



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

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**For Immediate Release:**

## **Montana's Workforce is Prepared for Green Economy**

**(Helena, MT)** Montana's Workforce is prepared for the future challenges of a greener economy, according to a new report released by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry. The report details research results of the Northern Plains and Rocky Mountain Consortium, a group of labor market researchers from six states lead by Montana, that are investigating the size and characteristics of green jobs.

"Here in Montana, we wanted to know what the impact of a green economy is on our workforce, and what the impact will be in the future. This research gives us a good baseline so we can measure the growth of green jobs in the Treasure State," said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly.

The report includes research on the skills of newly hired workers, a labor market supply and demand analysis, research on new and emerging renewable energy technologies, and other related studies to enhance knowledge about Montana's economy and workforce. Conclusions of the report include:

- Green jobs do not require education and training above that required for all Montana jobs, but may require special certifications or specialized training.
- New and emerging energy technologies reviewed by the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center at Montana State University, may have a substantial impact on Montana's workforce in the coming years. Combined job impacts from the reviewed technologies could exceed 57,000 jobs in the six Consortium States.
- Research into the economic impact of forest restoration activities indicate that for every million dollars of capital investment into forest restoration projects, 19.5 jobs were created.
- Currently 4.5% of Montana's jobs are green, compared to 3.5% for the full six-state region. Green jobs are found in every industry, with the largest concentration of green workers in the Agriculture and Construction industries.

With a limited supply and ever-increasing demand for natural resources, the need to reduce energy costs and limit environmental impact is likely to continue in the future," says Senior Economist Barbara Wagner. "Montana's businesses and workers are already responding to these market forces by adopting green practices into work habits."

The research into green jobs and related labor market research was made possible through a \$4million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor awarded in 2009. Along with Montana, the five other states included in the Consortium are: Nebraska, Iowa, Wyoming, South Dakota and Utah. Colorado also conducted research as a part of the grant. The research project finished under the original budget and rescinded money back to the federal government.

"One of the most positive aspects of the grant was capacity building, both in terms of staff abilities and data resources" said Todd Younkin, Consortium Director, "In the process of researching green jobs, we gathered data on benefits, job turnover, retention rates, and the labor supply that was unavailable in the past. This data has already been used by businesses and policy makers in planning for the future economy."

The full report can be found on the Northern Plains and Rocky Mountain Consortium's website at [www.researchingthegreeneconomy.com](http://www.researchingthegreeneconomy.com).

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