

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](mailto:lmi-imt@servicecanada.gc.ca)

### **Labour Force Trends**

Employment in the Northwest Ontario economic region decreased by 3,200 from October 2009 to October 2010 with almost all job losses in part-time employment (-3,000). Fewer people looked for work leading to a decline in the size of the labour force (-5,300). This, combined with a decrease in the number of unemployed people, caused the unemployment rate to drop by 1.6 percentage points from 8.4% in October 2009 to 6.8% in October 2010. Over the same period, the provincial unemployment rate declined from 8.9% to 8.6%.

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**

#### **Agriculture**

Mission Terminal Inc. is adding three new storage bins to its grain elevator in Thunder Bay with a \$1 million grant from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). The company expects to hire six new workers because of increased handling capacity at the facility.

#### **Business, Building & Support Services**

The Municipality of Red Lake is constructing a new composting area, hazard waste depot and a recycling transfer centre. The project, supported

by a \$162,500 grant from the NOHFC's Infrastructure and Community Development Program will create approximately 10 new jobs.

#### **Construction**

The municipal airport in Nakina is receiving \$4 million from the federal government to upgrade 1,000 metres of runway, and purchase landing lights and an auxiliary generator. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2011.

Building permits in Thunder Bay totalled \$23.6 million for September 2010, an increase of 93.7% over September 2009.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) announced 25 housing starts in Thunder Bay for October 2010 compared to 28 in October 2009. [www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca)

#### **Forestry**

Several forestry contractors and companies signed a historic agreement with the Government of Ontario and First Nations communities to manage the 1.2 million hectare Kenora Forest. The shareholder-managed Sustainable Forest Licence agreement will be managed by Miitigoog LP, a newly-formed company of several members, including: Wabaseemoong (Whitedog) Independent Nations, Dalles First Nations, Whitefish Bay First Nations, Weyerhaeuser Canada, Kenora Forest Products, Wincrief Forestry Products and Kenora Independent Loggers.

#### **Health Care & Social Services**

The Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre held its grand opening in October. Approximately 30,000 people in communities in the north are expected to benefit from the 145,000 square-foot, 60-bed hospital that will employ more than 300 staff and 30 physicians. The facility, which also contains a gift shop, ceremony room, multi-denominational faith room and a prenatal clinic, expects to be fully operational by November.

A new 27,000 square-foot air ambulance centre opened in Thunder Bay. The Ornge Transport Medicine Centre of Excellence includes a simulation training room for paramedics, a communication station and a patient waiting area. The facility also houses two aircrafts and a land ambulance for emergency transportation in the Northwest Ontario region.

The Rainy Lake Tribal Development Corp. and pharmacist Edwin Bruyere formed a partnership to develop a pharmacy on the Couchiching First Nation. The 800 square-foot building, currently being built by True Line Construction and Trevor Strom Contracting, will house a dispensing area, a preparation area, and a counselling office. Construction is expected to be completed in December 2010.

### **Manufacturing**

Weyerhaeuser Company announced 17 workers at the iLevel plant in Kenora were laid off at the beginning of October. The facility, which also experienced a week-long shut down in September, cites unfavourable market conditions for the layoffs. The company specializes in the manufacturing of engineered wood products.

### **Mining**

North American Palladium's mine northwest of Thunder Bay restarted in October. Approximately 200 workers were recalled at the Lac des Iles mine, which previously ceased production in October 2008 because of falling palladium prices. The company is constructing a shaft to reach a new ore body below the existing pit. It expects that this resource and new technologies could extend the life of the mine by 10 years.

Rainy River Resources Ltd. opened an administration office in Emo. Exploration and drilling is ongoing at the Rainy River Gold Project located north of the township.

Noront Resources Ltd. announced high-grade assay results for nickel, copper, platinum and palladium at the Eagle's Nest deposit in the James Bay lowlands. Drilling continues at the site, which is located in the Ring of Fire district.

Mainstream Minerals Corporation entered into an option agreement to acquire 100% interest in the Slate Lake Mineral property east of Red

Lake. The property has been historically known for the presence of gold.

### **Public Administration**

Kasabonika Lake First Nation, located north of Sioux Lookout, announced plans to build a 17,000 square foot business centre. The facility will house a restaurant, grocery store and an eight-unit hotel and is expected to create 16 new jobs. The project is supported by a \$1 million grant through the NOHFC's Infrastructure and Community Development Program.

The Kingfisher Lake First Nation northeast of Sioux Lookout is building a 9,600-square foot business facility with a \$1 million investment from the NOHFC's Infrastructure and Community Development Program. A number of businesses have expressed interest in the facility, including a grocery store, Kingfisher Lake Socio-Economic Development Corporation, Tikinagan Child and Family Services, Ashweig Winter Road Corporation and Canada Post.

The Finlandia Association of Thunder Bay is making a number of upgrades, including the electrical and heating systems on the Finnish Labour Temple. The NOHFC is providing \$300,000 towards the project, which is expected to create four new jobs.

Wasaya Group Inc. signed a letter of intent with the Lac Seul First Nation to secure a working relationship between the two parties. The agreement also outlines mutual economic interests in sectors such as transportation, forestry, and tourism.

### **Transportation & Warehousing**

Wasaya Airways LP added a Bombardier Dash 8 to its fleet. The aircraft will be used to fly employees and cargo of Goldcorp Inc. to the Musselwhite Mine near Pickle Lake.

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

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