling soccer club, the Twin Falls Rapids. The club received the proceeds from a yogurt fund raiser where consumers paid about two-thirds of the shelf price, or about \$10 a case. The Rapids serves 200 youth ages 5-18 and hosts the annual Canyon Rim Classic soccer tournament that draws teams from all over the state. The club is looking forward to awarding scholarships and purchasing new equipment with the proceeds. More than 2,000 cases of yogurt were sold.
- Jami Stroud moved her nurse practitioner practice into her existing day care center, Peach Tree Child Care and Wellness in Buhl. Kids can now be treated at daycare rather than have a parent miss work to take them to a clinic.

CASSIA COUNTY



Nearly 92,500 people visited the City of Rocks National Reserve during 2010, according to the National Park Service. They spent almost \$6.3 million, supporting 85 local jobs, mostly part-time and seasonal. City of Rocks Superintendent Wallace Keck believes the count is closer to 95,000, and the combined visitor count for both Castle Rocks State Park and the City of Rocks was 185,247 in 2011.

GOODING COUNTY



The city of Wendell approved a \$92,500 contract with Region IV Development for administrative and financial work toward a new wastewater treatment facility. The community needed to acquire additional land for the application of treated sewage. After being rejected in 2007, Region IV's proposal was approved in 2008 by the Idaho Department of Commerce only to be put on hold while the land and details were negotiated.

OPENINGS

- Passions Restaurant in Hagerman, serving breakfast and lunch in the former Ein Tisch Inn
- Clarity Family Eye Clinic in Buhl

CLOSURES

- Ketchum Dry Goods after 36 years in business

LAYOFFS

- C-3 Call Center – 30 workers were laid off in response to decreased demands by its client. About 600 remain employed at the third-party call center in Twin Falls.

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SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

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

COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

BANNOCK COUNTY

- Hoku in Pocatello is laying off 20 employees because of financial concerns. Hoku's plan to begin full capacity production of polysilicon has been delayed several months. Company officials hope that the company can be at full production in several months.

BEAR LAKE COUNTY

- Bear Lake High School will host a career fair on March 28 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The fair is sponsored by the Bear Lake Chamber of Commerce. Organizers are encouraging area businesses and educational institutions to participate by registering online at www.bearlakechamber.org or calling Renee Davis at (208) 847-0742 or Julie Nelson at (208) 220-2458.

BINGHAM COUNTY

- The Blackfoot Community Center has celebrated its fifth anniversary of offering early childhood programs for children ages 3 to 5 and afterschool programs for students from kindergarten through fifth grade. "Instead of being home alone or spending time with babysitters, kids get to be with friends in a safe environment after school," Lorinda Nichols, the parent of a program participant, said. Children attending the center pay an annual \$24 registration fee and \$50 a month.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

- A new equine sports complex in Franklin, being built by Strategy 5, will be called "The Horse Station at Cache Valley." The complex will include a hotel, equine hospital, retail stores, restaurants, horse boarding facilities, trails and horse rings. When completed and fully operational, the facility could provide over 100 jobs.

POWER COUNTY

- American Falls farmer Tim Deeg has been elected chairman of the Malad-based Ireland Bank board of directors. During the past 37 years Deeg has developed over 1,000 acres of irrigated land, farmed additional acres of dry land and managed several farms held in trust. Deeg has also served as a board member for the D.L. Evans Bank.

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EASTERN IDAHO

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

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS



A recent National Park Service economic study says the 3.6 million visitors to Yellowstone in 2010 spent \$334 million in the area. The 2.7 million people who came to Grand Teton National Park spent \$424 million. The economic impact study included the impact on communities within

a 60-mile radius. Spending in and near Grand Teton Park supported 6,300 jobs while spending in the Yellowstone area supported about 4,900 jobs.

COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

TETON COUNTY



A free business sustainability workshop was held in Victor focusing on sustainable operations, energy efficiency and waste reduction. The Yellowstone Business Partnership and Teton Valley Chamber of Commerce hosted the event.

MADISON COUNTY

- An agreement was announced between Idaho State University and Brigham Young University-Idaho that would allow off-track BYU-Idaho students to get credit for Idaho State courses. This change will also allow students to begin graduate work at Idaho State earlier than before. Students enrolled in the program could earn their BYU-Idaho undergraduate and Idaho State graduate degrees in as little as five years.

BONNEVILLE COUNTY

- The Idaho Falls City Council passed an ordinance creating development incentive packages that waive fees and near-site improvements to streets and other infrastructure under specific conditions. Eligible businesses must have at least a \$5 million capital investment and create the equivalent of 100 full-time jobs with an average pay of \$15 an hour.
- The Idaho National Laboratory is one of eight national laboratories to sign onto a new technical transfer plan. The Agreement for Commercializing Technology program will enhance intellectual property rights negotiations, payment, project structures and indemnification. The new program will run a three-year pilot.
- Idaho Falls businessman Jeff Sayer was confirmed by the Idaho state Senate as the new director of the Idaho Department of Commerce. Sayer served as the chief financial officer of Idaho Falls' Mountain View Hospital and founded the Idaho Falls-based Novayx Group.

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

State of Idaho Data — State Economic Indicators

	Dec 2011**	Nov 2011*	Dec 2010	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
IDAHO LABOR FORCE ⁽¹⁾					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	762,500	760,800	758,900	0.2	0.5
Unemployment	64,100	65,000	73,400	-1.4	-12.7
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	8.4	8.5	9.7		
Total Employment	698,400	695,800	685,500	0.4	1.9
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	759,900	760,800	755,000	-0.1	0.6
Unemployment	64,700	63,800	73,200	1.4	-11.6
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	8.5	8.4	9.7		
Total Employment	695,200	697,000	681,800	-0.3	2.0
U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ⁽²⁾					
	Feb 2012	Jan 2012	Feb 2011		
	8.3	8.5	9.1		
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE					
	Feb 2012**	Jan 2012*	Feb 2011		
<i>Claims Activities</i>					
Initial Claims ⁽³⁾	10,512	15,995	11,706	-34.3	-10.2
Weeks Claimed ⁽⁴⁾	113,107	137,271	128,144	-17.6	-11.7
<i>Benefit Payment Activities</i> ⁽⁵⁾					
Weeks Compensated	113,107	111,930	112,945	1.1	0.1
Total Benefit \$ Paid	\$23,650,147.87	\$27,334,414.22	\$27,411,026.71	-13.5	-13.7
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$209.10	\$244.21	\$242.69	-14.4	-13.8
Covered Employers	47,473	47,306	48,346	0.4	-1.8
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months ⁽⁴⁾	\$219,594,658	\$223,355,537	\$266,213,232	-1.7	-17.5
U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ⁽²⁾					
	Feb 2012	Jan 2012	Feb 2011	% Change Month	% Change Year
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	225.3	224.1	218.3	0.5	3.2
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	228.4	227.5	222.0	0.4	2.9

**Forecast data

* Preliminary estimate

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

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

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

(5) Includes all entitlements, total liable activities.

Glossary of Labor Market Terms

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Glossary of Labor Market Terms (cont.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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