

Idaho Employment

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

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ROGER B. MADSEN, DIRECTOR

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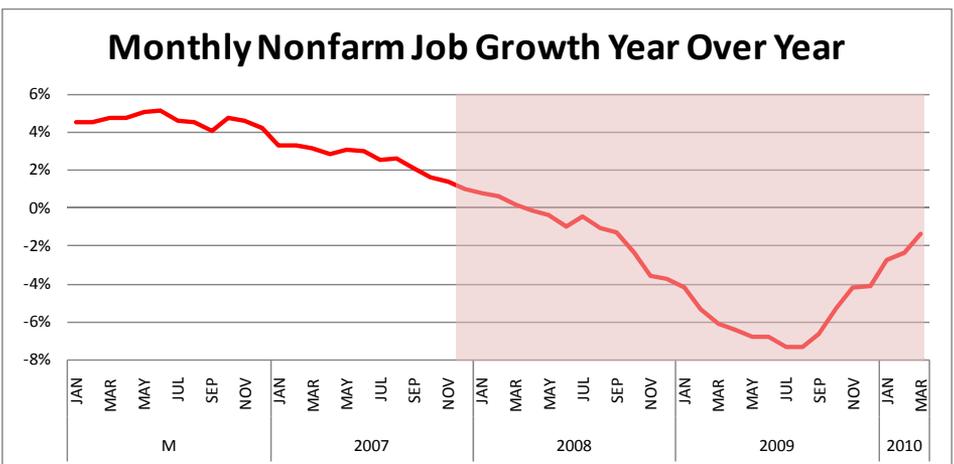
ROAD TO RECOVERY: IS THE RECESSION OVER?

Evidence is beginning to mount that Idaho's economy is no longer deteriorating and may in fact be taking the first small steps toward recovery.

This turnaround, if that is what it is, may well have started late last summer.

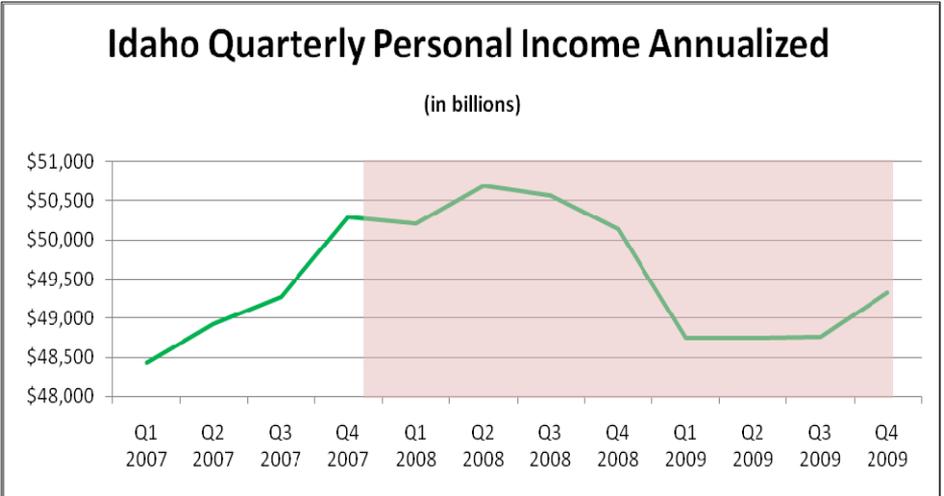
The economy peaked in 2006 with average job growth of 4.6 percent. It began shedding jobs in 2007, slowly at first but accelerating in late summer and into 2008. In April 2008, nonfarm jobs began running below the year-earlier levels, and that job gap widened persistently until it hit 7.3 percent in July 2009 and stayed there in August.

But then the year-over-year gap began to steadily close, falling to just 1.4 percent this March. It appears likely that the state will see current monthly job totals exceed the total for the same month a year earlier by late summer or early fall.

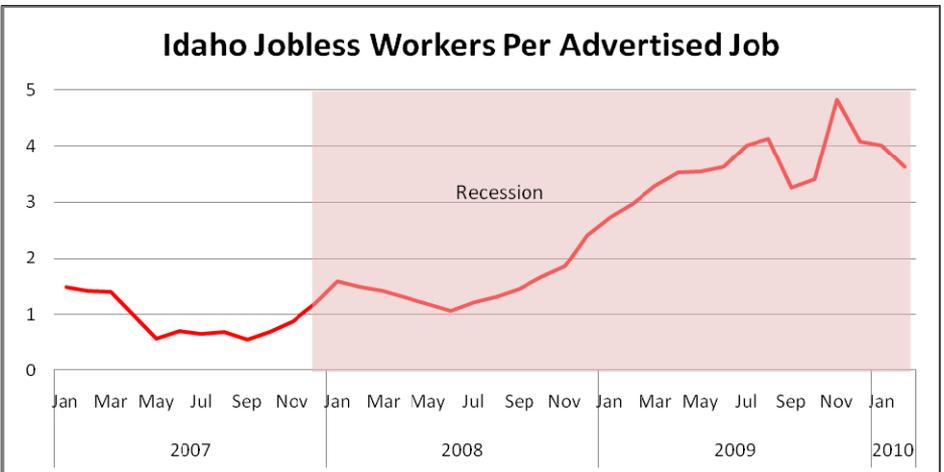


Then came personal income. Since the recession really took hold of the Idaho economy in mid-2008, Idaho's personal income – the sum of paychecks, business profits, investment earnings and transfer payments like pensions, Social Security and unemployment benefits – declined for three straight quarters and was flat for two more. It was the first time since the personal income data was established in 1969 that income fell for three quarters in a

row. Finally at the end of 2009, the same time the jobs gap began closing, Idaho's personal income posted a \$566 million increase back to \$49.3 billion. That was still \$1.3 billion below the personal income peak in the spring of 2008 but the first positive income sign in over a year.



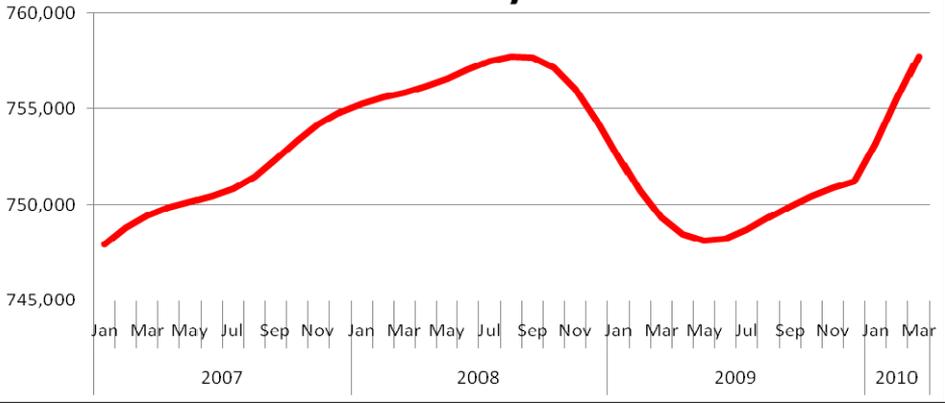
As the jobs gap began closing, employment opportunities began increasing, albeit slowly. During the peak of Idaho's economic expansion in mid-2007, there were two advertised jobs for every unemployed Idaho worker, according to The Conference Board, the New York-based business research organization. By the end of 2008, there were two advertised jobs for every four jobless workers. In November 2009 that reached two jobs for every 10 unemployed workers. But by February, the ratio had slipped to two jobs for every seven unemployed Idahoans.



After watching the state's labor force plunge nearly 10,000 in the matter of just nine months as the recession convinced more and more discouraged workers to simply drop out, the state's work force – the number of people working and looking for work – began expanding in June 2009. It was slow to begin with, just a few hundred new job seekers each month as talk of an improving economy bolstered optimism among people about work prospects. In January, the labor force rose by 2,000 followed by even larger increases in both February and March.

Since it is a lagging economic indicator, the unemployment rate's steady rise into 2010 was not unexpected. After hitting a record low 2.7 percent in the first quarter of 2007, the rate began a steady 32-month march upward, more than doubling by September 2008 and tripling by July 2009. But after hitting 9.5 percent in February 2010 – one tenth of a point below the record

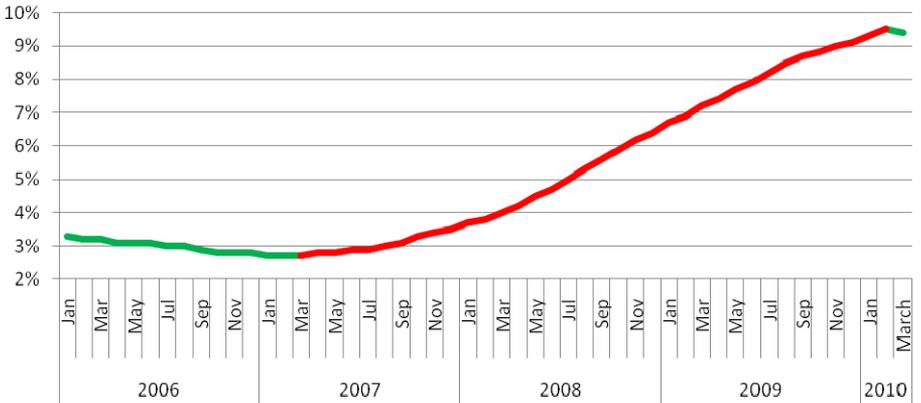
Idaho's Monthly Labor Force



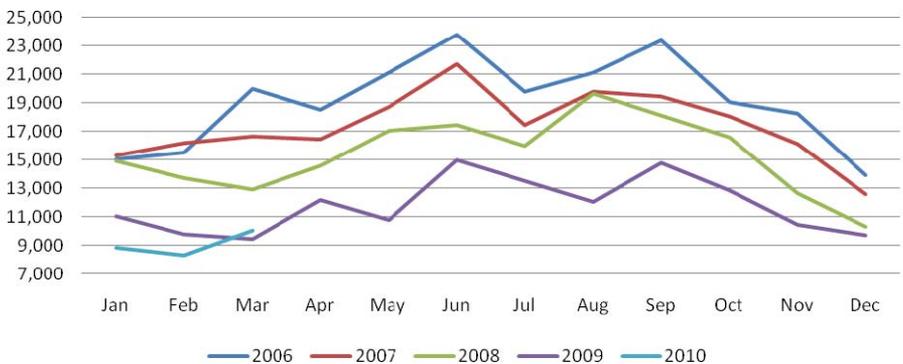
high from December 1982 through February 1983 – the rate fell back a notch to 9.4 percent in March, the first decline in 32 months. That also translated into a decline of nearly 600 in the number of unemployed. While only a fraction of the 71,000 workers still without jobs in Idaho, it was the first time that number has fallen in three years.

Reinforcing the break in the trend of rising unemployment was the report on employer hiring during March. It was the first time in three years – since February 2007 – that the number of people employers hired in a month exceeded the number they hired the same month a year earlier. While employers across Idaho remained cautious about their economic future, they appear to have begun opening up payrolls again, if ever so slightly.

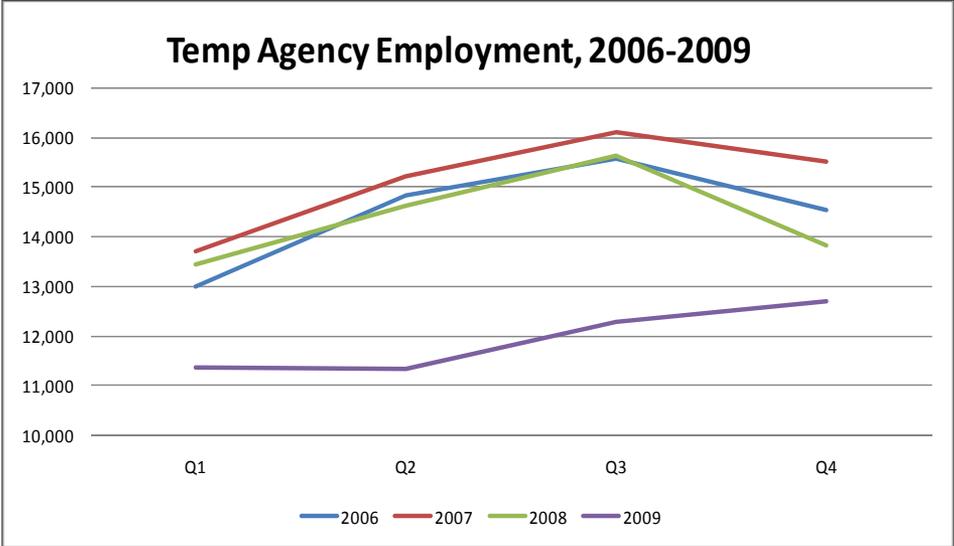
Idaho's Monthly Unemployment Rate



Monthly Idaho Employer Hiring, 2006-2010

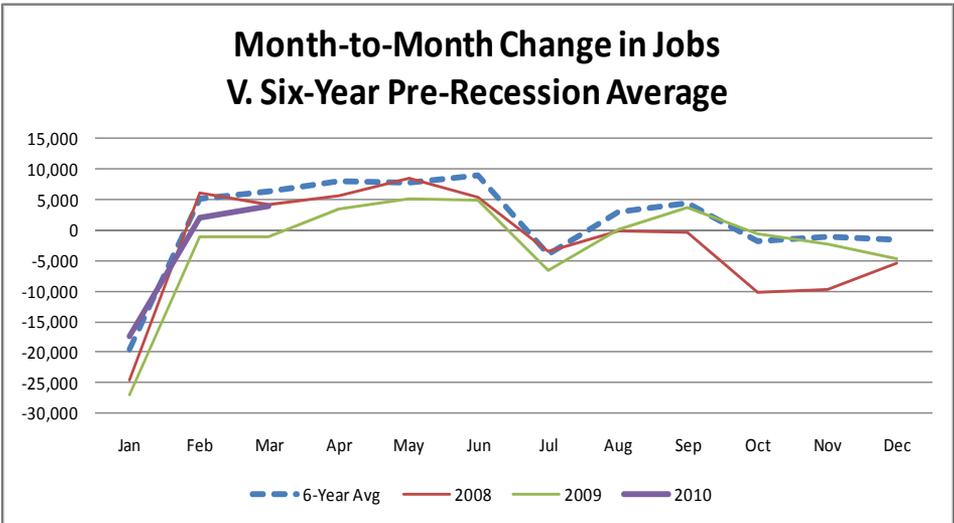


There are also employers who have yet to expand their payrolls but still see opportunities to improve business or production. They have seen clear to tap employment agencies for temporary workers to meet their less pessimistic business or production goals. Temporary agency employment began falling off in 2008 just after the recession began. But after seven quarters of employment below year-earlier levels, employment agency hiring rose in the fourth quarter of 2009 for the first fourth-quarter increase since 2002.



