7-1-2010

Monthly Economic, July 2010

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information

Craig Holland Manager

Labor Market Information, Northern/East District

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalmaine.com/cwri_docs

Recommended Citation

Maine Department of Labor; Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information; and Holland, Craig Manager, "Monthly Economic, July 2010" (2010). Center for Workforce Research and Information Documents. Paper 276.

http://digitalmaine.com/cwri_docs/276

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Labor at Maine State Documents. It has been accepted for inclusion in Center for Workforce Research and Information Documents by an authorized administrator of Maine State Documents. For more information, please contact statedocs@maine.gov.
National/State News

The not seasonally-adjusted statewide unemployment rate was 7.9 percent in May, down from 8.0 percent a year ago. Not seasonally-adjusted rates ranged from 6.6 percent in Cumberland and Sagadahoc Counties to 11.6 percent in Piscataquis County. Over the year rates decreased in twelve counties and increased in four coastal counties. The largest declines were in western and eastern rim regions, particularly Washington, Piscataquis, Oxford, and Somerset counties. The largest increases were in Waldo and Hancock counties.

Among metropolitan areas, unemployment rates were lower than the statewide average in Portland-South Portland-Biddeford (6.6 percent) and Bangor (7.5 percent), and close to the average in Lewiston-Auburn (8.1 percent).

The preliminary unemployment rate for Maine was 8.0 percent in May, not significantly different from revised rates of 8.1 percent in April and 8.2 percent a year ago. The number of unemployed totaled 56,500, down 1,300 from a year ago. The national unemployment rate was 9.7 percent, down slightly over the month from 9.9 percent and up slightly from 9.4 percent a year ago.

There were 589,900 nonfarm payroll jobs in May, up 4,000 over the month, largely reversing the decline reported for April.

Summary for North/East District

The May/April local Labor Market Area unemployment rates were as follows: Bangor MSA 7.5% from 7.8%; Calais 12.1% from 13.1%; Dover-Foxcroft 11.5% from 12.7%; Ellsworth 8.4% from 9.8%; Houlton 11.5% from 12.9%; Lincoln 11.2% from 12.0%; Machias 9.6% from 10.1%; Madawaska 9.6% from 10.7%; Millinocket 14.4% from 15.8%; Pittsfield 11.4% from 12.6%; and Presque Isle 10.3% from 10.9%.

Detailed analysis for each Labor Market Area follows in alphabetical order.
Bangor MSA continued from page 1

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 8.5 percent in February 2010 and the lowest was 2.6 percent in August 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 7.5 percent in 2010. The lowest May rate on record was 3.1 percent in 2000.

Characteristics of the insured unemployed (weeks compensated for those people collecting state unemployment checks) for the month of May showed that 17 percent of claimants were from construction, 11 percent from retail trade and 9 percent from manufacturing. As far as occupation of separation 20 percent were from construction and extraction occupations, 14 percent from office and related occupations and 9 percent from transportation and material moving occupations. Sixty-eight percent of the insured claimants were male. In terms of family responsibility 50 percent were primary wage earners, 32 percent lived alone, and 18 percent were secondary wage earners. As far as reasons for unemployment sixty-three percent of the claimants said they were on temporary layoff, 18 percent were on permanent layoff, and 19 percent said they left their jobs voluntarily. Eighty-six percent had at least a high school education 33 percent had some post-secondary education. Twelve percent of the claimants were veterans.

Firm Update

The U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Institute of Standards and Technology, has announced it had awarded $12.4 million to the University of Maine at Orono’s Advanced Structures and Composites Center for a testing facility and laboratory next to the composites center. The grant will be used for construction costs for the Advanced Nanocomposites in Renewable Energy Laboratory, known as ANREL, where composite materials and components for offshore wind turbines will be developed and tested. (Bangor Daily News – January 9, 2010)

Nonfarm Employment Jobs (jobs physically located in the area)

Over-the-month, nonfarm jobs in the Bangor MSA increased by 750 jobs to 64,610 between April and May 2010. In the services sector educational and healthcare services lost 20 jobs while information services decreased by 10 jobs. Retail trade increased by 130 jobs leisure services gained 120 jobs and professional and technical services and gained 110 jobs. Other services increased by 40 jobs, wholesale trade increased by 20 jobs and transportation and warehousing and financial services grew by 10 jobs each. In goods producing sectors construction gained 310 jobs and manufacturing decreased by 150 jobs and natural resources gained 50 jobs. Government employment increased by 130 jobs.

Over-the-year, nonfarm employment lost 1,050 jobs. In the services sectors retail trade decreased by 240 jobs and leisure services dropped 120 jobs. Wholesale trade lost 90 jobs, transportation and warehousing lost 80 jobs, financial services dropped 80 jobs information services and professional and technical services lost 70 jobs each. Education and healthcare services dropped by 10 jobs. Other Services gained 10 jobs. In goods producing sectors construction lost 60 jobs, natural resources gained 40 jobs and manufacturing lost 390 jobs. Government employment increased by a total of 110 jobs.

