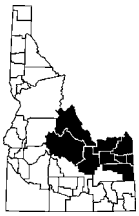

NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

May's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) increased two-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 3.6 percent as seen in Northeast Table 1. Of the four counties in the LMA, all showed increases of two-tenths of a percentage point except for Butte County, which showed an increase of eight-tenths of a percentage point. Year-over-year, the LMA's rate remained unchanged while the four counties (Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties) showed very little change, again with the exception of Butte County, which decreased 1.3 percentage points. The unemployment rate for Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, remained unchanged at 3.3 percent over the month, but decreased one-tenth of a percentage point over the year. The LMA's rate was 1.0 percentage point lower than the state's rate of 4.6 percent and 2.0 percentage points lower than the national rate of 5.6 percent.

Of the other six counties in Northeast Idaho, Clark County showed the largest monthly decrease—a 1.3 percentage point decrease to a 5.5 percent rate. Teton County showed the highest gain of seven-tenths of a percentage point for a 3.7 percent rate. Year-over-year, changes were minimal except in Clark County, which gained 1.5 percentage points. Madison County's rate remained unchanged at 1.6 percent. Unemployment rates ranged from Madison's 1.6 percent to Custer's 6.5 percent.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs increased by 1,470 over the month to 67,310 due mostly to increases in *Construction* (440 jobs), *Professional & Business Services* (250 jobs), and *Leisure & Hospitality* (230 jobs). Warmer weather and the end of the school year opened the way for outdoor construction projects and vacationing, and all three industries normally show increases at this time. Losses were not noted in any major industry over the month. Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased 2,140 jobs, with increases in *Construction* (680 jobs), *Trade (*600 jobs), *Professional & Business Services* (490 jobs), *Government Administration* (450 jobs), and *Educational & Health Services* (490 jobs) outpacing losses in *Manufacturing* (-560 jobs) and *Other Services* (-240 jobs). Losses in *Manufacturing* (-560) came from *Food Manufacturing* and *Other Manufacturing* sectors equally while *Machinery Manufacturing* lost 40 jobs. Northeast Idaho *Manufacturing* is greatly affected by agriculture and changes in the national economy, which have both been rather unsteady over the last several years.

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties

	May 2004*	Apr 2004	May 2003	% Change From Last Month	% Change From Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	87,320	86,720	83,580	0.7	4.5
Unemployment	3,110	2,910	2,980	6.9	4.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.6	3.4	3.6		
Total Employment	84,200	83,810	80,600	0.5	4.5
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	87,330	85,490	83,550	2.2	4.5
Unemployment	2,580	2,750	2,470	-6.2	4.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.0	3.2	3.0		
Total Employment	84,750	82,740	81,080	2.4	4.5
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs - NAICS**	67,310	65,840	65,170	2.2	3.3
Goods-Producing Industries	10,250	9,760	10,130	5.0	1.2
Natural Resources & Mining	70	60	70	16.7	0.0
Construction	5,330	4,890	4,650	9.0	14.6
Manufacturing	4,850	4,810	5,410	0.8	-10.4
Food Manufacturing	2,790	2,800	3,060	-0.4	-8.8
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	280	260	260	7.7	7.7
Machinery Manufacturing	400	410	440	-2.4	-9.1
Other Manufacturing	1,380	1,340	1,650	3.0	-16.4
Service-Providing Industries	57,060	56,080	55,040	1.7	3.7
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	15,680	15,510	14,980	1.1	4.7
Wholesale Trade	5,370	5,350	5,120	0.4	4.9
Retail Trade	8,440	8,300	8,090	1.7	4.3
Utilities	120	120	120	0.0	0.0
Transportation	1,750	1,740	1,650	0.6	6.1
Information	980	970	980	1.0	0.0
Financial Activities	2,220	2,190	2,170	1.4	2.3
Professional & Business Services	12,340	12,090	11,850	2.1	4.1
Educational & Health Services	6,840	6,780	6,350	0.9	7.7
Leisure & Hospitality	5,330	5,100	5,170	4.5	3.1
Other Services	2,040	2,020	2,280	1.0	-10.5
Government Education	5,150	5,100	5,230	1.0	-1.5
Government Administration	6,480	6,320	6,030	2.5	7.5