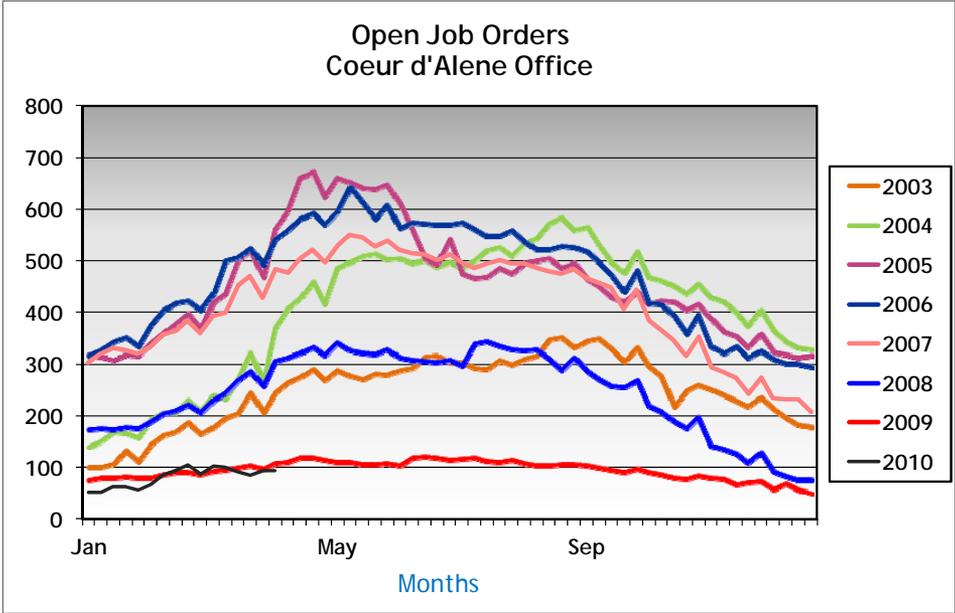
The nonfarm job numbers have also been gradually returning to the seasonal trends established during the six years prior to the recession. The month-to-month change in nonfarm jobs began straying significantly from the trend during the second half of 2008 and remained that way into the late summer 2009 before again beginning to follow the pre-recession seasonal trend.

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JOB LISTINGS IN NORTHERN IDAHO LOWEST IN DECEMBER-JANUARY

The number of job listings with Idaho Department of Labor offices is a good barometer of how the local economy is doing. The Coeur d'Alene office experienced the lowest number of job openings since the mid-1990s during December and January – a time when the number of out-of-work Idahoans remained at record and near-record highs. Only 61 openings were listed in December, and the number dropped to 57 in January. The last time listings were lower was December 1995 and January 1996. The story has been the same since late 2008.



The seasonal trend sees job openings peak from May through September and then decline the rest of the year.

It took the Idaho economy more than a year to pull out of the 2001 recession so it was not until 2003 that job openings listed with the Coeur d'Alene Labor office began rising. The increased activity escalated through the next three years until the first signs of weakening appeared during the second half of 2006. Those signs of a return to month-over-month losses in October 2006 were an early indicator of the recession to come.

After hitting a low point in December 2009 and January 2010, job listings began slowly rebounding, creeping to 102 in early April. The majority of those openings were in food services – 26.5 percent – followed by clerical and administrative at 24.5 percent and maintenance, transportation and warehousing at 13.7 percent.

The number of people seeking jobs through Labor's 25 local offices has been running in the other direction – rising dramatically since the recession began. In northern Idaho, there were 15.7 applicants for every job opening in third quarter of 2009 during what may have been the heart of the recession. By comparison there were 2.4 applicants per job opening in third quarter 2007 before the recession began. The Coeur d'Alene local office comparison was even starker.

Statewide, job applicants per job listing rose from 2.7 in the third quarter of 2007 compared to 10.5 applicants per opening two years later.

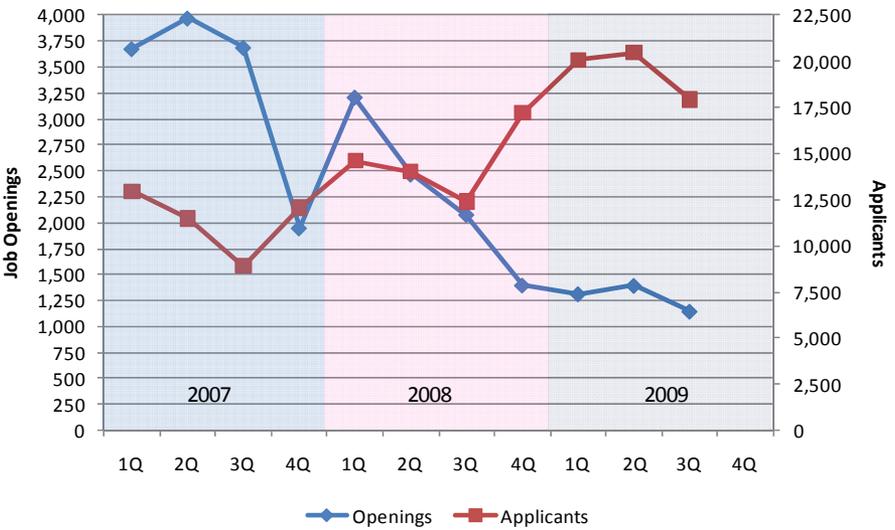
See table on page 6 for details.

Northern Idaho job openings balance with job seekers only during periods of relative economic stability. Typically, there are not enough workers during expansions and not enough jobs during recessions.

Job Openings and Applicants in North Central Idaho Labor Offices, 3q 2007 and 2009, Compared

Local DOL job service office	2007			2009			Percentage increases		
	job openings	applicants	applicants/ opening	job openings	applicants	/opening	job openings	applicants	/opening
Bonnors Ferry	213	854	4.0	82	1,175	14.3	-61.5%	37.6%	257.4%
Coeur d'Alene	2,253	4,893	2.2	573	11,011	19.2	-74.6%	125.0%	784.8%
Sandpoint	928	1,892	2.0	321	3,645	11.4	-65.4%	92.7%	457.0%
Silver Valley	152	801	5.3	78	1,366	17.5	-48.7%	70.5%	232.3%
St. Maries	141	456	3.2	91	739	8.1	-35.5%	62.1%	151.1%
All North Idaho	3,687	8,896	2.4	1,145	17,936	15.7	-68.9%	101.6%	549.2%
State of Idaho	22,538	60,610	2.7	10,870	113,784	10.5	-51.8%	87.7%	⁶ 289.2%

Job Openings - Applicants 2007-2009 by Quarter



Total applicants in the five northern Idaho local offices rose 9.2 percent from 34,222 in January to 37,376 in March 2010. Of the March total, 61.4 percent were unemployment benefit claimants. Since the Coeur d'Alene local office serves roughly 60 percent of total applicants in the region, it saw a similar increase of 8.8 percent during those some months.

The St. Maries office saw the highest jump in applicants from January to March, likely the result of layoffs in the wood products sector and further declines in business activity in the construction industry. The unemployment rate jumped from 14.7 percent in January to 16.5 percent in March.

Conversely, Boundary County experienced a large decline in unemployment, dropping from 17.4 percent in January to 15.5 percent in March while the Bonners Ferry local office experienced a boost in job applicants. Both are the result of the large Welco mill closure in late December. Workers directly affected by the closure were counted in January's unemployment numbers and applied for benefits at the local office. Only about 55 percent of all job seekers listed in the Bonners Ferry office are benefit claimants. The data indicate that some of those workers may have left the labor force, driving the unemployment rate back down.

With the decline in job openings came a decline in new hires as the recession gripped the local economy. According to the Local Employment Dynamics program, which merges census and labor force data, employers in northern Idaho hired just 11,146 workers during the first six months of 2009 – almost exclusively to replace workers who retired or left jobs for other reasons. That

Total Number of Applicants

Local Labor Department Office	Jan 2010	Feb 2010	Mar 2010	% Change From Jan to Mar
Bonners Ferry	2,211	2,306	2,438	10.3%
Coeur d'Alene	20,918	21,835	22,762	8.8%
Sandpoint	7,159	7,520	7,859	9.8%
Silver Valley	2,387	2,470	2,563	7.4%
St. Maries	1,547	1,633	1,754	13.4%
Totals:	34,222	35,764	37,376	9.2%

was the lowest January-to-June new hire total for the region since the figures were first compiled in 1991. New hires peaked in 2006 during the boom and then dramatically decreased 14.5 percent from 17,889 in 2006 to 15,627 in 2008. New hires are now showing a similar seasonal pattern as previous years, albeit at a much lower level, with the peaks occurring in the second quarter. The first three months of 2009 recorded the first new hires for any quarter in a decade – 9,101.

Significant declines in job openings coupled with impending benefit expiration have made for very difficult and harsh conditions for people not only in northern Idaho but across the state and country.

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CONSTRUCTION JOBS RAMP UP FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON

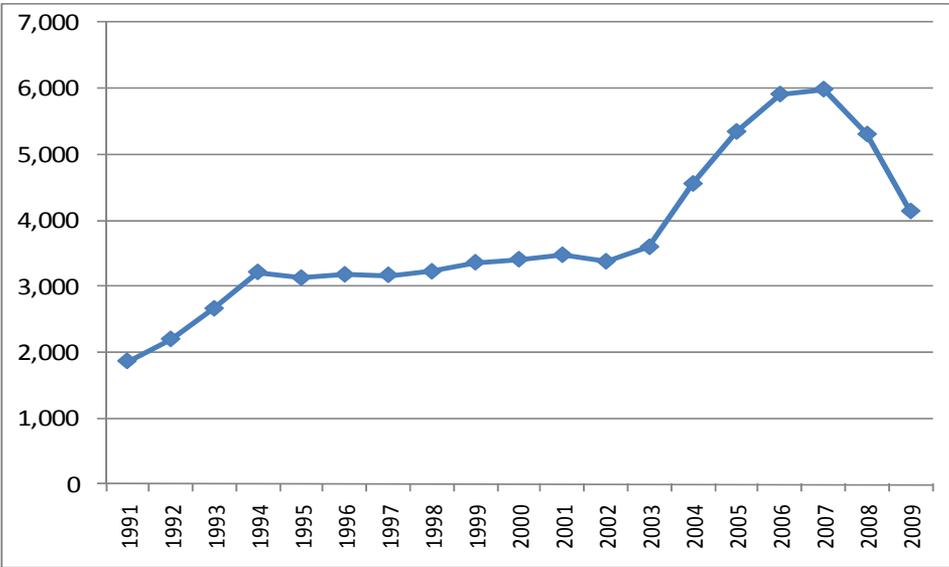
As the economy begins to reassert its typical seasonal patterns and starts to ease out of the recession, some construction jobs should begin returning. Construction has proven to be the hardest hit sector before and since the recession began in December 2007.

The construction industry posted significant losses in the fourth quarter of 2008 and first quarter of 2009 followed by seasonal gains during the spring and summer of 2009 only to see them offset by another decline of 13.1 percent in the final three months of the year. The second quarter of 2010 kicks off the construction season and typically posts higher quarter-over-quarter gains than any other period. From 1991 to 2009 data, second quarter 2008 experienced the smallest quarter-over-quarter gain, only 8.3 percent. The second quarter of 2009 didn't look any better, posting just an 8.4 percent gain from the first quarter.

Construction in northern Idaho started to show momentum in the second quarter of 2004 when the largest quarter-over-quarter gain occurred at 27.4 percent. The industry took off in 2005 when construction employed 5,300, an increase of 17.4 percent from the previous year, and peaked in 2007 at 6,000 workers.

Fortunately, the construction industry has seen a slight uptick in Kootenai County since August 2009. The month-over-month gain is a good sign entering

Average Construction Employment, Kootenai County



the upcoming construction season. Several large projects in the region will contribute. See page 40 to see a list of construction projects in Kootenai County.