Eastern Maine Development Corp. has received $2.1 million in stimulus funds to launch a green construction skills training program that could train over 100 people. The $2,109,088 grant from U.S. Department of Labor will set up a program to offer the National Center for Construction Education and Research curriculum that teaches workers about green building and retrofitting. EMDC
will partner with other entities to run the program, including Eastern Maine Community College, Maine Housing, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1253 and United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 716.

Brewer has received a $1.28 million earmark to help develop the Brewer Business and Commerce Park just prior the first tenant, Maine Liquid Methane Fuels LLC gained unanimous Brewer Planning Board approval. The earmark is part of the $447 billion omnibus spending bill that was signed into law by President Barack Obama on Dec. 16, 2009. The federal grant funds require a local match. (Bangor Daily News – February 6, 2010)

Encouraged by the success of its loan production office in Bangor, Katahdin Trust Co. has announced that it will open a full-service bank there later this year, and open another branch in Hampden. Katahdin Trust now operates a loan production office on Stillwater Avenue in Bangor.

Two Bangor region airports will receive more than $2.67 million in federal grants to upgrade their facilities. The Federal Aviation Administration through the U.S. Department of Transportation will provide $2,544,083 to Bangor International Airport to rehabilitate its cargo apron to restore the pavement’s strength. Also, Dewitt Field-Old Town Municipal Airport will receive $130,000 to purchase a loader for snow removal.

A new Department of Veterans Affairs health clinic is now under construction in Bangor. The new 29,000-square-foot community-based outpatient clinic, or CBOC, which will be located beside the Maine Veterans’ Home on land formerly part of the Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center. It is expected to open in the summer of 2011.

A new company has formed to take over an aviation aircraft maintenance facility at Bangor International Airport that previously was run by Telford Aviation. The newly created Maine Aero Services Inc. will assume operations of the maintenance facility. In March, ACC Holdings sold the maintenance portion of Telford to C&L Aerospace, an Australian company that vowed to pull the local aircraft parts and maintenance facility out of recent financial struggles. C&L Aerospace indicated in March that a new corporation would be formed to take over control of the maintenance facility. The deal was contingent on BIA turning over its lease from Telford to Maine Aero Services, which the Bangor City Council approved last week. (Bangor Daily News – April 21, 2010)

The City of Bangor has tapped Pittsfield-based Cianbro Corp. for work related to a proposed $73 million arena in the city. The city council’s finance committee approved giving the $175,000 contract to Cianbro for preconstruction services, including design review, cost control and constructability analysis of the site. City officials earlier this year approved a plan for a new arena with up to 7,400 seats and meeting and conference space. The arena would be Phase I of the project and would cost between $40 million to $55 million, while Phase II, the conference and meeting space, would cost $10 million to $15 million. (Maine Biz – May 19, 2010)

Federal regulators have approved Gardiner-based Savings Bank of Maine’s plan to stave off liquidation, which includes being acquired by a group of investors in order to increase the bank’s capital. The Office of Thrift Supervision which in March ordered the bank to double its capital-to-assets ratio to 10.76% -- has approved the bank’s recapitalization plan, which includes a private stock offering and creating a new holding company to acquire the bank. The holding company, SMB Financial Inc., will take over Savings Bank’s two existing holding companies, with money coming from an outside investment group led by John Everets, chairman of Boston-based Yorkshire Capital, and Willard Soper II, managing director of HFC Associates in Miami. (Maine Biz – May 19, 2010)

A statewide economic development grant is helping a small Bangor biotechnology firm bolster its presence here and abroad. Awarded late last month, the $12,500 seed grant from the Maine Technology Institute is already assisting Trillium Diagnostics. The company produces advanced tests for diagnosing infections and detecting the presence of fetal blood in mothers, a potentially dangerous and life-threatening condition. (Maine Biz – June 17, 2010)

More than 100 people lost their jobs at Carlen Transport. They closed the transportation center because of the economy. Carlen service center will remain open, and a few office staff will stay behind to help with the closing.

Approximately 400 of the nearly 500 workers at Cianbro’s Eastern Manufacturing facility have been moved to other job sites or were laid off as the company’s refinery module project has wrapped up. The last of 51 oil refinery modules created at the Cianbro’s Eastern Manufacturing Facility has been shipped by seafaring barge that took them
to Port Arthur, Texas, marking the completion of the site’s first contract. (Bangor Daily News – June 3, 2010)

**Eastern Maine Medical Center** has announced the layoff of nearly 50 full- and part-time employees, including approximately 23 nurses and about 25 nonclinical staff. The layoffs come after the medical center’s decision in January to offer early retirement to a number of employees with an aim of reducing the work force by 100 positions. (Bangor Daily News – March 4, 2010)

