

The Labour Market Monitor is an overview of labour market information for the **Northwest Ontario Economic Region** which includes the districts of Thunder Bay, Rainy River and Kenora. The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report focusing on labour market information produced by Ontario Region, Service Canada Labour Market and Socio-Economic Information Directorate. For further information contact us at: [lmi-imt@workingincanada.gc.ca](mailto:lmi-imt@workingincanada.gc.ca)

### **Labour Force Trends**

Employment in the Northwest Ontario economic region decreased by 10,100 from February 2010 to February 2011. Almost all job losses were in full-time employment (-9,600). During this period, fewer people looked for work leading to a decline in the size of the labour force (-8,500) and a drop in the participation rate by 4.6 percentage points to 58.7%. An increase in the number of unemployed people caused the unemployment rate to increase by 2.1 percentage points from 6.7% in February 2010 to 8.8% in February 2011. Over the same period, the provincial unemployment rate declined from 8.8% to 7.8%.

For more information, please visit the Statistics Canada website at:  
<http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/lfss05d-eng.htm>

### **Labour Market News by Industry**

#### **Construction**

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) announced more than \$14 million in funding towards the renovation and construction of housing units in 36 First Nation communities in Ontario.

Construction on a new Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) forensics laboratory in Kenora is scheduled to begin this summer. The 14,250 square-foot building will replace the current

facility on Water Street and will include a lab area, chemical room, photo studio, storage system, multi-media room and vehicle examination garage. The project is expected to be completed by the fall of 2012.

#### **Education Services**

A new learning centre has officially opened at the Matawa First Nations in Thunder Bay. The 3,000 square-foot centre is aimed at providing services to First Nations students who wish to complete a high school education.

#### **Forestry**

The province of Ontario has begun to announce successful proposals of the Stage II: Provincial Wood Supply Competitive Process. To date, 11 companies have received wood supply offers, estimated to create over 160 jobs and sustain an additional 400 in Northern Ontario.

[www.news.ontario.ca/mndmf/en/2011/02/creating-jobs-in-ontarios-forestry-industry.html](http://www.news.ontario.ca/mndmf/en/2011/02/creating-jobs-in-ontarios-forestry-industry.html)

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources awarded Superior Helicopters Canada Inc. a two-year contract for aviation, forest fire and emergency services in Northern Ontario. As part of the agreement, the Dryden-based company will station three of its helicopters in Wawa, Chapleau, and Cochrane.

#### **Manufacturing**

AbitibiBowater Inc. announced paper and market pulp production at the Fort Frances mill was halted during a two-week period ending March 7, affecting 230 employees. Another two-week temporary shutdown from March 28 to April 11 will affect over 500 employees. The company cites poor market conditions for both temporary shutdowns.

#### **Mining**

Laurentian Goldfields Ltd. and Kinross Gold Corporation have commenced a diamond drilling program at their jointly-owned Goldpines North Joint Venture site. The property is southeast of Red Lake.

Rainy River Resources Ltd. and Northern Superior Resources Inc. announced final positive assay results from the 2010 Phase One diamond drill program from the Ti-pa-haa-kaaning (TPK) gold property. The companies also announced the beginning of the 2011 diamond drilling and exploration program at the site. The property is northeast of Pickle Lake.

Soldi Ventures Inc. is beginning Phase One of a drilling program on its Rainy River and Cameron Lake properties. The company specializes in gold exploration.

#### **Public Administration**

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout received over \$22,000 from the Northern Communities Investment Readiness (NCIR) initiative.

#### **Trade, Wholesale and Retail**

A new gift shop, the Atikokan Trading Post, has opened in Atikokan.

Northern Sights Studio Gallery and Coffee House opened its doors in Red Rock, east of Thunder Bay.

*Note: In preparing this bulletin, Service Canada has taken care to provide clients with labour market information from reliable sources that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since the bulletin was published. Readers are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this bulletin does not necessarily reflect official policies of Service Canada.*