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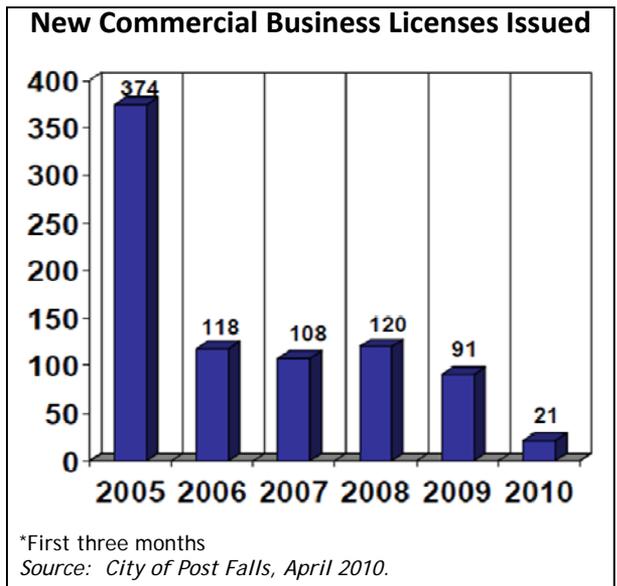
POST FALLS EMPLOYMENT DATA NOW AVAILABLE

Employment data is now available for the city of Post Falls. The city's March unemployment rate was 11.6 percent, down from 12.8 percent in February and 12.6 percent in January.

Many Post Falls businesses have seen activity increase in recent months, boosting total employment by nearly 120 from January to March. Although nonfarm job figures are not estimated for Post Falls, the community has seen growth in the manufacturing sector as well as increases in accommodation and food services.

As the number of unemployed continues to decline, so does the number of people in the labor force. This could pose a problem in future months as discouraged workers – those who have given up looking for work because they have had no success finding any – re-enter the labor force with new optimism about their prospects. Unfortunately, this lag effect will cause the unemployment rate to climb back up as the number of people reentering the labor force exceed the economy's ability to create new jobs.

The city of Post Falls is home to 725 businesses currently active within the city limits. The city saw new commercial business licenses peak in 2005 at 374. However, that number has dwindled fast as the recession hit, declining 75.7 percent from 2005 to 2009.



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RISING GASOLINE PRICES ESPECIALLY HARMFUL FOR NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

Gasoline prices have been rising in recent months, putting more pressure on an already distressed economy. The pressure is especially intense in areas like north central Idaho that rely on trucks to bring supplies from and take products to faraway major markets. In sparsely populated areas, many people travel miles to go to school, work, church and community events. In addition, the most important industries in many rural Idaho areas – agriculture and logging – rely heavily on gasoline and related fuels.

Gas prices rose above \$3 a gallon in the first week of April, up 99 cents from the same period in 2009. Prices averaged \$2.31 per gallon in 2009, down from \$3.21 in 2008.

Rising gasoline prices are especially hard because:

- North central residents have relatively low incomes so an increase in gasoline prices reduces their spending power more proportionately. The region's per capita income typically runs about three-quarters of the nation's per capita income.
- Agriculture and logging remain important in the region, and those industries are especially affected by fuel prices. In 2007, the Census of Agriculture found that gasoline, fuels and oils accounted for 8.4 percent of farmers' expenses in north central Idaho, compared to 5.4 percent of farm expenses nationally. The price of gasoline averaged \$2.76 per gallon in 2007. If it had been \$3, all other things being equal, farmers in north central Idaho would have paid an additional \$1.4 million for gasoline, fuels and oils.
- Trucking, an industry especially sensitive to gasoline prices, plays a larger role in the region's economy than the nation's. In 2008, trucking jobs made up 1 percent of America's nonfarm payroll while they accounted for 1.9 percent in north central Idaho.
- Rural residents often travel 30 miles or more to work, shop and attend community events. About 11 percent of the region's workers have commutes lasting 45 minutes or more one way, according to the Census Bureau's 2008 American Community Survey.

School districts, already struggling with falling revenues, will have to stretch their budgets even further just to get their students to school. Busing students is an especially high expense for sparsely populated districts like the school districts on the Camas Prairie.

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NORTH CENTRAL POPULATION GROWS DESPITE RECESSION

Populations of all the counties in north central Idaho except Clearwater grew between July 1, 2008, and July 1, 2009, according to estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. Asotin County, the Washington portion of the Lewiston metropolitan area, also experienced population growth despite increased unemployment.

Although Idaho and most parts of the United States saw significant decreases in net migration – the number of people moving in minus the number of people moving out – north central Idaho counties did not.

Geographic Region	Population		
	2000	2008	2009
Region 2— North Central	100,533	103,858	104,496
Clearwater County	8,930	8,155	8,043
Idaho County	15,511	15,330	15,461
Latah County	34,935	37,857	38,046
Lewis County	3,747	3,641	3,735
Nez Perce County	37,410	38,875	39,211
Asotin County, Wash.	20,551	21,085	21,420

Some of the counties have saw deaths exceeding births. That occurs because the counties have more senior citizens than young families.

The recession and the collapse in housing prices reduced the number of Americans changing residences to its lowest levels since World War II, accord-

ing to a new study by the Brookings Institution. About 12 percent of Americans moved in each of the past two years, down from 13 to 14 percent a year during the first part of this decade. Compared to historic trends, the drops were even more dramatic. In the 1990s, about 16 percent of Americans changed homes each year. In the 1950s and 1960s, it was 20 percent. The aging of the population, along with the crisis in the housing market, which made it harder for people to sell their houses, are the main reasons for the recent decline in American mobility.

The region’s low housing costs, which were not as inflated by the housing boom, and its relatively low unemployment rate, which averaged 7.2 percent in 2009 while the state’s rate was 8 percent and the national rate was 9.3 percent, are the major reasons why its net migration numbers did not fall as much as the state’s.

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Geographic Area	Total Population Change	Natural Increase	Vital Events		Net Migration		
			Births	Deaths	Total	International	Domestic
Average Change in Population Per Year 2000 to 2008							
State of Idaho	28,309	12,368	22,615	10,247	15,846	2,417	13,429
North Central Idaho	403	231	1,148	917	36	92	-56
Clearwater Co.	-94	-21	71	92	-68	1	-69
Idaho Co.	-22	-1	155	156	-9	5	-14
Latah Co.	354	215	425	211	-35	58	-93
Lewis Co.	-13	0	43	42	-11	1	-12
Nez Perce Co.	178	39	454	415	160	28	132
Asotin Co., Wash.	101	43	249	206	73	0	73
Change in Population: 2008 to 2009							
State of Idaho	18,295	14,256	25,162	10,906	3,734	2,179	1,555
North Central Idaho	638	241	1,208	967	371	81	290
Clearwater Co.	-112	-18	74	92	-105	1	-106
Idaho Co.	131	-4	175	179	138	5	133
Latah Co.	189	217	436	219	-19	48	-67
Lewis Co.	94	4	50	46	88	1	87
Nez Perce Co.	336	42	473	431	269	26	243
Asotin Co., Wash.	47	59	276	217	-13	0	-13

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO TOURISM SECTOR SHINES

North central Idaho's tourism sector has been outperforming the nation and the state. While Idaho hotel-motel receipts fell 12.1 percent in 2009, north central receipts rose 5.2 percent. The region's smallest and largest counties experienced decreases, while the other three counties posted large gains.

Lewis County fell 8.5 percent from \$792,486 in 2008 to \$725,350 in 2009, and Nez Perce County declined 0.9 percent from \$9.4 million to \$9.3 million. The drop was so marginal that lodging employment remained unchanged at 240 jobs.

Latah County's hotel-motel receipts surged 9.2 percent from \$7.4 million to \$8.0 million, Idaho County was up 10 percent from \$4.4 million to \$4.8 million and Clearwater County rose 12.9 percent from \$2.2 million to \$2.5 million. A great steelhead season – which explains much of Idaho and Clearwater County's gains – helped offset a reduction in business travel, which affected Nez Perce County the most.

The region's lodging sector has grown faster than the state's for several years. Since 2001, hotel-motel receipts adjusted for inflation have risen 36.5 percent in the region, while the increase statewide was just 5.4 percent. The region's lodging sector employs about 730 people.

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REGION ACHIEVES MAJOR VICTORY IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE TELECOMMUNICATIONS

First Step Internet, a Moscow-based Internet service provider, was awarded a \$2.4 million broadband infrastructure grant in March, an important step toward achieving the region's economic development goals.

In recent years, improving telecommunications – both Internet access and telephone service – has been the highest priority of north central Idaho's economic development organizations. High-speed Internet has become such a standard part of doing business, the lack of access has limited local businesses' ability to expand and the community's attractiveness to potential residents and businesses. Broadband Internet also helps rural hospitals and emergency care providers access vital information and improve communication.

The grant matched by \$600,000 from First Step will enable the company to build a regional network of 10 microwave towers to increase high-capacity Internet service to more than a dozen rural communities in north central

Idaho. It will boost high-speed Internet capacity by at least 10 times what is already in place in Bovill, Cottonwood, Craigmont, Deary, Elk River, Grangeville, Kamiah, Nezperce, Orofino, Potlatch, Princeton, Troy, Weippe and Winchester. In addition, Elk City will be able to choose high-speed Internet as an alternative to satellite for the first time. The project will also establish a second licensed high-speed Internet path for First Step between Moscow and Lewiston, which will have a much higher capacity than the existing one.

The project will directly connect 42 anchor institutions including emergency response agencies, health care facilities, libraries, government offices and institutions serving the Nez Perce Tribe. In addition, important community services have the option for free equipment to tie into this service. Their only costs will be the service package, or connection speed, they choose.

The new system provides redundancy that builds in reliability by allowing rerouting if one section of the network goes down. It also has extra capacity potential so it can be upgraded to gigabyte transmission, five times the current ability.

The new system could allow improved phone or other telecommunications services because it is designed for multiple users, providing for competition and allowing for other service providers such as cellular phone or cable Internet businesses to connect to it. That means they could expand into those communities by contracting with First Step to connect to the system.

The federal stimulus grant follows years of efforts by the Clearwater Economic Development Association to establish a network. The association has identified upgrades to telecommunications as a priority for the area, examined how best to meet the needs and worked with First Step on planning.

First Step received a \$213,000 grant in 2008 to provide broadband Internet service to Ferdinand, which until November was limited to dial-up and satellite service. Last fall, First Step began offering high-speed Internet to Ferdinand residents. It also installed 10 free-access computers and high-speed Internet at the community center in Ferdinand, where a staff member will provide assistance and computer courses for the next two years.

First Step Internet, which is headquartered in Moscow's Eastside Marketplace, has been building networks since 1989. It is the Inland Northwest's largest Internet service provider and employs nearly 40.

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EDUCATIONAL CLAIMANT CHARACTERISTICS REVIEWED IN SW IDAHO

One of the most notable effects of the current recession is its intrusion into areas of traditional employment stability – typically involving workers with increasing levels of education.

During the first quarter of 2010, more than 45,000 people filed claims to obtain unemployment benefits in southwestern Idaho. Only 3,855 were college graduates. While this figure represents just 8.5 percent of all claimants in the region, it is the highest percentage of college graduates in a decade.

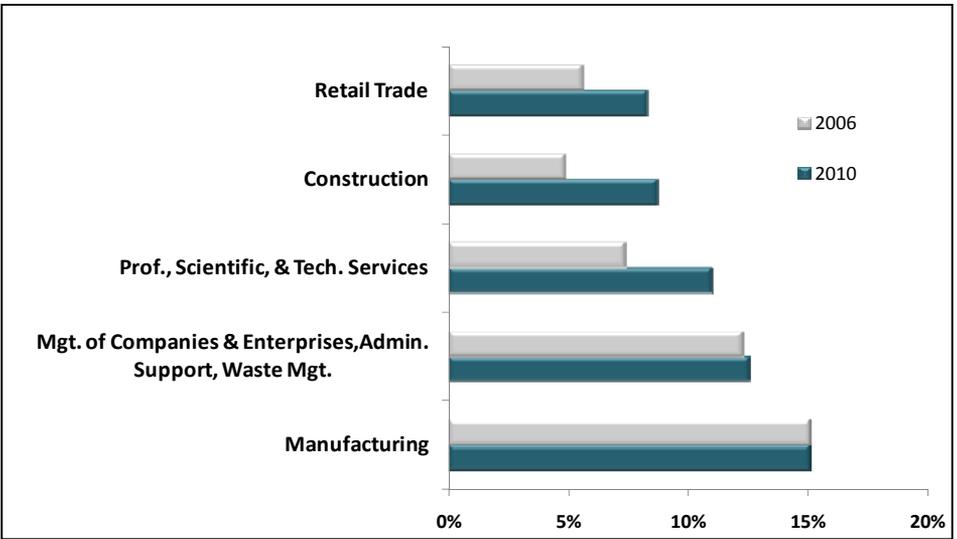
1 st Quarter	Percentage of All Claimants with Bachelor's Degrees
2001	6.05%
2002	7.23%
2003	6.91%
2004	6.42%
2005	6.71%
2006	7.03%
2007	5.95%
2008	6.67%
2009	8.47%
2010	8.49%

While 2009 shows a nearly identical percentage of unemployment benefit claimants with four-year degrees, the next highest percentage occurred in 2002 at 7.23 percent following the last recession.

Of the claimants holding bachelor’s degrees, just over 15 percent came from the manufacturing sector during the first quarter of 2010. That matches the percentage of claimants with college degrees from manufacturing during the first three months of 2006 when the Idaho economy was moving toward the peak of its expansion. The same was true for company management, which held steady at around 12.3 percent of all claimants holding degrees in both 2006 and 2010. This indicates that at this education level claimants were not disproportionately affected by the current recession.

