

All Oregon regions gaining jobs, but not equally

By Mateusz Perkowski
Capital Press

SALEM (AP) — Oregon now has more jobs than before the “great recession” but some rural areas are still lagging behind, according to the state economist.

After the financial crisis a decade ago, Oregon lost roughly 8 percent of its jobs, said Mark McMullen, the state economist.

Since then, the state has not only regained all those lost jobs but also increased the overall number by 6.5 percent from the pre-recession peak, he said during a hearing this week before the House Committee on Economic Development and Trade.

However, McMullen said those gains haven’t been felt equally by all regions of the state.

The Portland metropolitan area has seen the strongest recovery, with the number of jobs now 9 percent higher than before the recession.

There are now 7.5 percent more jobs in the Columbia Gorge, 6.8 percent more jobs in Central Oregon and 3.3 percent more jobs in the Willamette Valley.

Jobs contracted by about 12 percent in southern Oregon during the recession, but the region now has 0.3 percent more jobs than before the crisis.

Northeast Oregon and the North Coast haven’t yet fully recovered, but the number of jobs is less than a half-percent lower than before the recession.

Southeast Oregon still has 4.7 percent fewer jobs from the pre-recession peak, while the South Coast has 6.1 percent fewer jobs. These regions have seen worse times, though — both have recovered

roughly half the jobs they lost during the recession.

Some counties are still seriously reeling from the downturn. Gilliam County has recovered only 10 percent of the jobs it lost during the recession, while Crook and Grant counties have recovered fewer than 30 percent.

The good news is that nearly 100 percent of Oregon counties are now gaining jobs rather than losing them, McMullen said.

The lone exception — Morrow County — is actually an economic success story, but has recently lost some jobs due to the completion of major construction projects, he said.

Oregon now has about 2 unemployed people per job opening, down from 11 people per open position in late 2009.

In terms of income, the top 20 percent of Oregon households are now making 6.7 percent more money than they were a decade ago, adjusted for inflation, he said. Inflation-adjusted incomes are about 1 percent lower among the middle 20 percent of households and 7 percent lower among the bottom 20 percent.

Oregon is the 12th most trade-dependent state in the U.S., he said. Computer and electronic equipment lead in the way in exports, followed by heavy manufactured products such as metal and machinery, then agricultural goods and forestry products.

China is the major destination for Oregon exports, followed by Canada, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea.

Exports from Oregon are now facing a headwind due to the high value of the U.S. dollar compared to other currencies, which makes our products more expensive in foreign markets.

Sisters artists featured in exhibit

A new art exhibit titled “Sisters on the Road: Eight Artists and Their Discoveries” will run through March 16 at Sisters Art Works, 204 W. Adams Ave.

The Roundhouse Foundation, in an effort to further its support for the arts and artists in Sisters and Central Oregon, invited a group of artists to experience artist-in-residency programming at Anderson Ranch Arts Center; Archibry Foundation for the Ceramic Arts; Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts; Penland School of Crafts; and Sitka Center for Art and Ecology.

While attending workshops, the artists were asked to observe the different learning models and whether it would be feasible to have

similar programs in Sisters. The focus of the research was, broadly, artist-in-residence, workshop, and shared-space programs. Eight local artists attended a variety of programs on behalf of the project.

Participating artists are: Laura Campbell, Nancy Dasen, Greg Davidge, Susan Luckey Higdon, Judy Hoiness, Deb Sether, Kit Stafford and Mary Jo Weiss.

The exhibit “Sisters on the Road” showcases their work created while participating in the research, workshops and residencies, and features works in iron, wood, ceramic, metals, painting and mixed media.

The exhibit is open weekdays.

The community is



PHOTO PROVIDED

Kit Stafford's work is featured.

invited to the artist reception February 24 from 4 to 7 p.m. during the Fourth Friday Art Stroll in Sisters. Patrons are invited to gather around the outdoor fire pit, meet the artists, see the show and celebrate creative Sisters.

Galleries across Sisters will participate in the Fourth Friday Art Stroll.



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A wooden bowl by Greg Davidge.

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Sisters on the Road: EIGHT ARTISTS & THEIR DISCOVERIES

Artist Reception February 24, 4-7 p.m. at
Sisters Art Works (During the 4th Friday Art Stroll)
204 W. Adams Ave. (Corner of Ash & Adams)

Gather around our beautiful firepit, meet the artists, see the show, and enjoy refreshments together.

Participating Artists: Laura Campbell, Nancy Dasen, Greg Davidge, Susan Luckey Higdon, Judy Hoiness, Deb Sether, Kit Stafford & Mary Jo Weiss

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