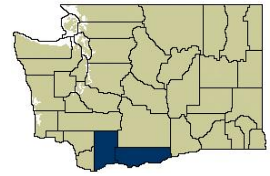
Washington State Employment Security Department

Klickitat and Skamania Counties



Labor Area Summary

March, 2021

Volume 2022, Number 2

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Monthly Review

But first, a word from our sponsor: the Pacific Northwest Regional Economics Conference is coming to Hood River, on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 24-25. The conference includes four keynote speakers and panels on topics including housing, energy, labor markets (with yours truly presenting), agriculture (all local, with Amanda Hoey from Oregon Wheat Growers, Rachael Horn of AniChe Winery and Mike Oates, Hood River orchardist and county commissioner), and transportation. You can register and find out more at www.pnrec.org.

Our four keynote speakers include Dr. Rajeev Dhawan of Georgia State University, presenting the national outlook on Tuesday morning; Dr. Rob Valleta from the San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank, talking about the Fed's perspective on the recovery in general and labor markets in particular, at noon; Matt Stoller of the American Economic Liberties Project and perhaps our nation's preeminent analyst of monopoly power, on Wednesday morning, and Dr. Vellore Arthi, University of California Irvine, bringing together epidemiology, the history of epidemics, and labor market analysis into a look at the long-term impacts of COVID (and long COVID) on the labor market.

If your time is limited and you'd like to grab a meal and attend one of the keynotes for $30, let me know and we can make it work.

And now back to our regularly scheduled programming…

Mar. 2022 Unemployment Rates

	Mar. 2022	Feb. 2022	Mar. 2021
Seasonally Adjusted:			
U.S.	3.6	3.8	6.0
U.S. U-6**	6.9	7.2	10.7
Washington	4.2	4.3	5.8
Oregon	3.8	4.0	6.1
Portland Metro	3.8	3.9	6.5
Columbia Gorge*	3.9	3.9	5.6
Unadjusted:			
U.S.	3.8	4.1	6.2
Washington	4.3	4.6	6.2
Oregon	4.0	3.9	6.5
Columbia Gorge*	4.6	4.7	6.5
Klickitat	6.0	6.5	7.3
Skamania	6.1	6.0	7.3
Hood River	3.2	3.1	5.5
Sherman	3.5	3.6	5.2
Wasco	4.3	4.5	6.8
Clark	5.1	5.1	6.3
Cowlitz	6.0	6.2	7.2
Wahkiakum	6.3	7.2	8.0
Portland Metro	3.9	3.9	6.3

*Includes Hood River, Klickitat, Sherman, Skamania, and Wasco counties.
**See text for definition.

Monthly Review

"It's now or never…"

Elvis

The Big Picture

Who knew that The King was singing about climate change?

I haven't had time to read the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, but news articles made it clear that the situation is increasingly dire. We know what needs to be done, and we aren't doing it. A scan of the political landscape indicates that the kind of strong, coordinated action needed to be taken is nowhere on the horizon. But as The Boss sang, "man, the dope's that there's still hope…"

Meanwhile, Santiago, Chile, with over six million residents, is rationing water as a 13-year drought—exacerbated by climate change—continues. "A city cannot live without water…We have to be ready for there to be not enough water for everyone who lives here."