Conversely, construction, retail trade and professional, scientific and technical services were all disproportionately affected by the current recession. Claimants with bachelor’s degrees from the construction sector jumped from 4.9 percent of claimants in 2006, the height of the building boom in the region, to 8.7 percent in 2010. This illustrates the economic blow the recession dealt to the construction industry overall. Degreed claimants from retail trade grew from 5.6 percent in 2006 to 8.3 percent in 2010 while those from professional, scientific and technical services rose from 7.3 percent to 10.9 percent.

Percent of UI Claimants with Four-Year Degrees by Specific Industries, 2006 compared to 2010



No single age group dominated unemployment insurance claims by workers with four-year degrees during the first three months of 2010. They tend to be relatively evenly distributed among ages over 24.

Age Distribution of Claimants with Four-Year Degrees					
	22 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55+
2006	14	334	257	264	220
2007	16	289	244	231	211
2008	8	425	426	379	305
2009	62	973	1,047	857	713
2010	51	951	990	976	887

GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF CLAIMANTS WITH FOUR-YEAR DEGREES

There has been no change in the gender composition of unemployment insurance claimants with college degrees between the first quarter of 2010 and the first quarter of 2006.

	Female	Male
2010	37.4%	62.6%
2006	37.6%	62.4%

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SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO’S POPULATION GROWTH OUTPACES THE STATE

South central Idaho’s population grew 1.5 percent in 2009, a third of a point faster than statewide population growth. Gooding County was the only one of the eight counties to show a loss – down a fractional 0.4 percent from mid-2008. This trend bodes well for the region through the recession even though unemployment has increased and job opportunities are scarcer than during the boom several years ago. The lack of jobs defined the movement of people both regionally and statewide.

BLAINE COUNTY

Blaine County has a diverse population – well-off retirees and wealthy trust fund beneficiaries who are not in the labor force, well-to-do second home owners and workers, a number with good jobs like teaching, nursing and law enforcement, who cannot afford to live in the Wood River Valley part of the county. Blaine County experienced moderate growth of 1.1 percent – similar to growth in 2008 and underperforming not only most of the counties in the region but the state overall. Despite a strong ski season, continued national interest in Sun Valley and the absence of wildfire, the local economy, especially the real estate market, was hit hard. Many subdivisions were halted in mid-buildout. There was an absence of in-migration that boosted population in 2004-2005 and 2006-2007 although that could do more with factors outside the county like recreational job opportunities in other parts of the state and country and the dynamics of the seasonal H2A workers hired by the Sun Valley Resort. There have been dramatic drops in tourism, declines in fixed income, equity and real estate markets, which contributed to declining in-migration that peaked in 2005. Nonfarm jobs in Blaine County decreased by close to 1,600, or almost 12 percent, from 2008 to 2009, and that impacts retail, food service and drinking establishments, a main component of Blaine’s economy. The business count was down 30 year-over-year as stores and restaurants closed their doors.

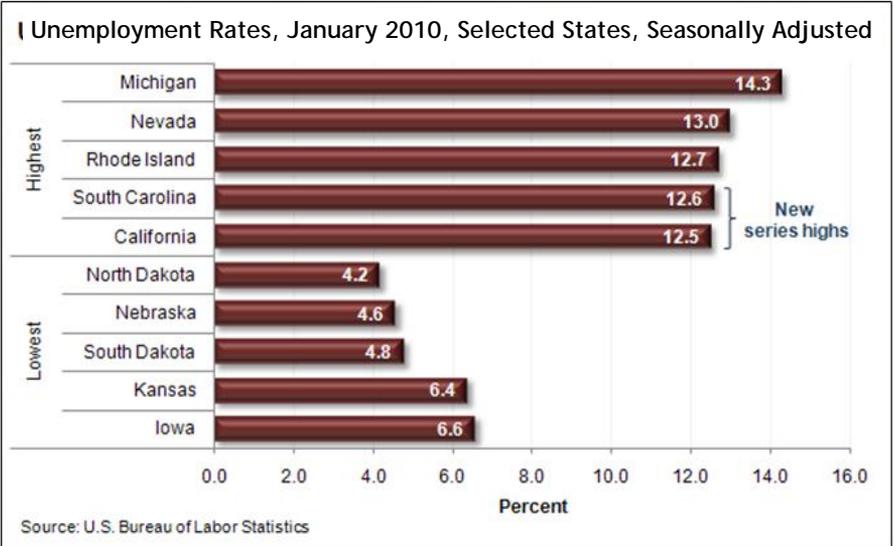
Blaine County Population			
Mid-Year over Mid-Year Changes	Net Natural Increase	Net Migration	Total Growth
2003-2004	190	179	372
2004-2005	175	-37	142
2005-2006	135	189	328
2006-2007	219	-71	149
2007-2008	169	122	286
2008-2009	195	50	242

Source: US Census Bureau

The U.S. Census Bureau’s 2008 population estimate concluded that 17.5 percent of Blaine County’s population was Hispanic, a higher rate than the state’s figure of 10.2 percent. At the same time, however, it is lower than all the other counties in the region except Camas and Twin Falls counties. Camas County, the second smallest county in the state, was 7.2 percent Hispanic and Twin Falls County was 12.3 percent. The Hispanic population typically experiences a higher birth rate. Statewide, the Hispanic population is growing two to three times faster than the population overall and is considerably younger. One in three Hispanics is under age 15 compared to one in five Idahoans overall. As the years pass, Hispanic influence will increase, politically, economically and culturally.

CAMAS COUNTY

Camas County with just over 1,100 residents experienced little growth since last year – a slight 0.3 percent increase. The rise in the out-migration in 2009 negated 2008’s net in-migration. Only natural growth – births exceeding deaths – kept the county from losing population. Data suggest that in times of economic turmoil, workers tend to move from rural towns to larger metropolitan centers where there are more jobs. Interestingly, while no area is immune, farm states have held up remarkably well during the current recession contrary to the popular conception that job opportunities are better in large cities. Idaho finds itself in the middle at 9.3 percent unemployment in January.



CASSIA COUNTY

Population grew 1.2 percent in Cassia County in 2009, driven entirely by births outpacing deaths. That has been the case in four of the last nine years. Movement into the county was offset by movement out of the county, ending a two-year string of net in-migration as managers relocated to run newly relocated companies like Pacific Ethanol, DOT Foods, Packaging Specialties and Hy-Line North America. Previously, the only two years with positive net migration were 2006-2007 with an increase of 24 and 2007-2008 with a surge of 250.

GOODING COUNTY

Gooding is the only county in the region to lose population in 2009, primarily due to out-migration. Births outnumbered deaths by 126 between mid-2008 and mid-2009, but the county suffered a net loss of 187 people moving elsewhere. Gooding County has lost ground four out of the last nine years. The county seat is isolated from Interstate 84, which seems to foster steady growth in the communities with easy access to the highway. And with many

retired or close-to-retired workers waiting out the recession, Hagerman has not experienced the growth and home construction it once had.

JEROME COUNTY

Jerome County experienced the highest growth rate in the region and the third highest in the state at 3.3 percent in 2009, primarily from in-migration. The county gained 387 people from movement in and out, the second highest in-migration gain in the region behind Twin Falls County and the sixth highest in the state. The birth rate was also sixth highest in the state. Jobs generated by Idaho Milk Products' new large-scale processing plant have allowed younger people to remain in the county and raise families. The median age is relatively low at 33.9 years compared to 34.4 years for the state and 36.7 years for the nation.

LINCOLN COUNTY

Lincoln County grew by 0.8 percent. Natural growth offset net outmigration of 36. Much of the county's work force commutes to the Wood River Valley to work in construction, landscaping and various service occupations. But the recession stripped nearly 1,600 nonfarm jobs from the Blaine County economy, almost 12 percent, from 2008 to 2009, and Lincoln County lost 30 jobs over the same period.

MINIDOKA COUNTY

Minidoka County realized 2009 population growth of 2.1 percent, almost double the state rate. But it was only the second year in the last decade that Minidoka County has recorded growth. The other was a tenth of a percent increase from mid-2006 to mid-2007. The recent surge underscores the revitalization the Mini-Cassia region has experienced as national employers relocate to the area offering jobs with wages above the median and benefits. Unlike the rest of the state, construction has been on the upswing to meet net in-migration of over 200 between mid-2008 and mid-2009. Natural growth added another 166 people.

TWIN FALLS COUNTY

The population of Twin Falls County increased 1.5 percent, a faster clip than the state's 1.2 percent. More than half of the growth occurred naturally with births exceeding deaths by nearly two to one. Net in-migration totaled 477. The exodus of workers idled by the closure of the Dell Computer call center will not be reflected until the 2010 population figures. This higher growth rate reflects, at least in part, the movement of people from rural areas to urban center as the recession gripped the state economy. The College of Southern Idaho is experiencing significant enrollment growth, again a likely result of the economic slowdown. This spring, the school enrolled 20 percent more students than a year ago.

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EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL ECONOMIST MAKES CAREER MOVE

Despite Two Recessions, Eastern Idaho Has Been Marked by Growth

As the regional economist for just over a decade, I have charted the growth of eastern Idaho despite two recessions, working with many of the people who have helped make the economy as vibrant as it has become. I plan to continue following the region's economic evolution as I move to another position in the Idaho Department of Labor and turn the economist's duties over to Will Jenson.

A decade ago, the city of Idaho Falls had a population of 48,548, an increase of just 4,000 through the long economic expansion of the 1990s.

There was only one small Wal-Mart, no Lowe's, and Home Depot would not open for another year. University Place was still evolving. There was no Olive Garden, and Texas Roadhouse was still months from opening. The civilian labor force was under 29,000 and the unemployment rate stood at 3.6 percent.

Like much of the rest of the state, the city skipped through the 2001 recession, and by 2006, the labor force had increased 5.9 percent to 30,400 while the unemployment rate dropped to 2.7 percent and then fell even further to a record low 2.3 percent in 2007.

The population was up nearly 12 percent in 2008 to 54,300, already outpacing growth in the 1990s with time still left in the new decade.

The current recession has checked that growth, dropping the labor force below 28,000 and driving the unemployment rate to 6.1 percent. Even so, the city has not been hit as hard as others in the state.

The 2000 census elevated Idaho Falls and surrounding Bonneville and Jefferson counties to a metropolitan statistical area and opened it to comparisons with the other 365 metro areas in the United States where it consistently ranked in the top 10 for job creation, population growth, low unemployment rate and other economic indicators.

It was not long before the Idaho Falls metro area began showing up in rankings for such things as "best place to raise a family" and "best place to live," based on crime rates, health facilities, services and various amenities. That free national attention brings in companies and business site selectors looking at the possibility of setting up shop in the area. The days of individual cities or groups going it alone, keeping possible business recruiting leads to themselves, slowly gave way to cooperative efforts across the region and economy to put the area's best foot forward. Grow Idaho Falls, state and local government and education leaders and industry leaders joined forces to promote the metro area as a great place to do business. It was that cooperation that resulted in AREVA choosing the Idaho Falls area for its uranium enrichment plant. The competition for the project was nationwide.

Throughout the decade, the metro area's industrial makeup shifted away from dependence on the Idaho National Laboratory for jobs. An emphasis on diversifying and complementing existing industries reinforced the stability of a region that serves as the retail, aviation, health and social services hub for a 200-mile radius.

The metro area grew by over 24 percent during the last decade to more than 126,000. Annual growth was at or around 2 percent in six of those 10 years and over 3 percent in 2008. The labor force increased by 4,600, or 33.6 percent, over the decade. And with all the economic turmoil of 2009, the unemployment rate remained below 6 percent albeit the first time over 4 percent since the metropolitan area was designated. Underemployment has been a problem as it has throughout Idaho, but even the underemployment rate in metropolitan Idaho Falls is below the state average.

Fueling metro growth has been the flexibility of the educational institutions to customize training programs to fit employer needs. Eastern Idaho Technical College, University Place representing Idaho State University and University of Idaho and Brigham Young University are all within 50 miles. The Center for



After more than 11 years as the Labor Department's east central regional economist, Tanya Albán is moving on to a new position with the department.



Will Jenson recently joined the Idaho Department of Labor as the new east central regional economist.

Advanced Energy Studies next to University Place in Idaho Falls is a public-private partnership with Boise State University, Idaho State University, the University of Idaho and the Idaho National Laboratory. It offers unique educational opportunities for innovative, cost-effective, credible energy research leading to sustainable technology based on economic development.

Regionally, there are nine counties which grew even faster than the metro area – 26.6 percent over the decade to nearly 202,500. The biggest surge of nearly 6,000 came in 2004 in the aftermath of two-year Ricks College in Rexburg transitioning into Brigham Young University-Idaho and creating a surge of students.

Subdivisions were springing up in Jefferson, Bonneville and Teton counties as the housing boom took hold. Regional population growth in 2008 was just a few dozen people short of 2004, and the three years in between each county recorded increases of over 4,000. Even in 2009, during the heart of a recession that saw many people unable to sell their homes so they could move, the region saw population growth of almost 3,600 – five in every six new residents in the metro area. That was up from four of every six a year earlier.

Over the decade, the regional labor force grew 15.9 percent, or 13,200, while the unemployment rate rose from 3.9 percent in 1999 to 6 percent in 2009. Statewide the unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in 2009 while nationally it hit 9.3 percent.

The region gained almost 2,000 employers and nearly 10,000 nonfarm jobs over the decade. Many of those jobs were in health care, which claims 10 percent of all occupations in the region. Salmon’s Steele Memorial Hospital became a full-service hospital and Rexburg’s Madison Memorial Hospital and Idaho Falls’ two hospitals all expanded. Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center has been upgraded to a Level 2 Trauma Center by the American College of Surgeons.

