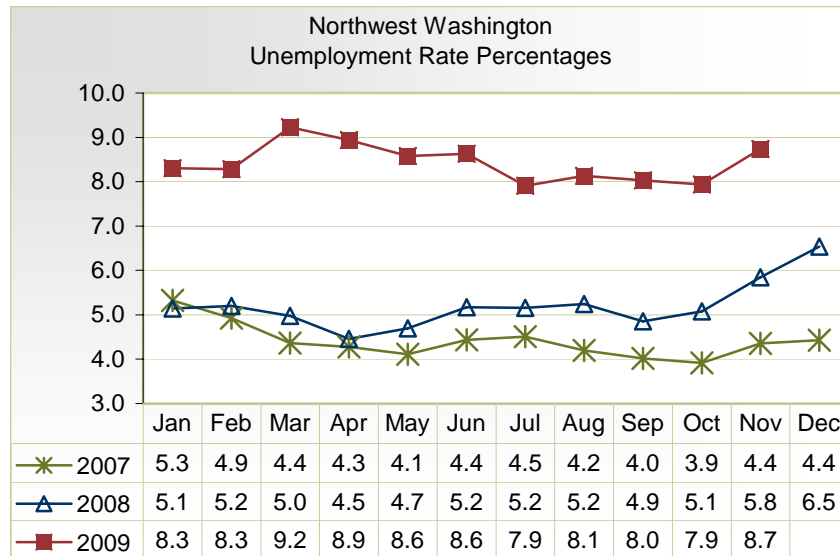


Northwest Workforce Development Area Labor Area Summary, November 2009

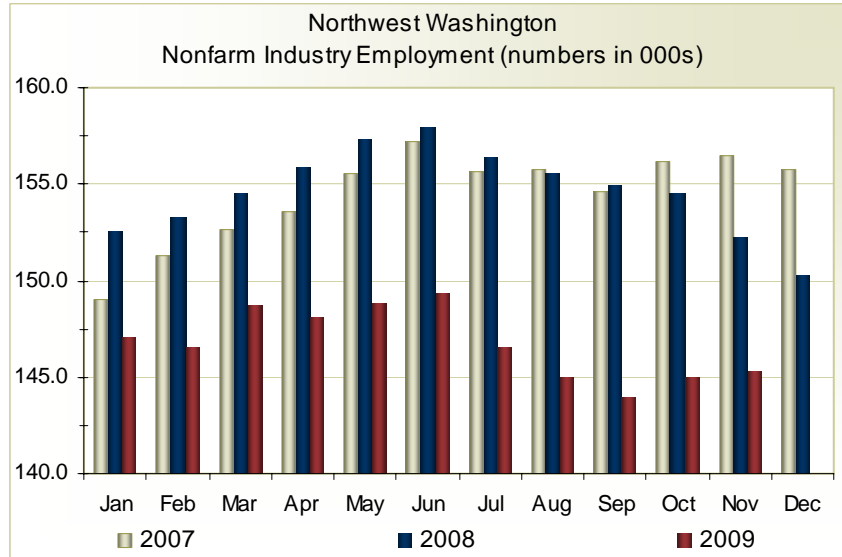
Based on data provided by the Washington State Employment Security Department, the unemployment rate for the four county area in November was approximately 8.7 percent (not seasonally adjusted).¹ The November jobless rate increased eight-tenths of a percentage point over the revised October rate for the area. Skagit County had the highest unemployment rate (10.3 percent), followed by Island County (8.5 percent), Whatcom County (8.1 percent) and San Juan County (6.8 percent). All four counties experienced significant increases in their unemployment rates last month. The increase was mostly seasonal in nature with much of the increase due to a loss of weather-limited jobs in agriculture, construction and tourism. While there have been indications for the last couple of months that the recession is over, the recovery will not likely be strong enough to support significant job growth. Until significant job growth occurs, unemployment rates will not fall. Current expectations are for unemployment rates to increase slightly or at least remain stagnant well into 2010. The state unemployment rate was 9.1 percent (not seasonally adjusted) in November, four-tenths of a percentage point above the revised October rate of 8.7 percent.