All assets owned by **Vaughn Thibodeau & Sons**, a longtime contractor and concrete business in Greater Bangor area are expected to be sold later this month as the result of foreclosure proceedings. The list of assets includes a concrete and asphalt plant on U.S. Route 1A in Prospect, an asphalt plant on Odlin Road in Hermon, a concrete plant on Route 1A in Hancock, a quarry on Hawes Bridge Road in Prospect, and the Vaughn Thibodeau & Sons office building and garage in Ammo Park in Bangor. (Bangor Daily News – June 2, 2010)

**FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

A University of Maine composite technology used in bridge construction has spawned a new private company in Orono that could employ more than 100 people in five years. **Advanced Infrastructure Technologies** has been formed by Brit Svoboda, a Bangor native who recently returned to the state. AIT will attempt to commercialize the composite bridge construction technology, called “bridge in a backpack,” developed at UMaine’s AEWC Advanced Structures & Composites Center.

The new **Lafayette Family Cancer Center** opened on Whiting Hill in Brewer as Eastern Maine Medical Center officials gathered to dedicate and tour the new facility. The new $42 million facility takes the place of the overcrowded Cancer Care of Maine center on the ground floor at EMMC in Bangor. The third floor of the new building offers office space and will include offices and computer resources for researchers from the Maine Institute for Human Genetics and Health, which is currently headquartered on Sylvan Road near the Bangor Mall. (Bangor Daily News – December 3, 2009)

**Maine Liquid Methane Fuels LLC** has submitted plans to build a liquid methane fuels energy plant to provide customers in the region with a cleaner and cheaper alternative to fossil fuels. The plant, estimated to cost $50 million to build, will be similar to ones in Massachusetts and California, which have used liquefied methane fuels for a number of years. The planned facility would provide 12 to 20 full-time jobs, and others related to transportation. (Bangor Daily News – January 4, 2010)

A new wood pellet venture is establishing itself in Brewer. Construction is under way for the home base of **ReVision Heat LLC**, a new operation formed through ReVision Energy’s wood-fuel heating division that will sell, install and service wood pellet boilers and stoves. And through a joint venture with Corinth Wood Pellets, the company will also offer direct delivery of Maine-made pellets to its customers.
Calais LMA

Area Definition

The Calais Labor Market Area is comprised of Alexander, Baileyville, Bar... Passamaquoddy Pleasant Point Indian Reservation, Pembroke, Perry, Princeton, Robbinston, Talmadge, Topsfield, Vanceboro and Waite.

The local unemployment rate decreased from 13.1 percent in April to 12.1 percent in May. Resident employment increased by 50 to 5,050, while the number of unemployed decreased by 60 to 690. More unemployment claims over-the-month came from the transportation and warehousing and accommodation and food service sector. Fewer were filed from manufacturing construction.

Last May there were 230 fewer residents employed, 320 fewer residents were unemployed and the jobless rate was 17.4 percent.

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 17.4 percent in May 2009 and the lowest was 4.9 percent in September 2001. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 17.4 percent in 2009. The lowest May rate on record was 6.2 percent in 2001.

Firm Update

The completion of New England’s largest wind project was marked with a ribbon-cutting ceremony near Danforth. An addition to the $60 million, 38-turbine Stetson Mountain industrial wind site, Phase II’s 17 1.5-megawatt wind turbines began producing electricity for project owner First Wind of Massachusetts. (Bangor Daily News – April 3, 2010)

Acrobat Research in Calais has reopened, putting more than three dozen people back to work. The company had set up operation in the former ICT Group telemarketing center with employees conducted telephone opinion polls, customer satisfaction surveys and social research.

Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed

The local area characteristics of the insured unemployed (number weeks compensated for those people collecting state unemployment checks) in May 2010 showed that 17 percent of the claimants were separated from transportation and warehousing, 10 percent from agriculture and forestry and 10 percent were from construction. As far as occupation of separation 20 percent from were separated from construction and extraction occupations, 15 percent from transportation and material moving occupations and 10 percent from production occupations. Seventy-two percent of the claimants were male. Sixty-two percent were the primary wage earners for their families, 22 percent lived alone, and 16 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-five percent had at least a high school education and 28 percent had some post-secondary education. Seventy-four percent of the claimants said they were on a temporary lay-off, 21 percent were on permanent layoff, and 5 percent said they left their jobs voluntarily. Fourteen percent were veterans.
The residential services division of Washington County Psychotherapy Associates, which provides crisis, counseling, residential and geriatric services in Washington and Hancock counties is to be acquired soon by Aroostook Mental Health Center and has cut 40 positions at their residential care facility in Calais.