The INL employs over 8,000 workers, 10 percent of all occupations, and has remained a strong base employer with good benefits and wages. Companies regularly spin off with products and services developed at the INL, which is active in the community and a major asset in economic development efforts. The diversity among INL employees and their high educational levels results in a high concentration of experts and a focus on the arts.

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Idaho Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area				
Year	1999	2004	2009	10 yr % change
Population	101,485	109,171	126,131	24.3%
Civilian Labor Force	56,808	56,867	61,398	8.1%
Total Employed	54,780	54,953	57,771	5.5%
Total Unemployed	2,028	1,914	3,627	78.9%
Unemployment Rate	3.6%	3.4%	5.9%	2.3 pct points
Number of Employers	3,292	3,792	4,398	33.6%
Avg Employment	43,786	49,465	48,958	11.8%
Region VI Statistics (9 Counties)				
Year	1999	2004	2009	10 yr % change
Population	159,881	177,814	202,463	26.6%
Civilian Labor Force	83,178	89,373	96,431	15.9%
Total Employed	79,957	86,136	90,618	13.3%
Total Unemployed	3,221	3,237	5,813	80.5%
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	3.6%	6.0%	2.1 pct points
Number of Employers	5,260	6,105	7,214	37.1%
Avg Employment	67,985	74,761	79,734	17.3%



Area and County Developments

CHANGES THIS MONTH: *Beginning with this edition of Idaho Employment, the nonfarm jobs data for the state and labor market areas will not be included in the newsletter. It will continue to be posted on the department's labor marketing information Web site at <http://lmi.idaho.gov/employment/IdahoNonfarmJobs/tabid/760/Default.aspx>.*

NORTHERN IDAHO

Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone counties

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

- The U.S. Census Bureau hired 400 Idaho workers this Spring in the last phase before April 1's headcount. The bureau expects to hire another 3,800 Idaho workers through September 2010 for other census operations including more than 300 in Kootenai County and 20 to 30 in Benewah County. The majority will go door to door in May to collect data from people who did not respond to the mailed questionnaire. All census jobs are short term, ranging from four to 10 weeks and pay \$12.25 an hour. Most will be hired by the end of April.
- Northern Idaho contractor Scott Whitman is helping people needing home repairs they no longer can afford. Whitman has partnered with Northern Sky Marketing to solicit nominations from a three-county area of people in need, many who are elderly and already have the materials but don't have the money to pay someone to do the job. Businesses such as Sky Marketing, Stimson Lumber, Home Depot and Sandpoint Building Supply have donated cash or materials while local eateries have provided lunch.
- Intercity bus service between Moscow, Coeur d'Alene and Spokane has returned — the first time since the early 1990s. Northwestern Trailways has added the routes with funding from federal transportation grants, although the company says it will still lose money operating the routes. The service is available seven days a week including holidays and connects with Greyhound bus lines, Amtrak and airlines in both Spokane and Boise.
- Spokane Teachers Credit Union posted a 13 percent increase in net income for 2009, rising to \$9.1 million, up from \$8 million in 2008. The credit union's deposits grew 22 percent in 2009, and membership grew 10.8 percent to 86,400. Loans jumped 14 percent to about \$1.14 billion, up from \$997 million a year earlier. The credit union also had 22 percent growth in Visa credit card accounts, a 27 percent increase in auto loans and an 11 percent growth in commercial loans. Overall, the organization had a return on average assets of 0.67 percent for 2009, compared with 0.7 percent the previous year. The teacher's credit union is projecting net income of about \$12 million in 2010.
- According to the Dodge Report, which provides construction market analysis, forecasts and trends, total construction for the first two months of 2010 in Kootenai County is 49 percent ahead of 2009. The 2010 total hit \$21.1 million compared with \$14.2 million in January and February 2009. But new residential construction in northern Idaho, which includes apart-

ments as well as homes, dropped to \$11.8 million, down 4 percent from last year. Spokane is trending the other way. The value of building permits in Spokane was down 30 percent from the same period a year ago. For the first two months of 2010, the total value was \$29.9 million, down from \$42.8 million in 2009. However, residential starts are up 22 percent this year compared to the same period last year. Overall, the Dodge Report says total U.S. construction is down 20 percent, and residential construction nationwide is down 21 percent.

BENEWAH COUNTY

- The Coeur d'Alene Tribe was awarded \$12.3 million in federal stimulus money to construct fiber optic networks that will provide high-speed Internet access to businesses and residents in Plummer, Worley, Tensed, DeSmet and the surrounding communities. The tribe is one of the first to receive broadband funding and was the only application in Idaho to be funded. The project will lay 275 miles of fiber optic cable lines across the 539-square-mile reservation. The tribe expects to start work within the next few months. The project is estimated to provide up to 30 new jobs on the reservation.
- The Idaho State Department of Education awarded the St. Maries school district a \$50,000 grant to improve technology. The grant is part of the Enhancing Education Through Technology Classrooms of the 21st Century program and will provide new equipment and training for teachers to improve student achievement.
- A long time ago the Coeur d'Alene Tribe used "longhouses" to survive the rough northern Idaho winters. Today, the tribe has revisited that sense of togetherness and has completed construction of its new 8,000-square-foot, \$1.5 million longhouse in DeSmet. Although the longhouse won't be a residence, the concept is the same and will be used for celebrations, dinners, weddings, funerals, educational events and community meetings. It is available to tribal and non-tribal members.

BONNER COUNTY

- Sandpoint's Coldwater Creek a women's clothing retailer plans to open 20 new retail stores this year. After losses of \$56.1 million in 2009 and \$26 million in 2008, sales still climbed 12 percent to \$318.4 million during 2009. The company ended 2009 with 356 retail stores.
- Bonner County commissioners hope to make arrangements with the Panhandle Area Council to secure low-interest funding for the property and materials for a new juvenile jail. Without a new facility, juveniles will to be housed at the Region 1 lockup in Coeur d'Alene, where it could cost the county \$1 million per year.

BOUNDARY COUNTY

- As part of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare budget cuts, the Bonners Ferry office will be one of nine the agency is closing this Spring, reducing its local offices from 30 to 21. The closures are estimated to save the agency \$7 million annually.
- Safeway has purchased Boundary Trading Co. and started a multimillion-dollar renovation. Safeway will transfer 30 employees from its existing store that will close when the renovated one opens July 23. The renovation will create 20-25 construction jobs over a 12-week period and 90-100 long-term store positions— including the 30 transferred from Safeway. Some of Boundary Trading Co.'s 69 employees will transfer to the new store. The independent Well Life Pharmacy will move its operations from the existing Safeway to South Main Street and retain its staff.

- Equinox Foundation in partnership with the Inland Northwest Community Foundation is offering \$200,000 in grants to non-profit organizations in Boundary and Bonner counties. Funds are available to organizations that address Equinox Foundation's vision and strategies for the benefit of the two counties. Annual grant awards will range between \$2,000 and \$30,000 and are provided for one year. The grants can be used for startup funding for new organizations and programs, program expansion, capital and/or equipment necessary to implement eligible programs, providing free or lower-cost access to programs for eligible populations and general operating support.

KOOTENAI COUNTY

- Due to a shrinking market, 84 Lumber, a Pennsylvania-based company, discontinued operations in Post Falls, putting the remaining 10 employees out of work. It employed about 20 workers at peak operation. The company shut down nine other stores the same day in Wisconsin, Mississippi, Illinois, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Virginia and Pennsylvania. That cut the number of the lumber company's stores to 289 in 34 states, down from 450 stores in 2007.
- Rocky Mountain Construction Group Inc. of Hayden landed a \$4.8 million contract with Six Flags Inc. for work on a roller coaster at Six Flags in Arlington, Texas. Rocky Mountain employs 20 people to design, build, install and repair roller coasters and water park features. The "Texas Giant" rollercoaster will have a hybrid design, combining features of a classic wood coaster structure with a steel track that spans 5,000 feet and rises 158 feet high.
- Plummer Forest Products has purchased Potlatch's particleboard mill in Post Falls. The plant, to operate under the Plummer Forest Products name, now employs about two dozen people and most will keep their jobs. Potlatch will continue to own 840,000 acres of forestland in Idaho and operate a lumber mill and plywood plant in St. Maries.
- LA Aluminum Casting Co., a Hayden permanent mold aluminum foundry and machine shop, has received two new multimillion-dollar contracts and plans to expand its facilities from 20,000 to 30,000 square feet. The company currently employs 43 and may hire 12 more. LA Aluminum manufactures parts for tanks, wind generators, helicopters and airplanes, serving a diverse client base.
- River City Fabrication, a diversified manufacturer of everything from fuel tanks to more intricate items, goes through 20 to 30 tons of steel each month. The company employs 24 in its plant. Diversification has kept this small operation in business through the economic downturn.
- Integrated Ideas, a company specializing in precision sheet metal products, has grown from 12 employees when it moved to Post Falls from Sacramento, Calif., in 1998, to 25 today. It recently was AS 9100 certified, which keeps it competitive in the aerospace and maritime industries. AS 9100 certification is a Society of Automotive Engineers international standard required for companies that plan to work with high-quality, precision manufacturers in the aircraft, space and defense industries.

SHOSHONE COUNTY

- Shoshone County and the cities of Mullan and Pinehurst were each awarded energy efficiency grants from the Idaho Office of Energy Resources. Shoshone County will use the funds to upgrade energy efficiency at the courthouse, saving the county an estimated \$5,000 per year in energy costs. Mullan's grant will be used to fund new heaters and vinyl win-

dows for multiple buildings including city hall and the fire station. Pinehurst's energy efficiency projects, when completed, will save the city an estimated \$1,400 per year in energy costs.

- Hecla Mining Corp. has announced a 77 percent increase in reserves at the Lucky Friday mine to the 7,000-foot level. Exploration and findings will result in additional drilling in 2010.
- Gold and silver production will begin in April at the New Jersey mill in Kellogg with ore from the company's Silver Strand Mine, northeast of Coeur d'Alene, and New Jersey Mine, three miles east of Kellogg. About 4,000 tons will be mined from an ore block. Current prices for gold and silver make mining at the Silver Strand more economical. The company is currently searching for potential joint venture partners to fund the development of its Golden Chest mine, where 10,000 ounces of gold per year can be extracted and up to 50,000 ounces with the construction of a large flotation mill.

OPENINGS

- Island Sun, a tanning salon in Coeur d'Alene.
- ZS Fitness replaced the Coeur d'Alene Homes Thrift Store in Coeur d'Alene.
- New law office owned by Brian W. Woods opened in Bonners Ferry.
- Full of Beans coffee shop opened in Kellogg.

EXPANSIONS/HIRINGS

- LA Aluminum is expanding its facility from 20,000 to 30,000 square feet and expects to hire 12 more machinists and foundry workers.
- Ground Force has been hiring the last couple months and expects to hire more.

CLOSURES/LAYOFFS

- Panhandle State Bank laid off 20 employees.
- 84 Lumber closed in Post Falls, laying off 10 employees.
- Safe-T-Line reduced manpower and hours from 18 to eight employees each working 24 hours week.
- Jungle Pizza closed in Post Falls. The thrift store next door expanded into the space.

[Link to Coeur d'Alene MSA nonfarm job data.](#)

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NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis and Nez Perce counties

DEVELOPMENTS

CLEARWATER COUNTY

- Clearwater County Economic Development recently hired Loren Whitten-Kaboth as director, replacing Chris St. Germaine who took a job overseeing telecommunications projects for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. The director helps existing businesses expand, tries to attract new businesses to the county, assists with the development of a biomass plant in Orofino, oversees efforts to add capacity for houseboats on Dworshak Reservoir and works for improved telecommunications and infrastructure.

IDAHO AND LEWIS COUNTIES

- St. Mary's Hospital and Clinics, based in Cottonwood, received an \$85,000 grant from the federal Department of Health and Human Services to study ways to integrate traditional medicine with alternative methods such as acupuncture, massage therapy and yoga. The grant will be used to develop a strategic plan for expanding workplace wellness programs, increasing access to alternative healing programs for the elderly and improving referrals between traditional and nontraditional health care providers in Idaho, Lewis and Clearwater counties. St. Mary's will work with Clearwater Valley Hospital, St. Gertrude's Monastery, Brookside Landing Assisted Living Center in Orofino and an area development company.
- Idaho County and some of its cities recently received nearly \$200,000 in federal stimulus grants to improve energy efficiency. Idaho County was awarded \$60,335 for retrofit projects at the courthouse and the Kooskia road shop. Grangeville got \$66,400 to replace windows and doors at city hall and make improvements at a city well including a new energy-efficient motor. Riggins will spend its \$64,300 grant on two new well pumps with smart controls, energy-efficient lighting and attic fans for city hall.
- Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter made Nezperce the Capital for a Day on March 19. Dozens of residents in the town of 490 came out for the traveling monthly meeting with the governor and some of his cabinet members, discussing their concerns about telecommunications, the state budget, economic development and other issues. They met in Nezperce's new library/community center that opened in February. The governor also saw last fall's upgrades to Main Street.
- One bright spot in Lewis County is the growth of non-lumber manufacturers. Hillco Technologies in Nezperce, makes farm equipment. It employs nearly 40 people and has been responsible for most of that growth. The city of Craigmont is likely to get its own manufacturing operation in the next couple of years when a foundry employing more than a dozen people is expected to open there. Complementing the recent growth of Hillco Technologies has been expansion in health care and social assistance.

