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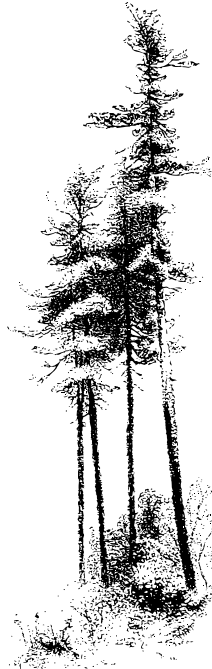
# Eastern Washington Sawmill Statistics for the First Half of Calendar Year 2004

## 2004 Interim 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://www.cnr.uidaho.edu/forp/Consortium/JANUS/index.htm>



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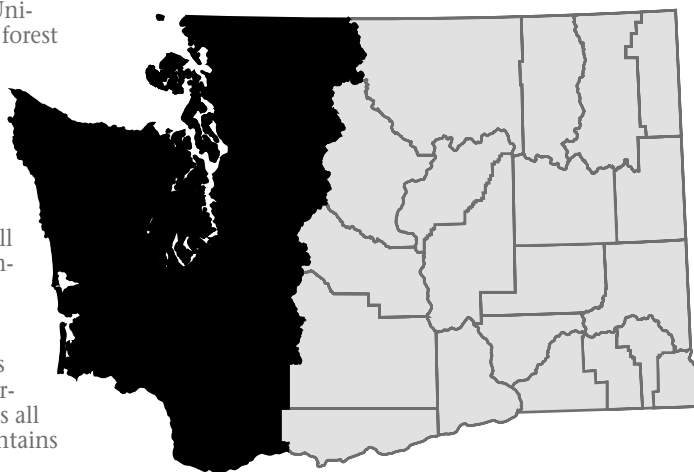
# Eastern Washington Sawmill Production for the First Half of Calendar Year 2004

## 2004 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 2004. The year 2004 summary report will be produced following further data collection.

Data presented are based on a census of sawmills located in eastern Washington (Figure 1). 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.



*Figure 1.*  
*Eastern Washington counties included  
in mill survey*

## Results

During the first half of 2004, the sawmills of eastern Washington produced 516.9 million board feet, lumber tally. This is approximately 8.7% more than during the same period of 2003. Average monthly production of all mills combined was approximately 86.2 million board feet lumber tally, ranging from 73.6 million board feet in January to 100.4 million board feet in March. Shipments by these mills during the first six months of 2004 totaled 528.6 million board feet of lumber, lumber tally (Figure 2). Shipments during this period exceeded the same period of 2003 by approximately 9.9%. Average monthly shipments for all mills totaled approximately 80.1 million board feet of lumber. Total monthly shipments of lumber during the period were more variable than in past years, with a low in January of 71.7 MBF and a high in April of 100.4 MBF (Figure 2). Shipments exceeded production by 11.6 MBF, or 2.2%.

Average monthly employment during this period was relatively constant at 1,391 employees each month, ranging from 1,273 in January to 1,452 in June. Employment numbers were approximately 1.2% 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 \$3.9 million,

ranging from \$3.42 million in February to \$4.4 million in June (Figure 3). Total payroll to production employees was approximately \$23.4 million during the first six months of 2004 in Eastern Washington- approximately 23.8% more than the same period of 2003.

The number of hours worked by each production employee averaged 42.2 hours each week, from January through June 2003. March represented the highest average number of hours worked per week, at 43.7 hours, while January had the lowest at 38.8 hours. The average for the first six months of 2003 was 38.5 hours per week. The increased number of hours worked combined with a modest increase in the hour wage rate paid during the first six months of 2004 appears to account for most of the increased payroll costs incurred during the first half of 2004.

Employee productivity, measured in thousands of board feet produced by each employee, averaged 2.6 MBF per worker day during the first half of 2004. Worker productivity for the region reached its peak during March at 3.3 MBF per worker day and fell to its lowest level during May at 2.6 MBF per worker day (Figure 4). Productivity per employee in eastern Washington decreased 3.7% compared to the first six months of 2003.