Portland-based Ocean Renewable Power Co., which is conducting studies of hydropower in Cobscook Bay, is hoping to create a business in Eastport that would manufacture parts for hydro turbines. They plan to create the company in the Eastport Business Center, leasing the building from the city in cooperation with the county which could initially generate up to 75 jobs. (Bangor Daily News – April 14, 2010)

DOVER-FOXCROFT LMA

The residential services division of Washington County Psychotherapy Associates, which provides crisis, counseling, residential and geriatric services in Washington and Hancock counties is to be acquired soon by Aroostook Mental Health Center and has cut 40 positions at their residential care facility in Calais.

Portland-based Ocean Renewable Power Co., which is conducting studies of hydropower in Cobscook Bay, is hoping to create a business in Eastport that would manufacture parts for hydro turbines. They plan to create the company in the Eastport Business Center, leasing the building from the city in cooperation with the county which could initially generate up to 75 jobs. (Bangor Daily News – April 14, 2010)

DOVER-FOXCROFT LMA

Area Definition

The Dover-Foxcroft LMA includes Abbott, Atkinson, Beaver Cove, Blanchard unorganized, Bowerbank, Brownville, Cambridge, Dexter, Dover-Foxcroft, Greenville, Guilford, Lake View Plantation, Medford, Milo, Monson, Northwest Piscataquis unorganized, Parkman, Ripley, Sangerville, Sebec, Shirley, Southeast Piscataquis unorganized and Willimantic.

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE TRENDS

The jobless rate in the Dover-Foxcroft LMA decreased from 12.7 percent in April to 11.5 percent in May. Resident employment increased by 60 to 8,210 while the number unemployed decreased 120 to 1,070. Fewer unemployment claims were filed from all major sectors.

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 13.8 percent in April 2009, the lowest was 4.1 percent in July 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 12.9 percent in 2009. The lowest May rate on record was 4.5 percent in 2000.

Last year 8,200 residents were employed, 1,220 residents were unemployed and the unemployment rate was 12.9 percent.
In May 2010, 21 percent of the insured claimants were separated from manufacturing, 16 percent from construction and 8 percent from retail trade. As far as occupation of separation 21 percent from were separated from construction and extraction occupations, 18 percent from production occupations and 13 percent from transportation and material moving occupations. Sixty-six percent of the claimants were male. Fifty percent were the primary wage earners for their families, 30 percent lived alone, and 20 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-nine percent had at least a high school education and 27 percent had some post-secondary education. Sixty-seven percent of the claimants said they were on a temporary layoff, 21 percent were on permanent layoff, and 12 percent said they left their jobs voluntarily. Seven percent were veterans.

The local jobless rate decreased from 9.8 percent in April to 8.4 percent in May. Resident employment increased by 1,360 to 26,200. Unemployment decreased by 300 to 2,410. Fewer unemployment claims over the month came from all other major industry sectors.

In May 2009, 500 more residents were employed and 110 fewer were unemployed and the unemployment rate was 7.9 percent.

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 12.6 percent in February 2010, the lowest was 2.1 percent in August 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 8.4 percent in 2010. The lowest May rate on record was 3.5 percent in 2000.
Ellsworth LMA
continued from page 7

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE* 
*Numbers may not add due to rounding

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INSURED UNEMPLOYED

A sample distribution of insured claimants in May 2010 revealed that 16 percent of the insured claimants were separated from manufacturing, 15 percent separated from accommodation and food services and 15 percent from retail trade. As for occupation of separation 16 percent were separated from construction and extraction occupations, 11 percent from office and related occupations and 11 percent from transportation and material moving occupations. Seventy-one percent said they were on a temporary layoff, 11 percent left their jobs voluntarily, and 18 percent were on a permanent layoff. Fifty-six percent of the claimants were male. Fifty percent were their family’s primary wage earner, 31 percent lived alone, and 19 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-three percent had at least a high school education and 35 percent had at least some post secondary education. Eight percent of the insured claimants were veterans.

The National Center for Research Resources has given Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory $1.73 million to boost high-speed Internet connections between Bangor and Presque Isle and along the coast between Portland and Ellsworth. The improvements are aimed at boosting the data transmission and storage capacity for institutional members of Maine’s Idea Network for Biomedical Research Excellence. By extending existing broadband capacity to Presque Isle, the grant will help position Maine to connect with Canada’s research and education network. (Bangor Daily News – December 3, 2009)

The Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory will construct a $4.5 million wing that will add nearly 7,000 square feet of research space to its Salisbury Cove campus in Bar Harbor. The proposed “Marshall Wing” will allow the laboratory to hire 12 new research staffers, which will increase its work force to 60 employees. (Mount Desert Islander – March 17, 2010)

Maine Coast Memorial Hospital in Ellsworth announced 14 employee layoffs and unspecified reductions in executive compensation, citing backlogged Medicaid reimbursements and economic hard times.

Brooklin Boat Yard has lain off ten of its sixty employees. The company usually works on up to three yachts at a time. It just finished building an eight million dollar yacht but now the boat yard has no large-scale orders to fill.