Jobs in Nezperce ZIP Code

	2002	2005	2008
TOTAL JOBS	196	214	250
Educational Services	54	54	68
Wholesale Trade	45	35	43
Manufacturing	24	29	38
Public Administration	37	41	36
Health Care and Social Assistance	0	7	16
Retail Trade	9	14	10
All Other Sectors	27	34	39

LATAH & WHITMAN COUNTIES

- BioTracking LLC in Moscow is the only U.S. company that confirms pregnancy through blood samples for cattle and wildlife. Taking blood samples is much easier and less dangerous than manual pregnancy testing, especially when dealing with volatile or large animals like bison. Blood samples sent to BioTracking are processed within 27 hours so ranch owners or game managers know which animals are pregnant. BioTracking is 99 per-

cent accurate if it determines an animal is not pregnant and about 94 percent accurate in confirming pregnancy. While domestic livestock account for the bulk of the company's business, pregnancy tests for wildlife and farm-raised game are on the rise. At ranches, bison farms and game preserves, the tests play an important role in herd management. The blood tests are being used in research to determine whether wolf packs and ATVs are affecting pregnancy rates in wild elk. BioTracking is another example of how technology transfer from the University of Idaho is creating jobs in Moscow. Owner Garth Sasser and colleagues at the university originally developed the test for cattle in the 1980s. The company now employs about 10 people.

- On April 1, Northwestern Trailways began offering service between Moscow, Coeur d'Alene and Spokane to communities along Highway 95. It has been nearly 20 years since a bus ran between Moscow and Coeur d'Alene and since Potlatch had regular passenger service. Now Potlatch residents can catch the bus in their own town and take it further north or connect with Greyhound, other intercity buses, Amtrak or airplanes in Spokane or the CityLink bus system serving Plummer, Worley, Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls.

NEZ PERCE AND ASOTIN COUNTIES

- The Port of Lewiston is preparing to accept oversized loads on a regular basis by improving the dock's fender system that protects the concrete from barges. The project will cost about \$250,000 and should be completed in August. There is a growing demand to accommodate super-sized freight including industrial equipment, wind turbines and 100-ton oil drums. In the last two years, the port has handled two super-sized loads, gaining a reputation as an alternative for getting oversized freight into Canada and the Midwest. That type of cargo usually goes through the Panama Canal into the Gulf of Mexico and is unloaded in Texas where it then travels by truck to its destination. The port also is more than doubling the length of the dock to 270 feet so it can load or unload two barges at a time.
- Clearwater Paper plans to start making a special line of "green" facial and eventually toilet tissue in ultra and premium versions that will be certified as environmentally friendly. To make the new product, Clearwater Paper is increasing the amount of hardwood pulp it buys from Canada and South America. That kind of pulp increases tissue softness but not the production cost. The finished toilet paper and facial tissue packages will carry the logos of the Rainforest Alliance and Forest Stewardship Council, which indicates trees come from forests certified through the council and have earned chain-of-custody certification from the Rainforest Alliance SmartWood program. Clearwater Paper, the largest maker of private label consumer tissue products for grocery stores in the United States, will continue to offer its standard versions of facial tissue and toilet paper. It employs about 1,600 people in Lewiston.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency awarded Lewiston \$2 million to mitigate storm water problems downtown. The city will have to come up with \$500,000 in matching funds.
- Lewiston is putting together a land-use plan to guide development of its waterfront over the next 20 years. Like many cities, Lewiston wants to move away from industrial uses of urban waterways toward commercial and residential development of the areas along the Clearwater and Snake rivers. Clarkston, led by the Port of Clarkston, also has been making efforts to bring tourist-oriented and high-end commercial businesses to its water-

front. The Port of Lewiston will be the one industrial use expected to grow as it expands operations. The city is trying to improve access from downtown to the levee system along the rivers, which contains parks and paths. The destruction of the former Twin City Foods buildings between the Clearwater River and downtown opens up land for new uses, potentially helping the city achieve its waterfront goals. The city's vision of amphitheaters, docks, hotels and apartments on the waterfront is available online at www.cityoflewiston.org.

[Link to Lewiston MSA nonfarm job data.](#)

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SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

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

DEVELOPMENTS

- Escalating health insurance premiums are prompting increasingly more Idaho employers to drop coverage for their workers. Dave Silva is on the verge of doing just that at his Boise copier business after his premiums jumped another 21 percent this year following a 28 percent hike last year. From 2002 to 2009, the percentage of employers offering health insurance to full-time workers has plunged from over 80 percent to 56 percent.
- Tribute Media Inc., a Web-based marketing and development company in Meridian is relocating to The Ground Floor, the Meridian Development Corp. project that has struggled to find paying tenants since it opened this year. Tribute Media will bring 10 employees plus eight others who have been working from remote locations to the new offices. Shaun Wardle, whose V&G Ventures is managing The Ground Floor incubator, said the agreement with Tribute Media provides some short-term breathing room and a potential long-term partnership that will help attract more entrepreneurs and small business owners to the project.
- Artisans4Hope sells items handmade by refugees at local events, through Dunia Marketplace in Boise's Hyde Park and at private home parties. Volunteers help refugees hone their creative skills and come up with products like baby hats and felted purses that will appeal to local shoppers. And retired teachers offer English classes with lessons integrated into work sessions. Between 1999 and 2009, about 5,500 refugees resettled in Boise, roughly 500 people per year.
- XpressFlex of Boise, which administered health and child-care flexible spending accounts for about 100 employers in and out of Idaho, closed after employees of two school districts reported to their employers that XpressFlex's checks were rejected. XpressFlex and Boise police are cooperating with an FBI investigation.
- The Boise condo market appears to be picking up again. Few if any condominiums in downtown Boise were selling last August, but since then at least 25 sales have closed or are pending. "This year has started out great," said Lisa Lyons, director of sales for CitySide Lofts, where 10 units have sold since September and three sales are pending. Sales managers, agents and developers for five projects downtown said most prices have dropped between 15 percent and 30 percent since 2007, fueling buyer interest.

- Boise's downtown Macy's department store has closed as part of a corporate initiative to eliminate marginally productive stores. Sixty-one people worked at the downtown store. They are receiving severance and other benefits. Some may be able to apply for jobs at the other local Macy's stores in the Boise mall and in Nampa.
- Boisean Barbara Barry's Knit Kit has gotten a national boost. Barry's kit was mentioned on "The Martha Stewart Show" during a segment on knitting. She hopes the exposure on the do-it-yourself maven's show will boost her business to the next level. "You can't pay for publicity like this ... To have it in her hands is the greatest thing (to) happen in the craft industry," Barry said.
- Four retail-based medical clinics in southwestern Idaho have closed after failing to find a niche to serve busy families. When such clinics began mushrooming nationwide about five years ago, they were touted as a way to help reduce unnecessary - and costly - emergency room visits by people without health insurance. But the clinics saw mixed results, and health care officials say they had little if any impact on emergency room traffic.
- Home sales across the region increased 38 percent in February over a year ago, and the number of homes listed for sale decreased 22 percent. But median prices fell again in Ada County. Sober sellers also are getting between 95 percent and 97 percent of their more realistic asking prices. But the National Association of Realtors says the region's home-price declines this past year were the 10th worst among metro areas. And 23 percent of Idaho property owners owed more on their homes than they were worth, a February report from First American CoreLogic found.
- Chase Paymentech, a leading payment processor, and Kount, a Boise-based company that specializes in card-not-present fraud prevention, are offering a comprehensive suite of fraud detection, management and prevention tools for merchants. Chase Paymentech processes a significant share of global card-not-present payments and authorizes transactions in more than 130 currencies. Kount has state-of-the-art fraud prevention technology. Together, they will provide merchants with a real-time fraud score at the time of bank authorization.
- Vehicle sales were down 5.1 percent in Ada and Canyon counties in February compared with the same month last year. But new-car sales are continuing to show some growth, increasing by 47.7 percent over February 2009. The region is considered a strong truck market, but the number of trucks sold declined 14 percent from February 2009.
- After a decade in business, Treasurewood Furniture in Boise, an unfinished solid-wood furniture store, has closed. Hundreds of solid-wood items, including bookcases, armoires, dressers, TV stands and china hutches worth an estimated \$150,000 were auctioned online.
- Boise, Nampa and Meridian are submitting a joint application to be one of the areas Google picks for a high-speed fiber-to-the-home broadband network trial capable of delivering speeds up to and in excess of 1 gigabit per second. Community leaders believe bringing the network to the region would produce immediate economic benefits. A Google spokeswoman said the company expects to name one or more sites later this year. She said Google will offer competitively priced service to between 50,000 and 500,000 consumers during the test.
- Landowners in Kuna's local improvement district that is funding a new wastewater treatment plant have gone to court to get the district nullified.

They claim the city used fraudulent, coercive and deceptive tactics to create the district, telling developers that their property would not be annexed by the city unless they agreed to be included in the district. Owners of over half the land included in the district are backing the legal challenge.

- Walgreens is building new stores in Eagle and Kuna. The 15,500-square-foot building in Eagle is in the new Three Oaks Plaza development planned by Cottonwood Capital just north of the intersection of Eagle Road and Idaho 44. The Kuna location is on the east side of the city across from the Paul's market shopping center. Both should be open before the end of the year.
- An Idaho technology company helping irrigation farmers more efficiently use millions of watts of electricity is gaining the attention of the U.S. Department of Energy. M2M Communications of Boise just got a \$2.1 million federal stimulus grant to build a smart grid-compatible irrigation load control system in the central valley of California that will reduce peak demand, improve reliability and, most important to the farmers, save money. Of the 100 grants, 96 went to electric utilities and three of the remaining four grants went to large corporations - Honeywell, Whirlpool and Intelon. M2M has 29 employees but expects to add 50 more to handle the new project.
- State and federal regulators say Idaho First Bank must reduce exposure to problem loans. The five-year-old bank must raise up to \$5 million by June, according to a consent order between the bank and regulators. Idaho First Bank is already taking steps to cover its exposure to troubled loans. Some were extended while others had their interest rates adjusted. And the bank also has foreclosed on some properties.
- Micron Technology reported second quarter net income of \$365 million, or 39 cents a share, on net sales of just under \$2 billion. It was the second straight profitable quarter for the company, which earned \$204 million, or 23 cents a share, on net sales of \$1.74 billion in the first quarter. Revenue on sale of semiconductors was up 24 percent with volume and average prices both up.

[Link to Boise City-Nampa MSA nonfarm job data.](#)

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SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO

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

DEVELOPMENTS

TWIN FALLS COUNTY

- Agri-Service, the farm implement dealer with an office in Twin Falls, has established an Employee Stock Ownership Plan that gives workers an ownership stake in the business. Currently there are about 150 employees at eight locations in Idaho, Oregon and Utah, making it one of the largest sellers of Massey Ferguson, Hesston and Gleaner implements in North America. Founder Cleve Buttars opened the first Agri-Service retail and service center in Twin Falls in 1990 with four employees, but the company quickly grew. Buttars always dreamed of giving his employees ownership in the company, and now employees receive stock in the company based on their tenure. The stock is redeemed when they retire or leave. Agri-Service

joins other south central Idaho companies that are 100 percent employee owned including WinCo, Clear Springs Foods and Pacific Steel and Recycling.

- The Twin Falls School District has organized a town hall of sorts to solicit strategies for dealing with an estimated \$3.57 million in budget cuts in the next school year. The district is pulling in the patrons for a brainstorming session it hopes will produce creative ideas about how to implement cuts with the least collateral damage. The most recent turn of events found the District declaring a state of financial emergency so that new personnel contracts can be negotiated.

- Idaho Duck Tours will brighten up the streets of Twin Falls with yellow, WWII-style amphibious vehicles that maneuver on both land and water. The vehicles are perfect for sightseeing trips into the Snake River Canyon, then into the river and around various historic and scenic attractions. Operators hope to tap hotels and businesses as sponsors of the tours that would start from both the Visitor's Center and the Canyon Crest Event Center on the canyon rim. Other cities with successful Duck Tours include Boston, Seattle, Baltimore, San Francisco, Miami and San Diego.



A Duck Tour vehicles plunges into the water in Boston.

- Snake River Skydiving will operate out of Twin Falls, moving from the Jerome Municipal Airport. The company will lease a field from the Magic Valley Regional Airport near a runway with non-exclusive use as a landing and pick-up area for customers.

MINIDOKA COUNTY

- Renova Power, its creditors and the half-finished ethanol plant are still working through the court system. The creditors' trust group of more than 40 local and national companies is owed over \$26 million. The creditors' group raised \$1.5 million to pay the administrative cost of the bankruptcy so the assets can be moved out of court and into a trust. After the plant is completed or liquidated, the creditors will be repaid the money they put up to cover bankruptcy costs along with Minidoka County property taxes of \$359,123 and more than \$100,000 owed to the city of Burley on a land lease. Only then other Renova debts will be satisfied.

JEROME COUNTY

- The Magic Valley Dairy Research Center has been thrown a lifeline by the University of Idaho, which will continue to pursue placement and construction of the center. October is now the deadline for site selection. Within the next two months, organizers hope to have a new design that can be built in stages. Earlier this year, the governor and Legislature pulled back their \$10 million investment, saying the money was needed elsewhere but would be available once the economy rights itself and tax revenues pick up. The dairy industry, which is suffering from low milk prices, has also become reluctant to invest right now in research and development. Center backers still hope to locate the facility within 20 miles of the College of Southern Idaho and near University of Idaho research facilities like the one in Kimberly.

GOODING COUNTY

- The \$7 million Bliss Water Treatment project will take at least a year to complete now that construction has begun. The project will move homeowners and businesses off septic tanks and unlined ponds to a sewer system to protect the aquifer. Residents will pay \$46 a month. The project is being financed with \$700,000 in federal loans, a \$100,000 loan from the Idaho's Department of Environmental Quality along with a \$2.6 million state grant. Summit Excavation of Twin Falls will build the lagoon, and Eastern Oregon Construction of Ontario, Ore., will put in the service lines.

