

Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

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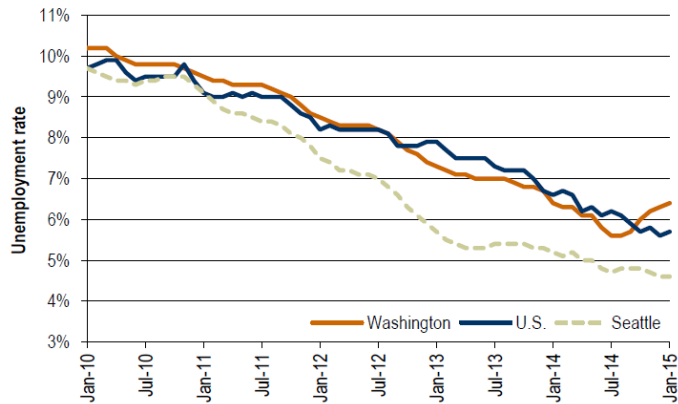
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On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington rose by 18,300 from December 2014 to January 2015. BLS estimates the private sector gained 18,500 jobs during the month and the public sector lost 200 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for January 2014 through January 2015 indicate an increase in employment of 100,500 for the state. The private sector added 89,800 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 10,700 jobs over the year.

U.S., Washington and Seattle unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted
January 2010 through January 2015
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2015 is 6.4 percent. The revised estimated December 2014 unemployment rate was at 6.3 percent. The January 2014 unemployment rate was 6.4 percent.

Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)				
Area	(Prelim.) Jan-15	Dec-14	Jan-14	Year-to- Year Change
USA	6.1%	5.4%	7.0%	-0.9%
Washington state	7.0%	6.3%	7.0%	0.0%
Whatcom	7.3%	6.5%	7.3%	0.0%
Skagit	8.4%	7.6%	8.6%	-0.2%
Island	7.9%	7.2%	7.4%	0.5%
San Juan	7.4%	6.1%	7.1%	0.3%

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision.

December’s preliminary estimated gain of 7,600 jobs was revised to a gain of 8,900 jobs.

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County rose from 6.5 percent (revised) in December to 7.3 percent in January (preliminary). The unemployment rate in January 2014 was also 7.3 percent.

- Compared to January 2014, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 3,530 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 270. Whatcom County’s labor force expanded by 3,820 over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County decreased from 1,576 in December to 1,159. The largest number of new claims was filed by persons in construction-related occupations. Altogether, 2,425 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in January.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)
 Data benchmarked through September 2014¹

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jan-15	Revised Dec-14	Revised Jan-14	Change		
				Dec-14 Jan-15	Jan-14 Jan-15	Jan-14 Jan-15
Total Nonfarm	87,800	88,600	84,400	-800	3,400	4.0%
Total Private	70,100	70,700	67,700	-600	2,400	3.5%
Goods Producing	15,100	15,200	14,500	-100	600	4.1%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	5,800	6,000	5,500	-200	300	5.5%
Manufacturing	9,300	9,200	9,000	100	300	3.3%
Service Providing	72,700	73,400	69,900	-700	2,800	4.0%
Private Services Providing	55,000	55,500	53,200	-500	1,800	3.4%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	17,200	17,600	16,100	-400	1,100	6.8%
Retail Trade	11,700	11,800	11,100	-100	600	5.4%
Financial Activities	3,600	3,600	3,400	0	200	5.9%
Professional and Business Services	7,700	7,800	7,200	-100	500	6.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	9,200	9,400	9,700	-200	-500	-5.2%
Government	17,700	17,900	16,700	-200	1,000	6.0%
Federal Government	1,400	1,400	1,300	0	100	7.7%
Total State Government	6,400	6,500	5,700	-100	700	12.3%
Total Local Government	9,900	10,000	9,700	-100	200	2.1%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Whatcom County contracted by 800 from December 2014 to January 2015. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs is up 4.0 percent or 3,400.

- January is not typically a time of month-to-month employment growth. Most sectors shed jobs in January 2015. One exception was manufacturing, which added 100 new jobs.
- Private sector employers collectively reported a gain of 2,400 jobs over the year. The largest private sector gains were attributed to hiring in trade, transportation, warehousing and

utilities (+1,100) and professional and business services (+500). The only major industry group reporting losses over the year was leisure and hospitality (-500).

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County increased from 7.6 percent in December (revised) to 8.4 percent (preliminary) in January 2015. The unemployment rate last January was 8.6 percent.

- Compared to January 2014, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,740 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 40. Skagit County’s labor force expanded by 1,760 over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County decreased from 1,121 in December to 803. The largest number of new claims was filed by persons in construction-related occupations. Altogether, 1,676 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in January.