Bumble Bee Foods, which acquired the former Stinson Seafood plant in Prospect Harbor (Gouldsboro) in 2004 announced the last remaining sardine cannery in the United States would close down for good on April 18, after more than 100 years. With the closure, 128 people are expected to lose their jobs. A reduction in the federal limit on herring was cited as the main reason behind the company’s decision. In 2004, the federal limit on Atlantic herring was 180,000 metric tons, but this year it is only 91,000 metric tons, she said. With such catch restrictions, the plant is no longer economically viable. (Bangor Daily News – February 18, 2010)

Firm Update

Two local scientific laboratories are getting nearly $6 million in federal stimulus money to help with planned construction projects. The Jackson Laboratory and Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory separately announced the grants from National Institutes of Health. Jackson Lab is set to receive $2.1 million to build space for its expanding bioinformatics and computational biology programs.

CLOSINGS/ LAYOFFS (past 12 months)
Citing a surge in sales, The Hinckley Co. expects to begin rehiring some of the 80 employees laid off last fall and earlier this year. Some of those returning employees will go back to work at the Southwest Harbor-based company’s operations in Manset and Trenton. (Mainebiz – October 16, 2009)

Bass Harbor-based Morris Yachts has been awarded a contract to build four 44-foot sailing vessels for the Coast Guard’s Academy to use in its Leadership 44 sail training program. The company plans to start construction on the $800,000 boats by the end of the year. As a result, Morris Yachts will be able to recall as many as 20 employees who were temporarily laid off this summer due to the economic slowdown. (Mainebiz – October 23, 2009)

The Holiday Inn in Ellsworth has reopened as a Ramada Inn. The property has been bought known local hotelier David J. Witham. Extensive renovations have been done to the facility prior to the reopening. The hotel will operate seasonally.

Maine Halibut Farms, which has been under development at the University of Maine Center for Cooperative Aquaculture Research in Franklin, has plans to construct a new facility on land formerly owned by the Navy in the village of Corea. Earlier this month, Gouldsboro’s planning board approved a proposal to subdivide about 26 acres into four commercial lots, one of which has been reserved for Maine Halibut Farms. (Bangor Daily News – April 23, 2010)

Boatbuilding company The Hinckley Co. is hiring back workers it laid off in 2008 and 2009, thanks to a boost in orders. The Southwest Harbor-based company has rehired about 100 people at its boatbuilding plant in Trenton and 35 people at its waterfront facility in Manset this year. (Belfast Republican-Journal - May 17, 2010)

Verso Paper in Bucksport has hired 20 permanent employees and 79 temporary summer employees at the mill.
Houlton LMA  
continued from page 9

effective with January 2000 data was 14.0 percent in April 2009, the lowest was 3.1 percent in September 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 12.4 percent in 2009. The lowest May rate on record was 5.0 percent in 2000.

Last May, 7,620 local residents were employed, 1,080 were unemployed and the local jobless rate was 12.4 percent.

In May, 42 percent of the insured claimants were separated from agriculture and logging, 10 percent from transportation and warehousing and 7 percent from construction. As for occupation of separation 35 percent were separated from farming, fishing and forestry occupations, 17 percent were from transportation and material moving occupations and 9 percent were separated from production occupations. Sixty-one percent said they were on a temporary layoff, 9 percent left their jobs voluntarily and 30 percent were on a permanent layoff.

Eighty-one percent of the claimants were male. Sixty percent were their family’s primary wage earner, 28 percent lived alone, and 12 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-four percent had at least a high school education and 22 percent had at least some post-secondary education. Ten percent of the insured claimants were veterans.

Firm Update

Employees at a local trucking company that closed in February as a result of the downturn in the pulp and paper industry are now eligible for federal assistance to tap into re-employment services. Little Rock Express Inc. is eligible to apply for Trade Adjustment Assistance. The trucking company supplied freight trucking services to Fraser Paper. Trade Adjustment Assistance is a U.S. Department of Labor program that helps workers who have lost their jobs as a result of increased imports or a shift of production outside of the U.S. The assistance provides trade-affected workers with a variety of re-employment services and benefits to help them find new jobs and get back to work. (Bangor Daily News – May 26, 2010)

CLOSINGS/LAYOFFS  
(past 12 months)

The National Starch and Chemical Co. plant in this Aroostook County town has ceased production in June, laying off 37 workers, as part of efforts to streamline the company’s continental manufacturing operations. National Starch and Chemical Co. is a member of the ICI Group, a worldwide manufacturer of adhesives, specialty polymers, natural polymers and electronic materials. It has operated the Island Falls facility since 1976. The Island Falls plant was built in the 1950s by a group of area farmers to make starch from potatoes. Since then, the facility, located on Burleigh Street along the shore of the West Branch of the Mattawamkeag River, has changed hands three times, the latest in 1997 when ICI bought National Starch for $8 million.
Lincoln LMA

Area Definition

The Lincoln LMA includes Burlington, Carroll Plantation, Chester, Drew, Lakeville, Lee, Lincoln, Prentiss, Springfield, Twombly unorganized, Webster, Whitney unorganized, and Winn.