CASSIA COUNTY

- A business panel comprised of representatives of DOT Foods, Boise Paper Holdings and Packaging Specialties led a discussion of the recession and its impact on the work force and other elements of the economy. The session was organized by the Workforce Development Alliance and Roger Madsen, director of the Idaho Department of Labor. Business owners had the opportunity to offer ideas on how the Idaho Labor Department could assist them in growing and succeeding. A broad range of topics was discussed including the difficulty in filling experienced driver positions for shorter-haul, over the road trips. The consensus was the economy continues to be the biggest challenge. The department plans another session April 26 at its Canyon County office.
- A local task force was assembled by Cassia County in response to the plan by Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power to run their Gateway West transmission line from southwestern Wyoming across southern Idaho to Melba. The draft environmental impact statement tends to support a route through prime agricultural land in Cassia County over the task force recommendation to hug the Nevada-Idaho state line despite its breeding grounds for threatened sage grouse. The task force advised the county commissioners to be ready for a lawsuit.

BUSINESS OPENINGS

- Bluebell Country Inn in Eden.
- Harbor Freight Tools in Twin Falls, hiring 25 retail workers.
- Kiwi Loco in Twin Falls.
- Sherm's Grill in Twin Falls.

CLOSURES

- Jayker Wholesale Nursery in Twin Falls.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

- WOW Logistics expansion in Jerome.
- Valley Wide Cooperative, new corporate headquarters next to existing store, in Rupert.
- Valley Agronomics in Kimberly.

[Link to Twin Falls Micro SA nonfarm job data.](#)

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SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

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

DEVELOPMENTS

BANNOCK COUNTY

- A simulation game designed by Professor Ramesh Ramloll of Idaho State University's Institute of Rural Health was among 24 finalists in the Federal

Virtual Worlds Challenge, a competition sponsored by the U.S. Army. Ram-Ioll's Play2Train, first available in 2006, helps first responders and medical workers train for real-life crisis situations. The army's competitive opportunity helps the federal government identify new uses for these virtual worlds.

BINGHAM COUNTY

- Plans for several new wind farms are in the works including the 18-turbine Lava Bed Wind Farm west of Blackfoot and two Cedar Creek farms by Utah's Western Energy, also in Bingham County. While the 66-turbine farm has been approved, the 33-turbine farm has passed approval but is waiting through the appeal period before it can proceed.
- The first 20 students have completed the Certified Nursing Assistants training on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. The program is a partnership among Partners 4 Prosperity, the Idaho Department of Labor and the Community Council of Idaho along with the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Fort Hall Indian Health Services and the Department of Health and Welfare's Education, Employment & Training/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs. More than half the graduates are employed. Many of the others are continuing their education at Idaho State University. A Spanish-English bilingual class started in February at Snake River High School in Blackfoot. Partners 4 Prosperity, the Idaho Department of Labor and Community Council of Idaho have partnered to offer the 120-hour program to 21 students who will assist the community and local areas with bilingual needs.

POWER COUNTY

- Cheryl Koopin of Koopin Farms in American Falls has been named chairwoman of the United States Potato Board – the first woman to represent Idaho on the board. She will serve one year, overseeing the long-range plan for the international and domestic marketing of potatoes. The board implements programs that will increase demand for potatoes and improve the business environment for potato growers throughout the United States. Koopin's past involvement with the board included a trip to West Africa with the International Food Aid Initiative to help Senegalese people prepare U.S. dehydrated potatoes. She served for three years as co-chairwoman of international marketing. Koopin's philosophy is "don't plant a potato until there's a home for it." She encourages all growers in the market to do the same to avoid oversupply, which depresses prices.

OPENINGS

- Five Guys Burgers & Fries in Pocatello.
- Costa Vida Mexican Restaurant in Pocatello.
- CheckCashers in Pocatello.
- The Bank of Commerce in Pocatello.
- Bear Mountain Flooring in Blackfoot.
- Smart Buy in Blackfoot.

[Link to Pocatello MSA nonfarm job data.](#)

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EAST CENTRAL IDAHO

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

DEVELOPMENTS

IDAHO NATIONAL LABORATORY

- CH2M Hill Newport News Nuclear based in Virginia was given the contract for the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project at the Idaho National Laboratory. The U.S. Department of Energy chose the company to treat and prepare radioactive waste for shipment through 2015. This ends the contract that Bechtel BWXT-Idaho has held for the waste treatment project since it took over in 2005. Both CH2M Hill and its minority partner Newport News have a history of working with the INL. Most of the 800 plus employees likely will transition to the new contractor within the next several months.

REGION

- Hollywood Video is closing four local stores. The Rexburg and Ammon locations are in the process of closing. The Northgate Mile store in Idaho Falls was only recently notified that it will be closed, and Blackfoot will likely be next. Movie Gallery Inc., the parent company, filed for reorganization under the federal bankruptcy laws in February, citing “economic and competitive realities.” There will be about 50 employees affected among the four stores.

BONNEVILLE COUNTY

- The Goshen North wind farm proposal, a joint venture between Ridgeline Energy and BP Wind Energy, has been approved and construction is under way. The farm, which will have 83 GE wind turbines when finished toward the end of the year, will be the largest in Idaho. Officials estimate up to 250 workers will be employed at the peak of construction on this project that will take place on both sides of Bone Road east of Idaho Falls. In the first phase 25 miles of new, private roads are being constructed on the 11,000-acre site to allow access. The turbines should be built by May and then shipped to the site for installation. Ridgeline and BP have signed a 20-year agreement to sell 90 of the 124 megawatts of power that will be generated by the farm to California, which should generate energy for 37,000 homes. The project brings construction jobs to the area, required leases with nine landowners and will generate property taxes for the county.

LEMHI COUNTY

- Call center Channel Blend in Salmon closed in March, idling 30 employees. However, the manager bought the equipment and started her own call center, Driving Force Solutions, and hired at least half of the former Channel Blend employees.
- The Sacajawea Center in Salmon was awarded two grants for \$40,000 from the Bureau of Land Management to fund the Outdoor School program this year and next, and develop an environmental education curriculum for grades one through four this year and for grades five through eight in 2011. The Bureau of Reclamation has also officially partnered with the center and will provide \$6,000 for the 2011 budget for Native American interpretation.

LEMHI AND CUSTER COUNTIES

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act awarded \$10 million to the Salmon-Challis National Forest to replace three bridges built in 1950 across the Salmon River. They are the only access to the river's Middle Fork and Main Fork, used extensively for recreational access. Another \$803,000 was allotted for trail maintenance to include the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. This will bring 100 miles of trail up to standard, improve water quality and public safety and protect habitat. Partners in the project include the Student Conservation Association, the Salmon River chapter of Backcountry Horsemen, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation and the local chapters of Idaho Trail Riders, the Yankee Fork Gold Dredge Association and the Youth Employment Program in Lemhi County. Another \$1.2 million in partnership with Idaho Outfitters & Guides Association, the Student Conservation Association, Montana Conservation Corp., Backcountry Horsemen of Idaho, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation and the Youth Employment Program in Lemhi County will hire local workers to improve the overall condition of the area. A total of \$57 million of federal stimulus money was awarded to 20 states to help maintain and restore forests to their natural states.

MADISON COUNTY

- After more than a decade of working and planning, Rexburg's water park will finally become a reality. The city council approved the \$5.25 million Riverside Park in March. It will be built by the Rexburg Development Agency under an urban renewal district designation then turned over to the city for operation and maintenance, opening by Memorial Day 2011. It will include an activity pool with an interactive play area, a lazy river, a swimming area and water slides. The plan also includes a changing area and rest rooms, a concession area and a group party and winter warming room.
- A certified nursing assistant class started in February in Rexburg through a joint effort by Partners4Prosperity, the Idaho Department of Labor, Eastern Idaho Technical College and the Community Council of Idaho. Ten students are enrolled in the 120-hour class.

OPENINGS

- Odd Fellows Bakery in Salmon.
- Custertel, a telephone services cooperative, is opening new office in Salmon.
- The Shoe Box, a women's clothing, shoes and accessories store in Rigby.
- Morning Krave, a gourmet coffee shop in Rigby.

CLOSURES

- Roberts Crafts in Idaho Falls will close by the end of April, affecting about 30 employees
- Schlotzsky's Deli in the Grand Teton Mall parking lot closed in February, affecting 10 people.

[Link to Idaho Falls MSA nonfarm job data.](#)

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State of Idaho Data

March 2010 Labor Force (preliminary) compared to March 2009 (benchmarked) data (continued on next page).

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Mar 2010				Mar 2009			
	Civilian Labor Force	# Unemployed	% Unemployed	Total Employment	Civilian Labor Force	# Unemployed	% Unemployed	Total Employment
STATE OF IDAHO	757,654	70,969	9.4	686,685	752,506	50,395	6.7	702,111
COUNTIES								
ADA	193,154	18,649	9.7	174,505	195,589	11,910	6.1	183,679
ADAMS	2,076	379	18.3	1,697	2,095	308	14.7	1,787
BANNOCK	39,600	3,420	8.6	36,180	40,362	2,227	5.5	38,135
BEAR LAKE	3,349	221	6.6	3,128	3,297	137	4.2	3,160
BENEWAH	4,108	679	16.5	3,429	4,118	584	14.2	3,534
BINGHAM	23,260	1,691	7.3	21,569	21,241	1,128	5.3	20,113
BLAINE	13,005	1,257	9.7	11,748	14,118	743	5.3	13,375
BOISE	3,449	379	11.0	3,070	3,478	271	7.8	3,207
BONNER	20,141	2,739	13.6	17,401	20,585	1,998	9.7	18,587
BONNEVILLE	49,692	3,465	7.0	46,227	50,980	2,426	4.8	48,554
BOUNDARY	4,843	754	15.6	4,089	4,306	508	11.8	3,798
BUTTE	1,473	93	6.3	1,380	1,408	70	5.0	1,338
CAMAS	610	67	11.1	542	671	56	8.4	614
CANYON	82,277	9,210	11.2	73,067	85,108	7,406	8.7	77,702
CARIBOU	3,900	307	7.9	3,593	3,498	167	4.8	3,330
CASSIA	11,333	749	6.6	10,584	9,935	414	4.2	9,521
CLARK	594	50	8.4	545	522	24	4.7	497
CLEARWATER	3,523	697	19.8	2,826	3,298	400	12.1	2,898
CUSTER	2,515	172	6.8	2,343	2,487	168	6.8	2,319
ELMORE	11,721	999	8.5	10,722	11,134	733	6.6	10,402
FRANKLIN	5,557	385	6.9	5,172	5,917	282	4.8	5,634
FREMONT	5,843	573	9.8	5,270	5,425	407	7.5	5,019
GEM	6,993	851	12.2	6,142	7,058	668	9.5	6,389
GOODING	8,801	612	7.0	8,189	8,497	422	5.0	8,075
IDAHO	7,256	853	11.8	6,403	7,068	734	10.4	6,334
JEFFERSON	11,192	862	7.7	10,330	11,565	635	5.5	10,930
JEROME	10,466	818	7.8	9,648	10,046	591	5.9	9,455
KOOTENAI	72,251	7,312	10.1	64,939	70,788	5,990	8.5	64,798
LATAH	20,161	1,398	6.9	18,763	16,160	757	4.7	15,403
LEMHI	3,787	369	9.8	3,417	3,718	367	9.9	3,351
LEWIS	1,680	110	6.5	1,570	1,647	82	5.0	1,566
LINCOLN	2,722	302	11.1	2,421	2,548	317	12.4	2,231
MADISON	16,115	901	5.6	15,214	15,483	600	3.9	14,883
MINIDOKA	10,399	727	7.0	9,672	9,108	451	4.9	8,658
NEZ PERCE	18,659	1,350	7.2	17,309	18,676	1,025	5.5	17,651
ONEIDA	2,223	120	5.4	2,103	2,212	101	4.6	2,111
OWYHEE	4,191	189	4.5	4,002	4,254	140	3.3	4,114
PAYETTE	10,869	1,142	10.5	9,727	10,482	967	9.2	9,515
POWER	3,495	283	8.1	3,212	3,600	213	5.9	3,387
SHOSHONE	6,069	919	15.2	5,149	6,408	748	11.7	5,660
TETON	4,911	359	7.3	4,552	5,818	188	3.2	5,629
TWIN FALLS	40,122	3,253	8.1	36,868	38,340	2,068	5.4	36,272
VALLEY	4,354	793	18.2	3,561	4,641	574	12.4	4,067
WASHINGTON	4,916	511	10.4	4,406	4,818	390	8.1	4,427
ASOTIN WA	10,245	777	7.6	9,468	10,484	1,066	10.2	9,418

* In thousands

State of Idaho Data

March 2010 Labor Force (preliminary) compared to March 2009 (benchmarked) data (continued from previous page).