Skagit County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Mount Vernon-Anacortes Metropolitan Statistical Area (Skagit County)
 Data benchmarked through September 2014

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jan-15	Revised Dec-14	Revised Jan-14	Change		
				Dec-14 Jan-15	Jan-14 Jan-15	Jan-14 Jan-15
Total Nonfarm	47,700	48,400	46,000	-700	1,700	3.7%
Total Private	36,500	37,400	34,800	-900	1,700	4.9%
Goods Producing	9,300	9,700	8,700	-400	600	6.9%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	3,300	3,500	3,100	-200	200	6.5%
Manufacturing	6,000	6,200	5,600	-200	400	7.1%
Service Providing	38,400	38,700	37,300	-300	1,100	2.9%
Private Services Providing	27,200	27,700	26,100	-500	1,100	4.2%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,900	10,400	9,400	-500	500	5.3%
Retail Trade	7,100	7,400	6,700	-300	400	6.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	4,700	4,800	4,400	-100	300	6.8%
Government	11,200	11,000	11,200	200	0	0.0%
Federal Government	300	300	300	0	0	0.0%
State Government	1,500	1,400	1,500	100	0	0.0%
Local Government	9,400	9,300	9,400	100	0	0.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

In January, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls contracted by an estimated 700 jobs. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs is up 3.7 percent or 1,700 jobs.

- Month-to-month, all private sector industries reported losses or remained unchanged from December levels.
- Over the year, however, all major private sectors included in this survey reported employment gains relative to last year. The largest year-over-year gains were observed in trade transportation and utilities (500), which includes retail trade.

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County bumped up from 7.2 percent (revised) in December to 7.9 percent in January (preliminary). The unemployment rate in January 2014 was 7.4 percent.

- Compared to January 2014, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 590 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 200. Island County’s civilian labor force increased by 790 residents over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County decreased from 276 in December to 249. The largest number of new claims was filed by persons in construction-related occupations. Altogether, 584 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in January.

Island County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Oak Harbor Metropolitan Statistical Area (Island County)

Data benchmarked through September 2014

NAICS Industry Title	Change					
	Prelim Jan-15	Revised Dec-14	Revised Jan-14	Dec-14 Jan-15	Jan-14 Jan-15	Jan-14 Jan-15
Total Nonfarm	15,410	15,640	15,120	-230	290	1.9%
Total Private	10,860	11,100	10,630	-240	230	2.2%
Goods Producing	1,270	1,360	1,280	-90	-10	-0.8%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	620	700	640	-80	-20	-3.1%
Manufacturing	650	660	640	-10	10	1.6%
Service Providing	14,140	14,280	13,840	-140	300	2.2%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,450	2,530	2,420	-80	30	1.2%
Retail Trade	1,990	2,070	2,000	-80	-10	-0.5%
Information and Financial Activities	780	780	800	0	-20	-2.5%
Professional and Business Services	1,160	1,160	1,220	0	-60	-4.9%
Education and Health Services	2,290	2,300	2,240	-10	50	2.2%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,240	2,280	2,020	-40	220	10.9%
Government	4,550	4,540	4,490	10	60	1.3%
Federal Government	1,320	1,340	1,360	-20	-40	-2.9%
State and Local Government	3,230	3,200	3,130	30	100	3.2%
State and Local Government Education	1,490	1,460	1,420	30	70	4.9%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County decreased by 230 in January. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 1.9 percent or 290 jobs.

- From December to January, all major sectors either lost employment or remained unchanged, with the exception of government which added 10. The deepest losses were observed construction and retail trade (-80 each), which are both highly seasonal industries.
- Year-over-year, Island County added 230 private sector jobs. The largest gains were observed in leisure and hospitality (220), government (60) and education and health services (50). The deepest losses were from professional and business services (-60).

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County increased from 6.1 percent (revised) in December to 7.4 percent (preliminary) in January. The unemployment rate observed in January 2014 was 7.1 percent.

- Compared to January 2014, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 260 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 40. All together, the San Juan County labor force increased by 300 over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County decreased from 84 in December to 82. The largest number of new claims was filed by persons in food preparation and serving related occupations. Altogether, 171 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in January.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through September 2014

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jan-15	Revised Dec-14	Revised Jan-14	Change		
				Dec-14 Jan-15	Jan-14 Jan-15	Jan-14 Jan-15
Total Nonfarm	4,910	5,120	4,660	-210	250	5.4%
Total Private	4,050	4,260	3,860	-210	190	4.9%
Goods Producing	700	750	710	-50	-10	-1.4%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	520	560	560	-40	-40	-7.1%
Manufacturing	180	190	150	-10	30	20.0%
Service Providing	4,210	4,370	3,950	-160	260	6.6%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	820	860	800	-40	20	2.5%
Information and Financial Activities	330	340	300	-10	30	10.0%
Professional and Business Services	350	370	330	-20	20	6.1%
Education and Health Services	620	590	580	30	40	6.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	1,020	1,130	940	-110	80	8.5%
Government	860	860	800	0	60	7.5%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in San Juan County in January contracted by 210. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 250 jobs or 5.4 percent.

- San Juan County has a highly-seasonal economy, due to its orientation toward tourism. Large downward shifts in employment are characteristic of autumn and winter months, with growth during the spring and summer months. The largest month-to-month shift in January was a loss of 110 jobs in leisure and hospitality. Education and health services was the only industry to gain employment in January.
- Over the year, San Juan County added 250 jobs. Leisure and hospitality was up 80 over the year (8.5 percent over last year). All major industries added jobs over the year, except for construction which shed 40.