

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 9,100 from April 2010 to April 2011. The majority of job losses were in full-time employment (-7,400). During this period, fewer people looked for work leading to a decline in the size of the labour force (-7,800) and a drop in the participation rate by 4.2 percentage points to 58.9%. An increase in the number of unemployed people (+1,300) caused the unemployment rate to rise from 7.5% in April 2010 to 9.4% in April 2011. Over the same period, the provincial unemployment rate declined from 9.1% to 8.2%.

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**

#### **Arts, Entertainment and Recreation**

The Ministry of Tourism and Culture announced funding for several summer festivals in Northwestern Ontario through the Celebrate Ontario 2011 program. The funding is aimed at attracting new audiences, increasing tourism and spending, and creating jobs.

- In Thunder Bay, grants have been awarded to Rockfest in the amount of \$75,000, \$40,000 for the Great Rendezvous, and \$40,000 for The Celtic Knot.

- In Kenora, Harbourfest and Celebrate Summer will receive \$75,000 and \$40,000 respectively.
- The 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Sioux Lookout Blueberry Festival is the recipient of \$39,845 in funding.
- Live from the Rock Folk Festival in Red Rock will receive \$15,000.

#### **Construction**

LH North Ltd. has been awarded a \$1.9-million contract to replace the Wabigoon River Bridge near Dryden. The project, funded through Ontario's Northern Highways Program, is expected to create 14 jobs and is scheduled to begin this spring.

E. & E. Seegmiller Ltd. has secured a \$6.4-million contract to repave a 28-km portion of Highway 17, east of Terrace Bay. The project will create about 45 jobs and is scheduled to begin this spring.

Construction on a \$140-million White River hydroelectric project has been delayed until the winter of 2011-2012. Previously, it was forecasted that construction, which is expected to create up to 100 jobs over two years, would begin this spring.

Preliminary data from Statistics Canada indicates the value of building permits in Thunder Bay totalled \$26.7 million in the first quarter of 2011. This represents a decrease of 6.6% over the first quarter of 2010.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) announced 8 housing starts in Thunder Bay for the first quarter of 2011 compared to 13 in the first quarter of 2010.

[www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca)

#### **Education Services**

The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) announced \$1.4 million in funding for 55 intern and 22 co-op positions in the Thunder Bay region. Placements will include mechanical engineering, accounting, health research and human resources.

[www.mndmf.gov.on.ca/nohfc/programs/youth\\_internship\\_and\\_co-op\\_e.asp](http://www.mndmf.gov.on.ca/nohfc/programs/youth_internship_and_co-op_e.asp)

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) is cutting 24 jobs as a result of a \$2-million structural and funding deficit. Layoffs include both unionized and non-union staff in management and support positions at the Lakehead University campus in Thunder Bay and Laurentian University campus in Sudbury. No faculty members will be laid off during the restructuring phase.

### **Forestry**

Whitesand First Nation has accepted a wood supply offer from the provincial Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry. The wood supply will be used to build a sawmill, a three-megawatt co-generation facility and a pellet manufacturing plant, with an anticipated completion in March 2013. It is expected that up to 42 new full-time jobs will be created in addition to 60 seasonal positions. Whitesand First Nation is located near Armstrong, approximately 250 km north of Thunder Bay.

Wawasum Corporation also accepted a wood supply offer from the province. The NOHFC is providing \$1 million in funding to help Wawasum Corporation build the pellet plant; a joint project of the Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek and Animiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek First Nations near Greenstone. It is expected that 20 direct jobs will be created.

### **Health Care and Social Services**

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) has awarded nearly \$2.5 million in funding for 31 Aboriginal community projects across Ontario. The grants will be used towards expansion of existing social programs and creation of new ones, community facility renovations, and the hiring of several facilitators, instructors, and coordinators.

### **Manufacturing**

A new meat processing facility, Rainy River Meats Inc., has opened in Emo. It is expected that once services are fully introduced, the plant

will hire a minimum of two full-time and several part-time employees.

### **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services**

Activation Laboratories Ltd. (Actlabs) opened a new mineral sample preparation facility in Dryden. Actlabs will employ 10 to 15 people once training is complete.

### **Public Administration**

The Town of Fort Frances announced the reduction of full-time professional firefighters from eight to six full-time positions. The Fort Frances Fire and Rescue Service will continue to be supported by 20 volunteer firefighters.

### **Transportation and Warehousing**

Wasaya Airways LP announced it is expanding services to include passenger flights from Thunder Bay to Ogoki and Geraldton. The newly scheduled routes began on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and operate daily, Sunday to Friday. The company cites economic growth in the Greenstone area for the increased service routes.

With a \$1-million grant from NOHFC's Infrastructure and Community Development Program, the Thunder Bay Port Authority will acquire a new crane, increasing the port's capacity and attracting new business. It is expected that three new jobs will be created in addition to the 20 existing positions.

*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.*