Seasonally Adjusted Data LABOR MARKET AREAS	Mar 2009				Mar 2008			
	Civilian Labor Force	# Unem- ployed	% Unem- ployed	Total Employ- ment	Civilian Labor Force	# Unem- ployed	% Unem- ployed	Total Employ- ment
BOISE CITY-NAMPA MSA	290,064	29,278	10.1	260,786	295,486	20,395	6.9	275,091
BURLEY MicSA	21,732	1,475	6.8	20,256	19,043	864	4.5	18,179
COEUR D'ALENE MSA	72,251	7,312	10.1	64,939	70,788	5,990	8.5	64,798
GRANGEVILLE SLMA	8,936	963	10.8	7,974	8,716	816	9.4	7,900
HAILEY SLMA	13,615	1,324	9.7	12,290	14,789	799	5.4	13,990
IDAHO FALLS MSA	60,884	4,327	7.1	56,557	62,545	3,060	4.9	59,485
LEWISTON MSA	28,905	2,127	7.4	26,777	29,160	2,091	7.2	27,069
POCATELLO MSA	43,095	3,703	8.6	39,392	43,962	2,440	5.6	41,522
REXBURG MicSA	21,958	1,474	6.7	20,484	20,908	1,007	4.8	19,902
TWIN FALLS MicSA	50,588	4,072	8.0	46,516	48,385	2,659	5.5	45,726
CITIES								
BOISE	106,730	8,803	8.2	97,927	107,932	6,683	6.2	101,248
CALDWELL	18,475	2,041	11.0	16,433	18,669	1,689	9.0	16,980
COEUR D' ALENE	23,041	2,135	9.3	20,906	22,874	1,622	7.1	21,252
IDAHO FALLS	27,560	1,919	7.0	25,641	27,608	1,257	4.6	26,351
LEWISTON	15,445	968	6.3	14,477	15,396	779	5.1	14,617
MERIDIAN	32,794	2,834	8.6	29,960	33,154	2,184	6.6	30,971
NAMPA	35,753	3,668	10.3	32,085	36,291	3,138	8.6	33,153
POCATELLO	27,505	1,979	7.2	25,526	28,017	1,464	5.2	26,553
POST FALLS	13,385	1,568	11.7	11,817	13,208	1,278	9.7	11,929
REXBURG	21,852	1,563	7.2	20,289	20,998	1,119	5.3	19,878
TWIN FALLS	22,176	1,648	7.4	20,527	22,088	1,160	5.3	20,928
United States*	153,910	15,005	9.7	138,905	154,164	13,310	8.6	140,854

* In thousands

SOURCE: Idaho Department of Labor, Research & Analysis and Public Affairs.

State of Idaho Data — State Economic Indicators

	Mar 2010*	Feb 2010	Mar 2009	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
IDAHO LABOR FORCE ⁽¹⁾					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	757,700	755,500	749,300	0.3	1.1
Unemployment	71,000	71,500	53,600	-0.7	32.5
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	9.4	9.5	7.2		
Total Employment	686,700	684,000	695,700	0.4	-1.3
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	753,800	752,900	743,500	0.1	1.4
Unemployment	74,200	79,300	60,000	-6.4	23.7
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	9.8	10.5	8.1		
Total Employment	679,600	673,600	683,500	0.9	-0.6

U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE⁽²⁾

	9.7	9.7	N/A
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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Claims Activities

Initial Claims ⁽³⁾	13,462	12,982	16,416	3.7	-18.0
Weeks Claimed ⁽⁴⁾	179,497	174,235	228,742	3.0	-21.5

Benefit Payment Activities⁽⁵⁾

Weeks Compensated	158,946	142,456	203,624	11.6	-21.9
Total Benefit \$ Paid	39,595,368	36,050,930	54,858,552	9.8	-27.8
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$249.11	\$253.07	\$269.41	-1.6	-7.5
Covered Employers	48,912	49,408	50,852	-1.0	-3.8
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months ⁽⁴⁾	\$374,114,470	\$389,377,654	\$291,471,476	-3.9	28.4

U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ⁽²⁾	Mar 2010	Feb 2010	Mar 2009	% Change Month	% Change Year
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	213.5	212.5	207.2	0.5%	3.0%
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	217.6	216.7	212.7	0.4%	2.3%

(1) Preliminary estimate

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

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

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

(5) Includes all entitlements/programs, total liable activities.

Northern Idaho Labor Force Data

Coeur d'Alene MSA Labor Force & Employment – Kootenai County

	Mar 2010*	Feb 2010	Mar 2009	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	72,250	71,510	70,970	1.0	1.8
Unemployed	7,310	7,570	5,140	-3.4	42.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	10.1	10.6	7.2		
Total Employment	64,940	63,940	65,830	1.6	-1.4
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	71,570	72,020	69,870	-0.6	2.4
Unemployed	8,510	9,320	6,420	-8.7	32.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	11.9	12.9	9.2		
Total Employment	63,060	62,700	63,450	0.6	-0.6
* Preliminary estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month.					

North Central Idaho Labor Force Data

Lewiston MSA Labor Force & Employment – Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Wash.

	Mar 2010*	Feb 2010	Mar 2009	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	28,910	29,220	29,470	-1.1	-1.9
Unemployment	2,130	2,580	1,890	-17.4	12.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	7.4	8.8	6.4		
Total Employment	26,780	26,640	27,580	0.5	-2.9
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	28,980	29,230	29,500	-0.9	-1.8
Unemployment	2,380	2,710	2,230	-12.2	6.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.2	9.3	7.6		
Total Employment	26,600	26,520	27,270	0.3	-2.5
*Preliminary estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month.					

Southwestern Idaho Labor Force Data

Boise-Nampa MSA Labor Force & Employment — Ada, Canyon, Boise, Gem and Owyhee counties

	Mar 2010*	Feb 2010	Mar 2009	% Change	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	290,100	290,500	291,900	-0.1	-0.6
Unemployment	29,300	29,100	23,400	0.7	25.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	10.1	10.0	8.0		
Total Employment	260,800	261,400	268,500	-0.2	-2.9
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	290,900	289,900	292,600	0.3	-0.6
Unemployment	28,900	30,900	24,800	-6.5	16.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	9.9	10.7	8.5		
Total Employment	262,000	259,000	267,800	1.2	-2.2

Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month.

South Central Idaho Labor Force Data

Twin Falls-Jerome MSA Labor Force & Employment — Twin Falls and Jerome counties

	Mar 2010*	Feb 2010	Mar 2009	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	50,590	49,560	48,260	2.1	4.8
Unemployment	4,070	4,250	2,720	-4.2	49.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.0	8.6	5.6		
Total Employment	46,520	45,310	45,540	2.7	2.2
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	49,360	49,680	46,890	-0.6	5.3
Unemployment	4,250	4,650	3,050	-8.6	39.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.6	9.4	6.5		
Total Employment	45,110	45,030	43,840	0.2	2.9

*Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month.

Southeastern Idaho Labor Force Data

Pocatello MSA Labor Force & Employment — Bannock and Power counties

	Mar 2010*	Feb 2010	% Change From		
			Mar 2009	Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	43,090	44,090	43,250	-2.3	-0.4
Unemployment	3,700	3,760	2,580	-1.6	43.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.6	8.5	6.0		
	39,390	40,330	40,670	-2.3	-3.1
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	43,740	44,090	43,760	-0.8	0.0
Unemployment	3,820	4,070	2,850	-6.1	34.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.7	9.2	6.5		
Total Employment	39,920	40,020	40,910	-0.2	-2.4

*Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month.

East Central Idaho Labor Force Data

Idaho Falls MSA Labor Force & Employment — Bonneville and Jefferson counties

	Mar 2010*	Feb 2010	Mar 2009	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	60,890	61,970	60,460	-1.7	0.7
Unemployment	4,330	4,570	3,210	-5.3	34.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	7.1	7.4	5.3		
Total Employment	56,560	57,400	57,250	-1.5	-1.2
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	61,060	61,050	60,370	0.0	1.1
Unemployment	4,650	4,980	3,700	-6.6	25.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	7.6	8.2	6.1		
Total Employment	56,410	56,070	56,670	0.6	-0.5

*Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month.

2010 Kootenai Construction Projects



IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

- 1. I-90 West Bridge Rehab;** Resurfacing of three I-90 bridges from state line to approximately Idaho Road.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Summer
- 2. US 95 - Wyoming Avenue to State Highway 53;** Reconstruct and widen US 95 from Wyoming Avenue to State Highway 53.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Fall



LAKES HIGHWAY DISTRICT

- 3. Diagonal Road Overlay;** Widen and overlay Diagonal Road starting at Sturgeon Road and ending just west of Ramsey Road.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer
- 4. Lancaster Phase 2 - Lancaster Road from Rimrock Road to English Point Road;** Reconstruct roadway.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall
- 5. Lower East Hayden Lake Road - The Dike to Half Mile Lane;** Maintenance rehabilitation and overlay project.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer
- 6. Avondale Loop, Avon Circle, Trafalgar Street, Kensington Avenue, Merman Drive, Brighton Street, and Thames Court;** Water line installation and paving project.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Fall



WORLEY HIGHWAY DISTRICT

- 7. Conkling Road - 350 feet east of US 95 to Larsen Road;** Install 1.25 miles of reinforced asphalt base.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer
- 8. Cougar Gulch Road - US 95 to Meadowbrook Loop;** Chip seal 3.88 miles of roadway.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer
- 9. Elder Road - US 95 to Washington State Line;** 4.32 mile Cement Reinforced Asphalt Base (CRABS) project.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer
- 10. Greensferry Road - Cougar Gulch Road to Highway District Boundary;** Chip seal 3.16 miles of Greensferry Road.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer

- 11. Kidd Island Road and Hull Loop Intersection Reconstruction;** Reconstruct intersection to meet Highway District standards and address deficiencies.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer

- 12. Loffs Bay Road - Rockford Bay Road West Intersection to Rockford Bay Road East Intersection;** 2.25 mile chip seal project.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer

- 13. Rockford Bay Road - US 95 to Loffs Bay Road;** 1.2 mile chip seal project.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer

- 14. Stach Road from Cougar Gulch Road to end of pavement;** 1.8 mile fog seal project.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer



CITY OF COEUR D'ALENE

- 15. 15th Street and Harrison Avenue Signal;** Install new traffic signal at intersection of 15th Street and Harrison Avenue.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Summer

- 16. Howard Street and Kathleen Avenue Traffic Signal;** Install new traffic signal at the intersection of Howard Street and Kathleen Avenue.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Summer

- 17. Howard Street Extension;** Extend Howard Street to Kathleen Avenue and reconstruct existing Howard Street from Appleway Avenue to Marie Street.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Fall

- 18. Marie Avenue Extension;** Extend Marie Avenue west to Ramsey Road.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Summer

- 19. Mary Lane - 15th Street to 17th Street;** Reconstruct Mary Lane from 15th Street to 17th Street, including installing sewer, storm water runoff, curbing, and paving.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall



POST FALLS HIGHWAY DISTRICT

- 20. Prairie Avenue and McGuire Road;** install roundabout at intersection.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall

- 21. Beck Road Realignment Project;** Realign intersection of Beck Road and Seltice Way for safety reasons, including moving railroad crossing approximately 225 feet east of the current crossing.
Start: Under Construction **Complete:** Summer



- 22. 21st Avenue - Spokane Street to Idaho Street;** Overlay existing roadway.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer

- 23. Frederick Street Improvements - Railroad Avenue to 4th Avenue;** Modernize and widen existing road.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Summer

- 24. Greensferry Road - Rodkey Drive to Plaza Drive;** Roadway improvements and sewer extension from Rodkey Drive to Plaza Drive and roadway overlay from Seltice Way to 3rd Avenue.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Summer

- 25. Idaho Street Widening - Mullan Avenue to 20th Avenue;** Widen, modernize, and overlay Idaho Street.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall

- 26. Maplewood Avenue - Ridgewood Drive to 1st Avenue;** Roadway overlay.
Start: Fall **Complete:** Fall

- 27. Pleasant View Road Improvements;** Intersection and roadway improvement between I-90 and Expo Parkway associated with commercial development.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall

- 28. Ridgewood Drive - Ponderosa Boulevard to 1st Avenue;** Overlay existing roadway pavement.
Start: Fall **Complete:** Fall

- 29. Rodkey Drive - Greensferry Road to end of pavement;** Overlay existing roadway pavement.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer

- 30. William Street - Railroad Avenue to 4th Avenue;** Modernize and widen existing roadway.
Start: Spring **Complete:** Summer

- 31. Pinewood Drive - Ponderosa Boulevard to 1st Avenue;** Overlay existing roadway pavement.
Start: Fall **Complete:** Fall



CITY OF HAYDEN

City of Hayden does not have any 2010 construction projects.



CITY OF RATHDRUM

- 32. SH 41 and Wright Street;** Realignment of Wright and McCartney streets and add left-turn lanes on SH 41, Wright, and McCartney Streets.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Winter

- 33. Mill Street Improvements - SH 53 to Main Street;** Construct raised center median on Mill Street on each side of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall



EAST SIDE HIGHWAY DISTRICT

- 34. Fernan Hill Road Overlay - from City Limits east one mile;** Construct asphalt treated base and overlay.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall

- 35. O'Gara Road Overlay - SH 97 to Chief Road;** Overlay 1.3 miles of roadway.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall

- 36. Fernan Lake Road - beginning of road at milepost 2.2 to milepost 10.7;** Reconstruct or resurface 10.7 miles of roadway, including straightening curves, widening roadway, and installing safety improvements.
Start: Under construction **Complete:** 2011

- 37. Bull Run Road - Roadway Restoration Project;** Restoration of Bull Run Road from the rails to trails crossing of the Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes southeast 730 lineal feet.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Fall



CITY OF DALTON GARDENS

- 38. Hanley Avenue Phase 2;** Upgrade Hanley Avenue between Davenport and 15th streets, including rebuilding the road base, resurfacing the roadway, and installing bike paths on both sides of road.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer

- 39. Hanley Avenue Phase 3;** Upgrade Hanley Avenue between Government Way and 4th Street, including rebuilding the road base, resurfacing the roadway, and installing bike paths on both sides of road.
Start: Summer **Complete:** Summer

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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