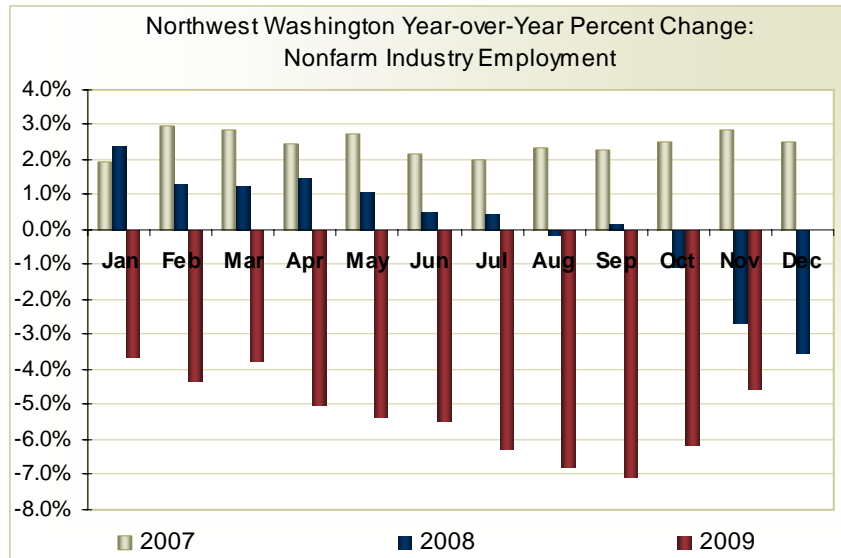
The November 2009 Northwest Washington unemployment rate was approximately two and nine-tenths percentage points above the November 2008 rate of 5.8 percent.¹ In the past year, employers have dropped 9,630 residents of the four county area from their payrolls. The data show that approximately 190,300 residents of the four county area were gainfully employed in November while 18,210 were looking for work – an increase of 5,810 since November 2008. The regional jobless rate increase mirrored what occurred statewide. The state jobless rate also increased by two and nine-tenths percentage points in the past year.

Nonfarm employment increased, albeit slightly, for the second consecutive month in November. The region gained 330 nonfarm jobs last month. Whatcom County (+400)

experienced the largest increase. Skagit County (+200) also experienced an increase in jobs in November. San Juan County (-210), due to the seasonal nature of its economy, experienced significant job losses last month. Nonfarm employment in Island County (-60) also decreased in November. Statewide, nonfarm employment decreased by 4,100 in November.



Over the year, about 6,940 jobs were lost to the economy in the four county region, a 4.6 percent decrease.¹ Over the same period one year prior, 4,210 jobs were lost to the regional economy. Since November 2007, a month before the national recession officially began, 11,150 jobs have been lost to the regional economy – a decrease of 7.1 percent. All four counties in the region lost jobs in the past year: Whatcom County (-4,400, -5.2 percent) lost the most jobs, followed by Skagit County (-2,100, -4.5 percent), Island County (-230, -1.4 percent) and San Juan County (-210, -3.8 percent). Total employment statewide decreased at a rate of 4.3 percent in the past year.



Labor Market Information for Northwest Washington
Not Seasonally Adjusted/*Updated with *QCEW Data: June 2009**

				Change		
	Prelim	Revised	Revised	Oct-09	Nov-08	Nov-08
Employment by Place of Residence	Nov-09	Oct-09	Nov-08	Nov-09	Nov-09	Nov-09%
Civilian Labor Force	208,500	207,070	212,310	1,430	-3,810	-1.8%
Resident Employment	190,300	190,640	199,930	-340	-9,630	-4.8%
Unemployment	18,210	16,440	12,400	1,770	5,810	46.9%
Unemployment Rate	8.7	7.9	5.8	0.8	2.9	
Employment by Place of Work	Prelim	Revised	Revised	Oct-09	Nov-08	Nov-08
Total Nonfarm 1/	Nov-09	Oct-09	Nov-08	Nov-09	Nov-09	Nov-09%
Whatcom County	80,000	79,600	84,400	400	-4,400	-5.2%
Skagit County	44,100	43,900	46,200	200	-2,100	-4.5%
Island County	15,940	16,000	16,170	-60	-230	-1.4%
San Juan County	5,280	5,490	5,490	-210	-210	-3.8%
Northwest Washington	145,320	144,990	152,260	330	-6,940	-4.6%

1/ Excludes proprietors, self-employed, members of the armed services, workers in private households, and agriculture. Includes all full- and part-time wage and salary workers receiving pay during the pay period including the 12th of the month.

*Prepared by the Labor Market and Economic Analysis Branch using a Quarterly Benchmark process. This process uses the most recent quarter from the Unemployment Insurance Tax Reports (currently 4th quarter 2008) and estimates employment from that point to present.

North American Industry Classification System. *QCEW = Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

¹Regional (WDA-3) data are based on individual county data and should be taken as a rough approximation to actual regional figures.