

# Eastern Washington Sawmill Statistics for the First Half of Calendar Year 2002

2002 Interim Report

Produced by

The Inland Northwest Forest Products  
Research Consortium, a research  
cooperative centered at the Forest Products  
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Bureau of Business and Economic Research at  
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Wood Materials and Engineering Laboratory  
at Washington State University.  
<http://its.uidaho.edu/forp/consortium.htm>



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## 2002 Interim Report

The Inland Northwest Wood Products Research Consortium, in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resource Sciences at Washington State University, has undertaken to work closely with the forest products industry of the state of Washington to collect economic and production information related to the Eastern Washington Forest Products Industry. Started in 1999, this effort has received strong support from the wood products industry of the region. This interim report provides a summary of monthly production, shipments, employment, and payroll data for the first half of 2002. The year 2002 summary report will be produced following further data collection.

Data presented are based on a census of sawmills located in eastern Washington. For purposes of this report, eastern Washington includes all of the sawmills located east of the Cascade Mountains within the state of Washington.

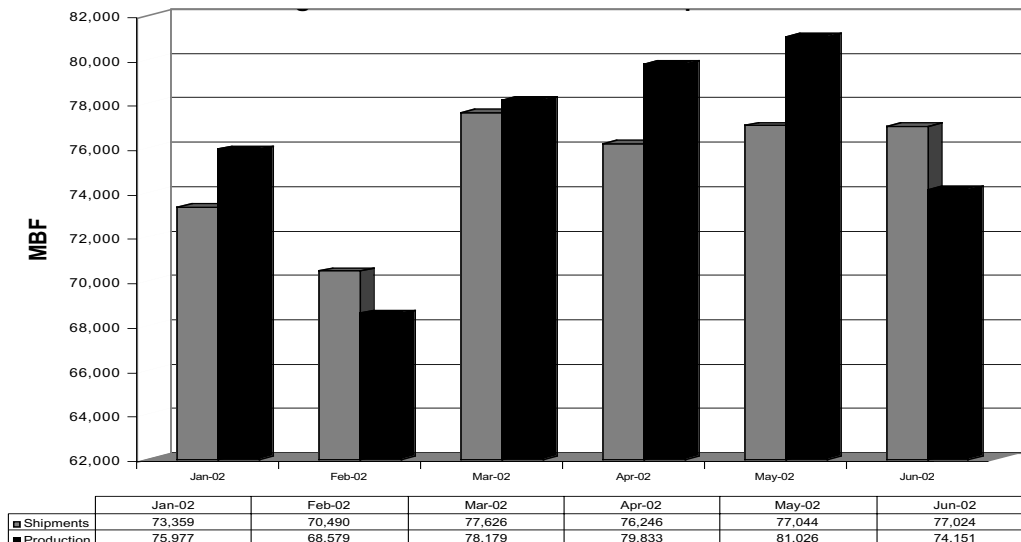
The intended readers of this information include the Washington State Governor's Office, the Washington State Legislature, industry members, state, federal, and tribal land management agencies, the media, and other parties interested in this important sector of the state's economy.

## Results

During the first half of 2002, the sawmills of eastern Washington produced 457.7 million board feet, lumber tally. This is approximately 8.8% more than during the same period of 2001. Average monthly production of all mills combined was approximately 76.3 million board feet, lumber tally, ranging from 68.6 million board feet in February to 81.0 million board feet in May.

Shipments by these mills during the first 6 months of 2002 totaled 451.8 million board feet of lumber, lumber tally (Figure 1). Shipments during this period exceeded the same period of 2001 by approximately 5%. Average monthly shipments for all mills equaled approximately 75.3 million board feet of lumber. Total monthly shipments of lumber during the period were relatively stable, with a low in February of 70.5 million board feet and a high in March of 77.6 million board feet (Figure 1). Production exceeded shipments by 5.9 million board feet, or 1.3%.

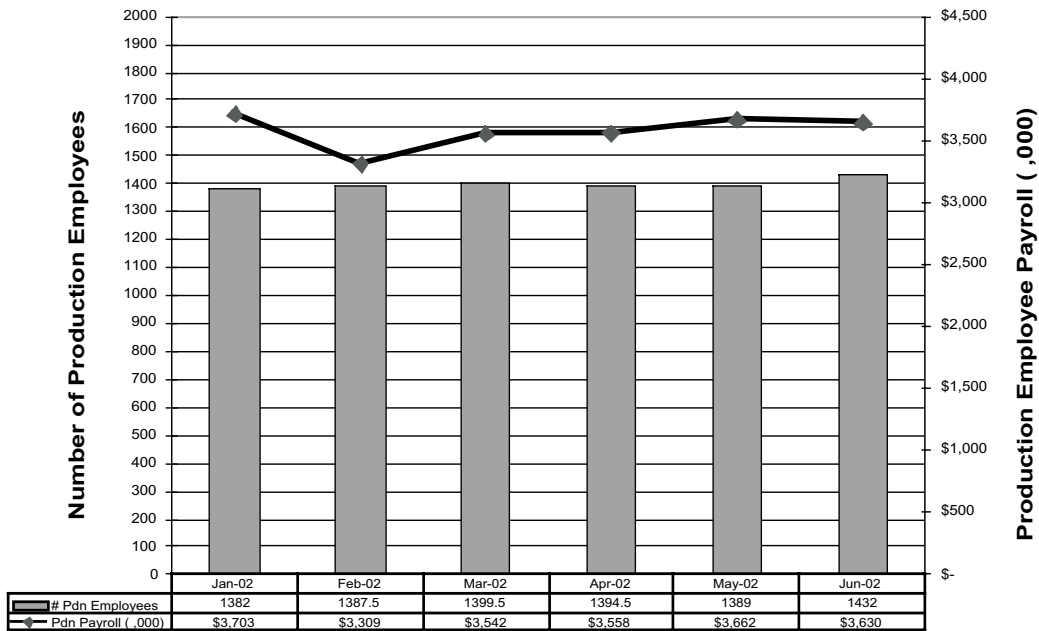
*Figure 1. Mill Production vs. Mill Shipments*