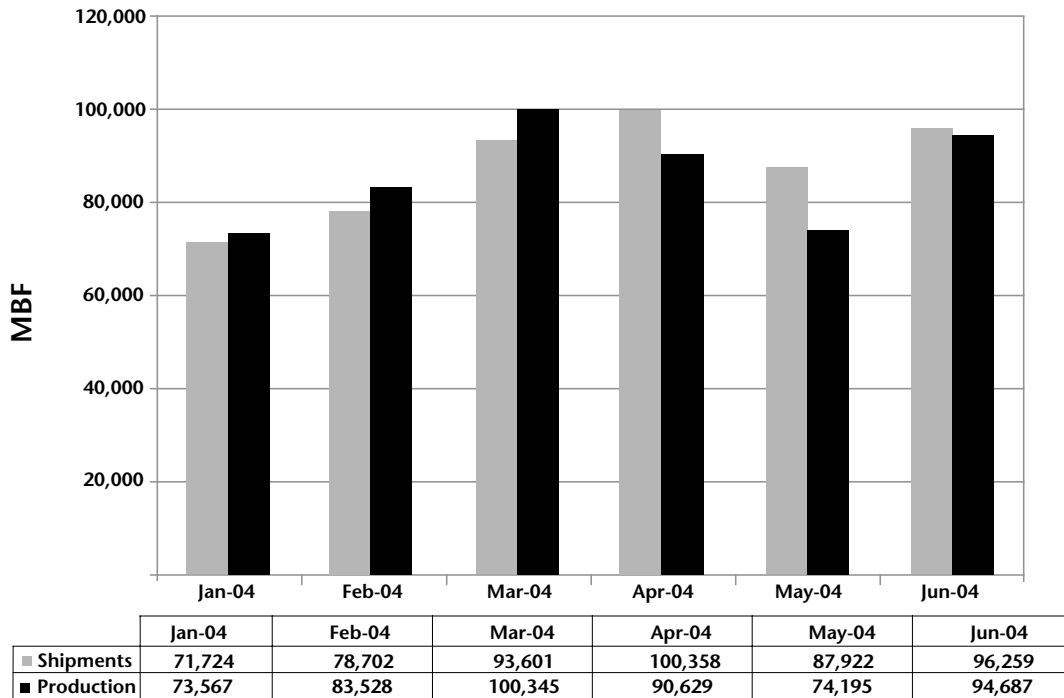


Figure 2.  
Mill production vs. mill shipments

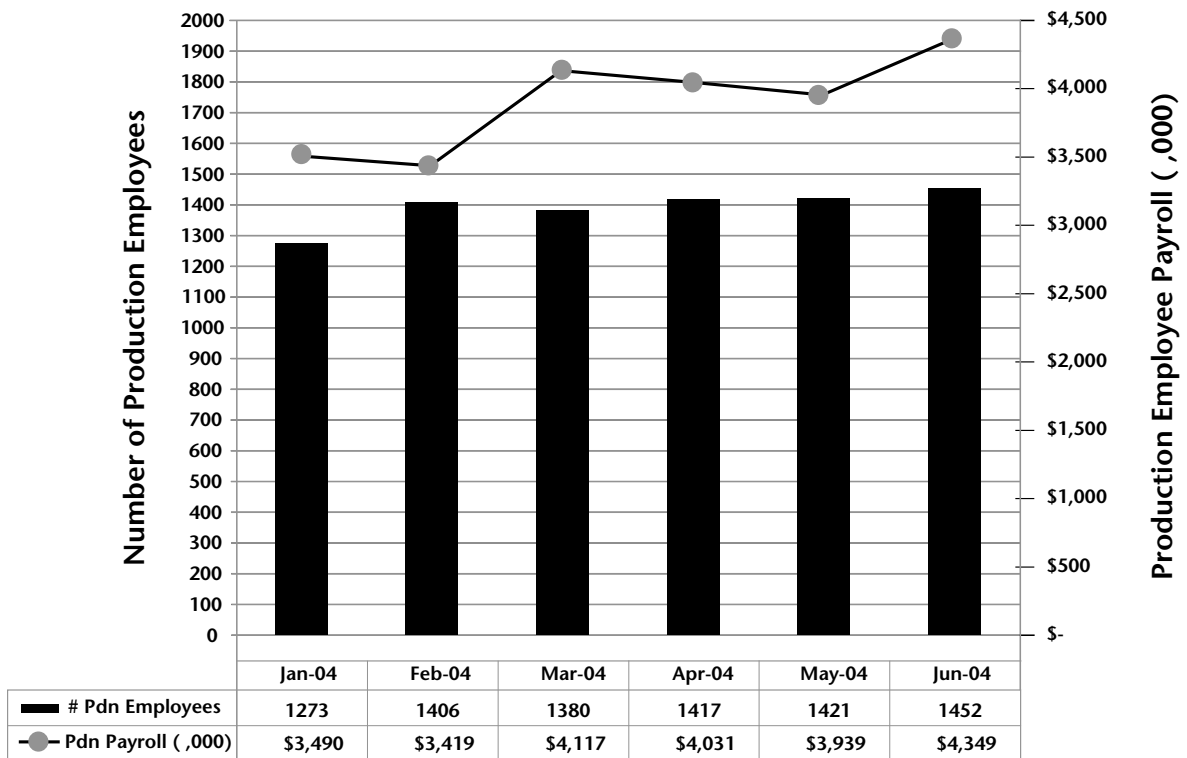
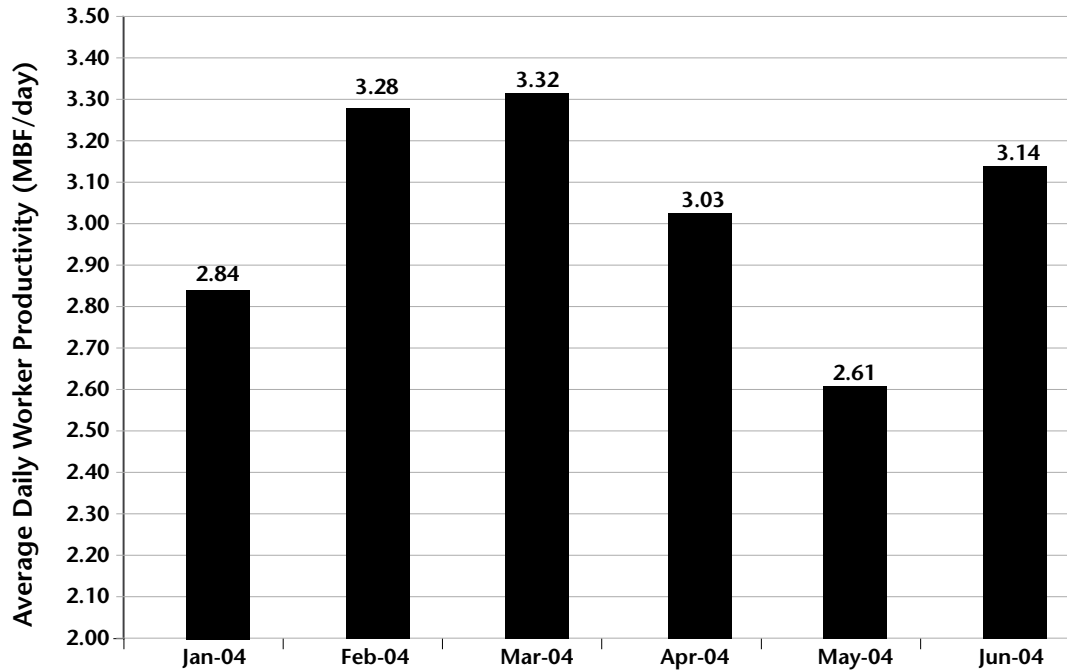


Figure 3.  
Monthly employment and payroll



*Figure 4.  
Average daily worker productivity*

Wages paid to production employees averaged \$14.82 per hour during the first half of 2004, 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 February at \$14.38, while June had the highest, at \$15.67 per hour. Average hourly pay during this period was 3.9% higher than during the same period in 2003.

#### 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 in 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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