

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

Labour Force Trends

Employment in the Northwest Ontario economic region decreased by 6,900 from June 2010 to June 2011. The majority of job losses were in part-time employment (-4,000). During this period, fewer people looked for work leading to a decline in the size of the labour force (-7,000) and a drop in the participation rate by 3.7 percentage points to 59.6%. An increase in the number of unemployed people caused the unemployment rate to rise from 7.4% in June 2010 to 7.8% in June 2011. Over the same period, the provincial unemployment rate declined from 8.8% to 7.9%.

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

Taranis Contracting Group Ltd. was awarded an \$11.4-million contract to make improvements to 37 kilometres of Highway 11/17 west of Kakabeka Falls. Construction is set to begin this summer and will create 80 jobs.

Miller Northwest Ltd. was awarded a \$5.5-million contract to reconstruct 14 kilometres of Highway 17 east of Upsala. Construction is set to begin this summer and will create 40 jobs.

Wahkaihanun Futures Corp. under the First Nation, Inuit, Métis Urban and Rural Housing Rental Component Program, and in partnership with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services and the Government of Ontario, announced the groundbreaking for a 10-unit apartment complex for off-reserve Aboriginals. Construction is scheduled to begin in early July and be completed by late fall.

Education Services

Construction on a new education and training facility at Confederation College is nearing completion. The Regional Education Alliance for Community Health (REACH) will prepare students for careers in health care and community services such as police foundations and early childhood education. The college will hire five to 10 new faculty members at its Thunder Bay campus.

Forestry

Several forestry companies in Northwest Ontario have been awarded wood supply offers from the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry through the Stage II: Provincial Wood Supply Competitive Process.

- AbiBow Canada Inc. in Thunder Bay accepted two offers totalling 621,600 cubic metres per year. The company will construct a wood pellet facility in the Fort William First Nation Industrial Park as well as a condensing turbine. The wood supply protects 470 jobs and allows the company to create an additional 38 in the region. The company has also accepted an offer for 317,500 cubic metres per year at the Fort Frances location, protecting 584 jobs.
- Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd. accepted 72,000 cubic metres of wood, creating 43 new jobs and protecting 157 jobs in Kenora.
- Wincrief Forestry Products L.P. accepted an offer of 17,000 cubic metres per year, creating 12 new jobs at its modular housing plant in Kenora.

- Precision Wood Design Inc. was awarded 33,000 cubic metres of wood, creating six new jobs and protecting four in the Murillo area.
- Giiishtoon Cedar Products Ltd. was awarded 11,000 cubic metres per year and will construct a sawmill, creating four new jobs in the Murillo area.

The Government of Ontario announced \$3.6 million in funding for 240 northerners to prepare them for jobs in the forestry sector and provide employers with a trained labour force that can meet workplace demands.

Apprenticeship training and on-the-job technical training in Dryden will prepare participants for jobs with Two Feathers Forest Products or as process operators in the forestry sector. The project will be run in partnership with Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, Wood Tech Group Finland Oy Ltd., Seven Generations Institute and Confederation College. Applications for the Northern Training Partnership Fund submitted to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) are reviewed quarterly. For further information and eligibility criteria please visit:

http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/Northern_Prosperty_Fund_Guidelines.pdf

Information and Culture

Long Lake #58 First Nation announced the

opening of a new multi-purpose centre located near the community of Longlac. The new facility will serve as a training centre, community hall and recreation centre for youth and elders. The multiplex is expected to create part-time employment in the community.

Utilities

The Government of Ontario invested \$4.2 million in the Bio-Energy Learning and Research Centre at Confederation College in Thunder Bay. The new biomass energy centre will provide students and researchers with lab space for hands-on training in renewable fuel technologies. The project is expected to create 25 jobs.

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.