The local jobless rate decreased from 12.0 percent in April to 11.2 percent in May. Resident employment decreased by 10 to 3,210, while unemployment dropped by 30 to 410. Fewer claims for unemployment were filed over-the-month from agriculture and forestry, construction and manufacturing. More unemployment claims were filed from wholesale trade, accommodation and food services and healthcare and social services.

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 14.7 percent in February 2004, the lowest was 3.9 percent in August 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 13.4 percent in 2004. The lowest May rate on record was 5.7 percent in 2000.

Last May 3,220 local residents were employed, and 480 were unemployed, and the local jobless rate was 13.1 percent.

Firm Update

Construction is well underway at the former Lake Mall site in Lincoln on a $4.07 million, 24-unit senior housing complex that will fill the last of eight Main Street properties devastated by arson in late 2002. Called Lakeview Senior Housing, the building will be located at Main Street and West Broadway will be about 15,000 square feet.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INSURED UNEMPLOYED

In May 2010, 24 percent of the insured claimants were from agriculture and logging, 10 percent were separated from healthcare and social services and 10 percent were from transportation and warehousing. As for occupation of separation, 22 percent were separated from farming, fishing and forestry occupations, 20 percent from transportation and material moving occupations, and 10 percent were separated from production occupations. Seventy-four percent said they were on a temporary layoff, 10 percent left their jobs voluntarily, and 16 percent were on a permanent layoff. Seventy percent of the claimants were male. Sixty-five percent were their family’s primary wage earner, 21 percent lived alone, and 14 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-nine percent had at least a high school education and 23 percent had at least some post secondary education. Twelve percent of the insured claimants were veterans.

Sargent Materials, a subsidiary of Sargent Corp., has purchased the concrete ready-mix plants of G.E. Goding. The purchase includes four ready-mix plants located in Lincoln, Millinocket, Woodland and East Machias, as well as several aggregate resources in various locations in northern and eastern Maine. Sargent intends to immediately begin refurbishment of the shuttered plants in Lincoln and East Machias, followed by rehabilitation of the Millinocket plant, in the meantime evaluating the long-term viability of the plant in Woodland.

(Bangor Daily News – January 6, 2010)
Evergreen Wind Power LLC, a subsidiary of First Wind of Massachusetts, hopes to spend $22 million to build the 40-turbine Rollins Wind project in the towns of Burlington, Lee, Lincoln and Winn. It could produce as much as 60 megawatts of electricity annually, enough to power 23,000 New England homes.

PK Floats in Lincoln one of the three largest companies worldwide that specialize in amphibious floats plans on hiring five new workers over the next three months. That should increase its work force to 15 full-timers producing the company’s 11 types of airplane floats.

Machias LMA

Area Definition


The local jobless rate decreased from 10.1 percent in April to 9.6 percent in May. Resident employment increased by 90 to 7,270 while unemployment decreased by 40 to 770. Fewer claims for unemployment were filed over-the-month from agriculture and forestry, construction and manufacturing. More unemployment claims were filed from retail trade and transportation and warehousing.

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 12.8 percent in February 2010, the lowest was 3.1 percent in August 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 9.6 percent in 2010. The lowest May rate on record was 4.3 percent in 2000.

Last May 7,230 local residents were employed, and 720 were unemployed, and the local jobless rate was 9.1 percent.
In May 2010, 31 percent of the insured claimants were from manufacturing, 11 percent were separated from retail trade and 11 percent from wholesale trade. As for occupation of separation, 21 percent were separated from transportation and material moving occupations, 18 percent from production occupations, and 14 percent were separated from construction and extraction occupations. Seventy-five percent said they were on a temporary layoff, 9 percent left their jobs voluntarily, and 16 percent were on a permanent layoff. Sixty percent of the claimants were male. Forty-nine percent were their family’s primary wage earner, 32 percent lived alone, and 19 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-one percent had at least a high school education and 26 percent had at least some post secondary education. Fifteen percent of the insured claimants were veterans.

Cooke Aquaculture has opened its new salmon processing plant in Machiasport and has exceeded its original expected number of employees. The Blacks Harbour, New Brunswick based Cooke, which operates in Maine as True North Maine Inc., anticipated opening in early 2009 and employ approximately 80 people. The company now has approximately 134 employees at its Machiasport facility working at the plant. The plant, which Cooke acquired in 2004 from Atlantic Salmon of Maine, currently processes 20,000 pounds of salmon a day. It makes salmon fillets for customers in the U.S. market.