*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

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Bonneville County

- The former Ground Round restaurant on Hitt Road in Ammon reopened in July as the Firehouse Gill. Several of the franchised Ground

Round restaurants in the U.S. closed in February when parent company American Hospitality Concepts filed for bankruptcy protection. Ammon Ground Round franchisee owner, Kevin LaFleur, was able to keep his restaurant open because it was not owned by the parent company. LaFleur closed Ground Round to convert it to his new restaurant, Firehouse Grill, which offers a large assortment of food, such as steaks, salmon, baked pasta, and prime rib. New décor and color scheme are already in the works for the new opening.

- The State Board of Education recently appointed Bill Robertson president of Eastern Idaho Technical College in Idaho Falls. Robertson has been interim president for the past year and twice before in the 1990s. He plans to continue offering the community and district a good array of quality education. Robertson has worked for EITC in staff positions for 32 years. He has a master's degree in guidance and counseling and a bachelor's degree in sociology.
- L.A. Weight Loss on Woodruff Avenue in Idaho Falls suffered an estimated $700,000 worth of damage to its building, supplies, and equipment following a weekend fire in mid-June. Owner David Strobel was able to reopen the following Monday in a nearby building he had purchased, intending to open a women's fitness center there. Strobel will reopen the damaged location and will continue his plans to open a women's fitness center in the alternative location.

Butte County

- Moore hosted the ninth annual King Mountain Gliding Championship at the end of June. Approximately 100 hang gliders from all parts of the world attended. King Mountain is known for its hang gliding because of mountain ranges and black lava, which together produce good columns of warm air that help lift gliders up and send them up to 100 miles away. Competitors ranged in age from 18 to 65 and were allowed to submit the best three flights out of five days. Each flight can last up to six hours.

Jefferson County

- Rigby's manufacturer of snowmobile clothing is marketing a new product line that appeals to another sports interest of its current clients—motorcycling. KLIM (pronounced "climb) Aggressive Sled Wear, which has been in business since 1998, has up to 300 dealers in the United States and some in Canada and Europe. The company's clothing, made from breathable fabrics, is designed for comfort and specifically for snowmobiling. The company says it only makes products its employees (all avid snowmobilers) would wear. Although the products are manufactured in the United States and abroad, the Rigby office on Main Street is headquarters for all sales and distribution. The new line could double the company's business over the next two years. For more information, contact the company at 745-7699.

Madison County

- Thompson Paving in Archer is now able to produce its own asphalt with a newly acquired conditional use permit for an asphalt (hot-mix) plant. Conditions of the permit, which was issued by the Madison County Commissioners, are: plant officials must appear before the commissioners for an annual review, operate only from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., produce less than 30,000 tons of asphalt per year, and meet Idaho Department of Environmental Quality regulations for water quality. While Thompson Paving has been in Archer for many years, it has always had to purchase its asphalt from other vendors. By making it's own asphalt, the company hopes to increase its business and profitability.
- Tiffani and John VanOrman recently opened a Great Harvest Bread Co. in Rexburg on Center Street, close to the Brigham Young University – Idaho campus. The couple owns two other stores in Idaho Falls. The store is a franchise of Great Harvest Bread Co., of Dillon, Montana, which has been in operation for more than 30 years. The store specializes in bread made from scratch daily and breakfast items. Office boxes and gift baskets are also available. Store hours are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Multi-County

- Deseret Book recently purchased Beehive Book stores in Rexburg, Idaho Falls, and Meridian. The Rexburg location will be closed because the company already has a store in the new shopping center on Second East. The Idaho Falls location at Memorial Drive will be converted into the city's second Deseret Book store; another store is located in the Grand Teton Mall. The Meridian location will be converted to a Deseret Book. Deseret Book sells books, gifts, and supplies of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints religion. Bob Franz, owner of Beehive Book, has been in the business for 30 years since he first opened his Rexburg store. Deseret Book plans to keep some Beehive employees, who have a significant amount of combined experience.

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