Average monthly employment during this period was nearly constant at 1,397 employees each month, ranging from 1,382 in January to 1,432 in June. Employment numbers were approximately 5% above the same period last year. This estimate includes only employees involved directly in lumber production, such as sawyers, millwrights, and associated personnel. Total monthly payroll for these positions averaged \$3.6 million, ranging from \$3.3 million in February to \$3.7 million in January (Figure 2). Total payroll for production employees was approximately \$21.4 million during the first 6 months of 2002 in eastern Washington—approximately 2.7% less than the same period of 2001.

The number of hours worked by each production employee averaged 42.3 hours each week, from January through June 2002—a 4.2% increase over the first 6 months of 2001. February represented the highest average number of hours worked per week, at 43.3, while April and May had the lowest at 41.7.

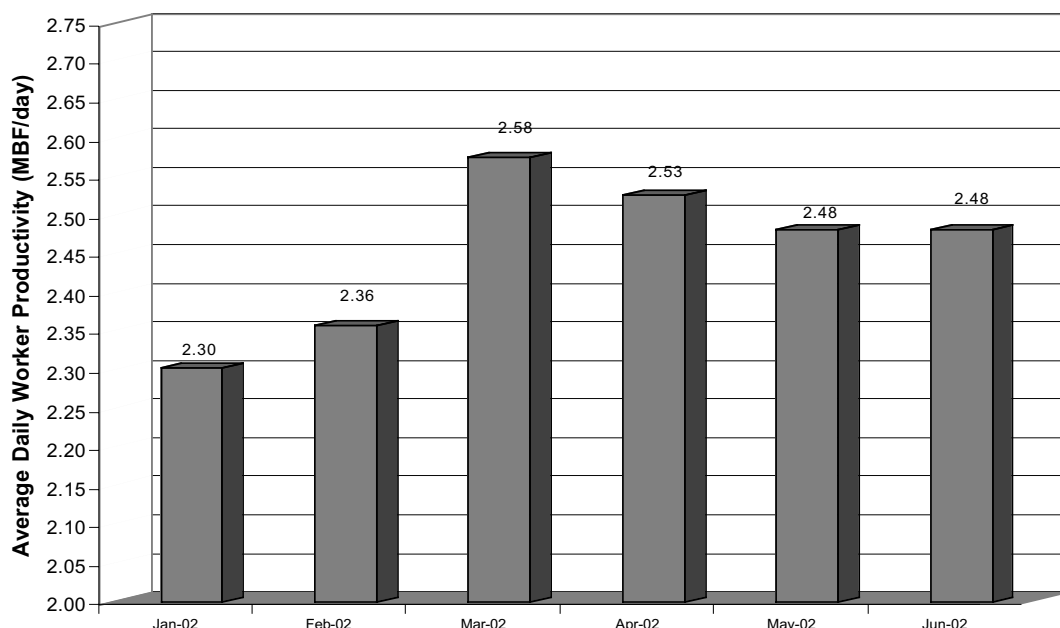
Figure 2. Monthly Employment and Payroll



Employee productivity, measured in thousands of board feet (MBF) produced by each employee, averaged 2.45 MBF per worker day during the first half of 2002. Worker productivity for the region reached its peak during March at 2.58 MBF per worker day and fell to its lowest level during January at 2.30 MBF per worker day (Figure 3). Productivity per employee increased by less than 1% in the region as compared with the same period of 2001.

Wages paid to production employees averaged \$14.11 per hour during the first half of 2002, based on the total numbers of hours worked in each month and on monthly production employee payroll. The lowest average cost per hour was observed in January at \$13.54, while June had the highest, at \$15.19 per hour. Average hourly pay during this period was 12.7% lower than during the same period in 2001.

Figure 3. Average Daily Worker Productivity



### End Note

Washington State University and the consortium members wish to extend our gratitude and thanks to the members of the forest products industry of eastern Washington for their support of this work and their assistance by providing the base data used in this analysis. As the database grows over the next few years, it will be possible to provide a somewhat more detailed analysis.

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## College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences

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