

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@servicecanada.gc.ca

Labour Force Trends

Employment in the Northwest Ontario economic region increased by 4,800 from May 2009 to May 2010 with almost all job gains in full-time employment (+4,500). This employment growth combined with a decline in the population aged 15 and over (-1,800) caused the employment rate to increase by 3.4 percentage points to 59.0%. The decrease in the number of people unemployed (-5,100) caused the unemployment rate to drop by 4.6 percentage points to 7.7% in May 2010, the second lowest rate among all Ontario Economic Regions. Over the same period, the provincial unemployment rate declined from 9.4% to 9.1%.

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

Business, Building and Support Services

A call centre, On-Line Support (OLS), is opening in Thunder Bay. The centre is expected to open in the Victoriaville Centre this summer. Initially 200 jobs will be created, with a potential of up to 200 additional positions within the year.

www.onlinesupport.com

The City of Kenora received \$248,000 from the Continuous Improvement Fund (CIF) for

improvements to the blue box transfer station. The facility will be upgraded to include an addition that will allow for loading into a compaction trailer. The facility, located on Mellick Avenue, is regulated through the Ministry of Environment and provides waste management and recycling services to residents.

Construction

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) announced five housing starts in Thunder Bay CMA for April 2010 compared to six in April 2009.

www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca

Building permits in Thunder Bay CMA totalled \$22.5 million for March 2010, an increase of \$19.3 million over March 2009.

Construction on Main Street in Atikokan continues on schedule. LTL Construction began phase two of the project in May, which includes repaving a section of Main Street, replacing the sidewalks and boulevards, and installing new streetlights. The project is expected to be completed for the fall of 2010.

Construction of the Red Lake Airport Terminal Building in Cochenour is underway. The project received \$4.2 million in joint federal and provincial funding. The 8,000 square foot facility is expected to be complete by April 2011.

Construction of the new town hall in Geraldton will move forward later this year along Barton Bay. Construction of the 14,000 square foot facility is expected to begin later this year and finish in the summer of 2011.

Forestry

The Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, east of Dryden, signed a partnership agreement with Domtar Corporation, which should provide employment and training opportunities for its members. As part of the agreement, Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation Tree Nursery will supply Domtar with over 3 million seedlings to aid in the company's reforestation efforts.

Hydro One Incorporated launched its pilot reforestation program in Dryden this month. Approximately 43,000 seedlings will be supplied to the Dryden Forest Management Company to offset the number of trees Hydro One cuts in the region each year to build transmission line rights-of-way and to prevent power outages caused by downed trees.

Health Care & Social Services

The John Howard Society in Thunder Bay opened its new building on Syndicate Avenue. The facility, which can accommodate up to 45 clients, replaces the old building in the south downtown core. The organization specializes in the rehabilitation of people who have been in conflict with the law.

The new Dilico Anishinabek Family Care Centre opened in Longlac in May. The 7,200 square foot facility is located on Forestry Road, directly across from the old building. The centre provides a range of services directed towards physical and mental health.

Manufacturing

Domtar Corporation received \$22 million in federal funding for its pulp mill in Dryden through the Pulp and Paper Green Transformation Program (PPGTP). The investment will be used for two capital improvement projects to increase efficiency and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Project details include installing a second steam condenser and a second high-pressure turbogenerator. Together, these projects are expected to produce an additional 128,000 mega-watt hours per year.

Buchanan Forest Products Limited, currently under protection from its creditors, has been granted a 60 day extension until June 30 by Ontario's Superior Court to delay the restart of the Terrace Bay pulp mill. The company needs the additional time to acquire sources of financing and to clear outstanding debts.

Mining

Initial estimates of chromite deposits for the Big Daddy chromite deposit in the north end of the Ring of Fire indicate favourable results. Spider Resources Incorporated, KWG Resources Incorporated and Freewest Resources Canada Incorporated have released an initial resource estimate of 23.2 million tones averaging 40% chromium oxide and an additional inferred

resource of 16.3 million tonnes averaging 39%. Deeper drilling is scheduled for this summer.

Rainy River Resources Limited signed a memorandum of understanding with the Fort Frances Chiefs Secretariat. As part of the agreement, the company agrees to inform the First Nations of proposed exploration activities, perform all exploration activities in an environmentally sound manner, and identify and develop employment opportunities for the communities. The Fort Frances Chiefs Secretariat represents the Rainy River, Naicatchewenin, Mitaanjigamiing, Couchiching, Lac La Croix, Nigigoonsiminikaaning, and Seine River First Nations.

Premier Gold Mines Limited announced that high-grade gold has been found at the Rahill-Bonanza property in Red Lake. The project is a joint venture between Premier Gold Mines Limited and Red Lake Gold Mines Limited.

Other Services

A new hair salon, Colors, Hair and Make-up, opened its doors in Rainy River.

Public Administration

DigNORTH is locating its provincial call centre in Dryden for its "Call Before You Dig" (CBYD) initiative creating six jobs and a potential of 30 more later this year. The program is designed for homeowners and contractors to have a single point of contact for information on the location of underground wires, pipes and cables before excavating. www.dignorth.com

Federal funding under the Canada Summer Jobs program will help employers in the Kenora, Rainy River and Thunder Bay districts create over 170 summer jobs. Canada Summer Jobs is focused on encouraging not-for-profit organizations, public sector employers and small businesses with 50 or fewer employees to create jobs that not only meet their needs, but also benefit students looking to gain work experience.

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.

Prepared by: Labour Market and Socio-economic Information Directorate, Ontario Region
