Eastern Washington Sawmill
Statistics for 2002

2002 Report

Produced by

The Inland Northwest Forest Products Research Consortium, a research cooperative centered at the Forest Products Department at the University of Idaho, the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Montana-Missoula, and the Wood Materials and Engineering Laboratory at Washington State University.

http://its.uidaho.edu/forp/consortium.htm

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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 product 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. The annual report provides a summary of monthly production, shipments, employment, and payroll data for the year 2002. Visit our website at http://www.its.uidaho.edu/forp/consortium.htm to learn more about the consortium and other ongoing projects.

Data presented are based on a census of sawmills located in eastern Washington. For purposes of this report, eastern Washington includes all sawmills located east of the Cascade Mountains within the state of Washington. This report amends previous data presented for the first six months of 2002.

Results

During the year 2002, the sawmills of eastern Washington produced 911.9 million board feet of lumber, (lumber tally), up 6.8% from 2001 (Figure 1). Production during the year 2002 exceeded shipments by 11.1 million board feet. Average monthly production of all mills combined was approximately 76.0 million board feet, lumber tally, ranging from 68.6 million board feet (February) to 85.6 million board feet (October). Shipments by these mills during the year totaled 900.8 million board feet of lumber, lumber tally (Figure 1), an increase of 5% over 2001. Average monthly lumber shipments for all mills totaled 75.1 million board feet. Lumber production and lumber shipments tracked each other from month to month within a range of +/- 5.6% on a volume basis. When evaluated for the entire year, lumber production exceeded shipments by 1.2%.

Figure 1. Mill production vs. mill shipments.
Eastern Washington sawmills shipped approximately $297.8 million of processed wood products during the year. The value of shipments is considerably lower (11.2%) than the value of shipments in 2001, which was $335.3 million. Average monthly employment during the year was fairly constant at 1,427 employees, up 5% from 2001. Employment levels ranged from 1,382 (January) to 1,463 (July) during this period (Figure 2).

This estimate includes only employees involved directly in lumber production such as sawyers, millwrights, and associated personnel. Total monthly payroll for these positions averaged $3.7 million (up 5.4% from 2001) and was in the range of $3.3 million (February) to $4.3 million (October) monthly (Figure 2). Total payroll for lumber production employees was approximately $44.8 million during 2002 in eastern Washington, up 6.3% from 2001.

The number of hours worked by each production employee was steady throughout the year, averaging 41.9 hours each week in 2002, up 4.5% from 2001. August represented the highest average number of hours worked per week at 42.4 hours, while December was the lowest at 40.1 hours. Employee productivity, measured in thousands of board feet (MBF) produced per employee, averaged 2.38 MBF per worker day during 2002, which is down 2.1% from the 2001 average of 2.43 MBF per worker per day. Worker productivity for the region reached its peak in March at 2.58 MBF per worker day and fell to its lowest level during July at 2.11 MBF per worker day (Figure 3).

Wages paid to employees averaged $14.11 per hour (up 2.7% from 2001) during 2002 based on the total number of hours worked in each month and monthly production payroll. The lowest average cost per hour was observed in January, at $13.54, while June had the highest at $15.19 per hour.

Acquisition of logs in the region was approximately 651.7 million board feet (Scribner) during the year for all mills combined. On a volume basis, 30.7% was from nonindustrial private forestlands, 28.1% were acquired from industrial forestlands, 26.7% were purchased from tribal lands, 6.0% were from U.S. Forest Service lands in Washington State, and 5.2% were from state owned and managed forestlands. Other sources totaled less than 1% each on average. The end-of-year sawlog inventory totaled 7.3 million board feet or 0.81% of total production.
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.

College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences

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