Facing a significant drop in patient volume over the last year, Down East Community Hospital in Machias has cut approximately $1 million from its operating budget. The cuts reflect the elimination of four full-time, non-physician positions and will result in a handful of unfilled positions remaining unfilled. The rest of the cuts will be made through a reduction in hours for an undetermined number of staff members. Down East Community Hospital was placed in receivership in July with Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems of Brewer taking over operations after a number of investigations into clinical and administrative complaints that spanned nearly two years. (Bangor Daily News – January 22, 2010)

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 11.0 percent in March 2009, the lowest was 2.5 percent in August 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 9.6 percent in 2010. The lowest May rate on record was 3.8 percent in 2000 and 2001.

Last May 2,690 local residents were employed, 250 were unemployed, and the local jobless rate was 8.4 percent.
In May, 25 percent of the insured claimants were separated from administration and support services, 15 percent from manufacturing and 12 percent from forestry and logging. As for occupation of separation, 18 percent were separated from production occupations, 15 percent from office and related occupations, and 12 percent were separated from farming, fishing and forestry occupations. Seventy-seven percent said they were on a temporary layoff, 5 percent left their jobs voluntarily, and 18 percent were on a permanent layoff. Seventy-one percent of the claimants were male. Fifty-seven percent were their family’s primary wage earner, 25 percent lived alone, and 18 percent were secondary wage earners. Ninety-four percent had at least a high school education and 43 percent had at least some post secondary education. Nine percent of the insured claimants were veterans.

The local jobless rate decreased from 15.8 percent in April to 14.4 percent in May. Resident employment increased by 30 to 3,310, while unemployment dropped by 60 to 560. More unemployment claims were filed over-the-month from agriculture and logging, transportation and warehousing and administration and support services. Fewer claims were filed from manufacturing and accommodation and food services.

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 30.1 percent in May 2003, the lowest was 4.2 percent in August and September 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 30.1 percent in 2003. The lowest May rate on record was 4.9 percent in 2000.
Millinocket LMA

continued from page 14

In May 2009, 3,270 local residents were employed, and 680 were unemployed, and the local jobless rate was 17.1 percent.

In May 2010 of workers separated by industry, 19 percent of the insured claimants were from agriculture and logging, 19 percent from the manufacturing sector and 15 percent from construction. As for occupation of separation 17 percent were separated from construction and extraction occupations, 14 percent from farming, fishing and forestry occupations and 14 percent were separated from production occupations. Seventy-three percent said they were on a temporary layoff, 4 percent left their jobs voluntarily, and 23 percent were on a permanent layoff. Seventy-eight percent of the claimants were male. Sixty-five percent were their family’s primary wage earner, 21 percent lived alone, and 14 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-six percent had at least a high school education and 21 percent had at least some post-secondary education. Nine percent of the insured claimants were veterans.

Firm Update

Ohio-based Scotts Miracle-Gro Co. will expand its $2.5 million plant in the Nicatou Industrial Park in Medway in January with new mulch and fertilizer products. The plant, which employs 30 full-time workers, will not expand its work force to produce the additional lines of product. (Bangor Daily News – November 4, 2009)

The Katahdin Times in Millinocket succumbed to plummeting national and local economies and a sharp downturn in advertising forcing the Katahdin region’s oldest weekly newspaper to close. Three full-time workers were laid off. Several independent contractors also lost work.
Pittsfield LMA

Area Definition

The Pittsfield LMA includes Burnham, Corinna, Detroit, Harmony, Hartland, Kingsbury Plantation, Palmyra, Pittsfield, Saint Albans, Troy and Wellington.

The local jobless rate decreased from 12.6 percent in April to 11.4 percent in May. Resident employment decreased by 20 to 6,640, while unemployment decreased by 110 to 850. Fewer unemployment claims were filed over-the-month from construction and manufacturing. More claims came from wholesale trade and administration and support services.

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area became effective with January 2000 data was 15.3 percent in March 2009, the lowest was 3.3 percent in August 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 11.8 percent in 2009. The lowest May rate on record was 4.1 percent in 2000.

Last May 6,610 local residents were employed, and 890 were unemployed, and the local jobless rate was 11.8 percent.

In May 2010, 22 percent of the insured claimants were from manufacturing, 17 percent from construction and 10 percent from administration and support services. As for occupation of separation, 22 percent were separated from production occupations, 19 percent were separated from construction and extraction occupations and 15 percent from office and related occupations. Sixty-five percent said they were on a temporary layoff, 18 percent left their jobs voluntarily, and 17 percent were on a permanent layoff. Sixty-one percent of the claimants were male. Fifty-four percent were their family’s primary wage earner, 21 percent lived alone, and 25 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-eight percent had at least a high school education and 25 percent had at least some post-secondary education. Eleven percent of the insured claimants were veterans.

General Electric Infrastructure Security in Pittsfield has laid off 6 employees in mid June. The plant makes fire and light safety products and employed about 425 workers. The company said cutbacks are needed because sales are down.
Presque Isle LMA

Area Definition


The local jobless rate decreased from 10.9 percent in April to 10.3 percent in May. Resident employment decreased by 120 to 21,670, while unemployment dropped by 180 to 2,480. Over-the-month an increased number of unemployment claims were filed from agriculture and logging, retail trade and transportation and warehousing while fewer claims came from manufacturing and construction.

The highest monthly unemployment rate recorded here since new labor market area configurations became effective with January 2000 data was 11.1 percent in April 2009, the lowest was 3.1 percent in September and October 2000. The highest May unemployment rate recorded in this area was 10.5 percent in 2009. The lowest May rate on record was 4.4 percent in 2000.

Last May 21,770 local residents were employed, 2,540 were unemployed, and the local jobless rate was 10.5 percent.

Firm Update

Twelve employees of a St. David trucking company are now eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance. The announcement regarding employees of Little River Transport came after confirmation from the U.S. Department of Labor. Trade Adjustment Assistance helps workers who have lost their jobs as a result of increased imports or a shift of production outside the U.S. TAA provides qualified trade-affected workers with job search and relocation allowances, occupational training, education assistance and other services.

In May, 28 percent of the insured claimants were from agriculture and logging, 11 percent from manufacturing and 10 percent from administration and support services. As for occupation of separation, 23 percent were separated from farming, fishing and forestry, 15 percent from transportation and material moving occupations and 13 percent from production occupations. Seventy percent said they were on a temporary layoff, 10 percent left their jobs voluntarily, and 20 percent were on a permanent layoff. Seventy-two percent of the claimants were male. Fifty-three percent were their family’s primary wage earner, 29 percent lived alone, and 18 percent were secondary wage earners. Eighty-three percent had at least a high school education and 23 percent had at least some post secondary education. Seven percent of the insured claimants were veterans.

Two of Maine’s larger electric utilities would merge under an agreement announced, increasing the impetus for a north-south power transmission line for wind farms. In a deal valued at about $108 million, BHE Holdings Inc., parent company of the state’s second-largest electric utility, Bangor Hydro Electric Co., plans to buy Maine & Maritimes Corp., which owns Maine Public Service Co., the state’s third-largest electricity provider. The two utilities would retain their separate names, and their rates would continue to be established separately. Customers would not see any immediate changes after the merger. Bangor Hydro Electric has about 115,000 customers in eastern and central Maine. Maine Public Service Co. has 36,000 customers in far northern Maine. Central Maine Power Co., with 600,000 customers, is the state’s largest utility.
About 20 workers laid off from a northern Maine trucking company are now eligible for federal assistance. Workers laid off from J.J. Bouchard Inc. in Van Buren can receive federal aid through the Trade Adjustment Assistance program. The U.S. Department of Labor investigation found the 20 workers lost their jobs as a result of trade-related losses in the pulp and paper industry. The DOL’s TAA program provides re-employment services and benefits to employees who lose their jobs because of foreign competition.

Employees at Northern Maine Medical Center in Fort Kent have been affected by cost-saving measures. Nineteen employees have been laid off permanently while an additional 32 have seen a reduction in work hours and eighteen open positions will remain unfilled. Northern Maine Medical Center is a not-for-profit community hospital and currently employs about 600 people in facilities that include an acute care hospital, a long-term care facility, wellness clinics and a psychiatric unit.

A Limestone sign company has furloughed indefinitely about 50 workers at its plant in the Loring Commerce Center. Pattison Sign Group was forced to idle the plant after five years in operation due to the sagging economy. Pattison Sign Group is the largest on-premise sign and visual communication company in Canada and second-largest in North America. Those workers have now been certified eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance.

First Wind of Massachusetts, the state’s largest wind power developer has filed an application to build a 51-megawatt facility in Oakfield by October 2009. Components of 20 turbines already are on the site and residents voted 51-0 at their March 23 town meeting to approve pursuing a tax-increment financing deal with First Wind. The project will consist of as many as 34 General Electric 1.5-megawatt turbines that will create enough electricity for the New England grid to power more than 20,000 homes.

Synergy Solutions, a nationally recognized outsource call center business specializing in customer relations and management has shut down its Pleasant Street facility in Fort Kent. Approximately 45 people are out of work now that the business has closed. The shutdown comes on the heels of a major layoff last month.

Irving Specialties, a subsidiary of Irving Woodlands based out of New Brunswick has closed in Fort Kent. Operating in a 13,300-square-foot, town-owned warehouse in the industrial park, the company manufactured cedar products, including flower boxes and decorative fencing made from local lumber and employed up to 20 people for 21 years. (Bangor Daily News – May 24, 2010)

CCH Small Firm Services announced that it will open a new headquarters facility in Kennesaw, Ga., later this year, affecting the 70 employees in its Caribou office. CCH provides tax and accounting software, research and training to more than 45,000 small firms in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. According to the company no jobs will be lost as a result of the move. The 70 Caribou employees will move by July 2012. (Bangor Daily News – February 27, 2010)