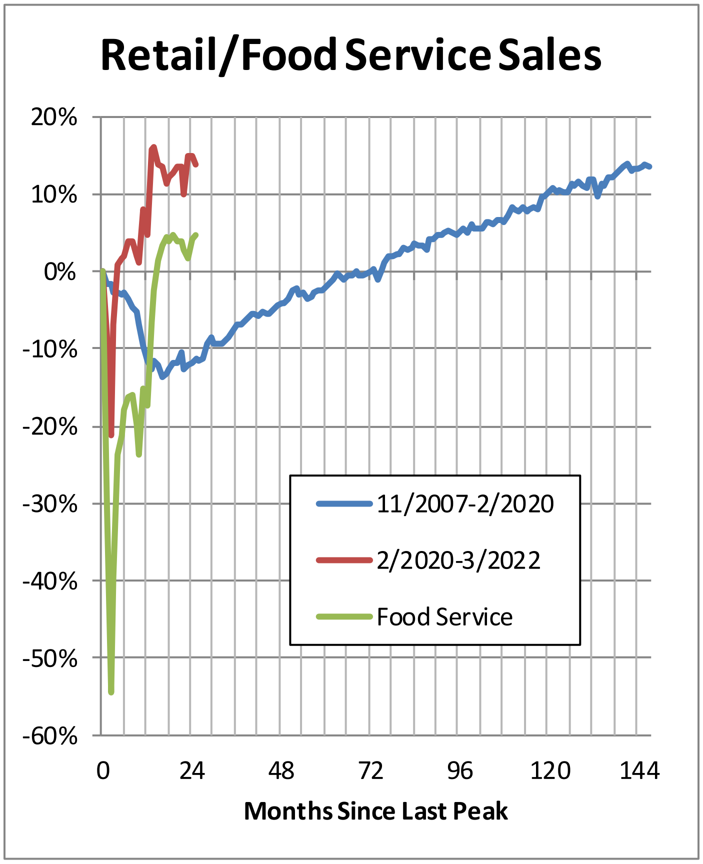
Not to mention the 122 degree weather in Pakistan and India that is frying crops, drying out reservoirs, draining water supplies and overloading the power grid.[1] Global grain supplies, already stretched thin by the Russia-Ukraine war, will be dealt another blow with shortfalls from India, normally a major grain exporter. Large wheat importers include Egypt (the Port of Vancouver recently sent a wheat shipment to Egypt for the first time in decades), Indonesia, Turkey, China, Nigeria and Italy.

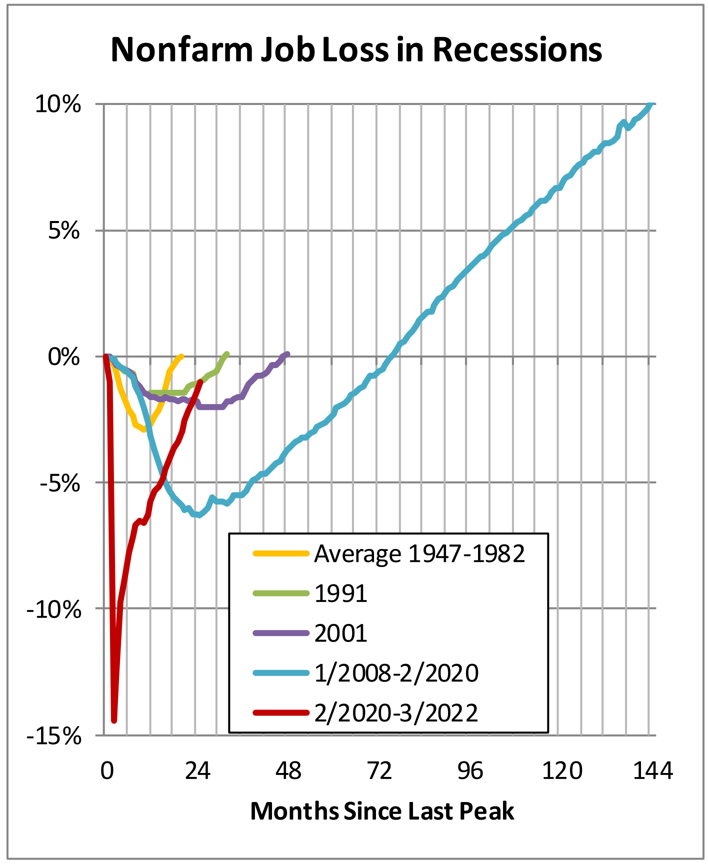
The Nation—current business cycle

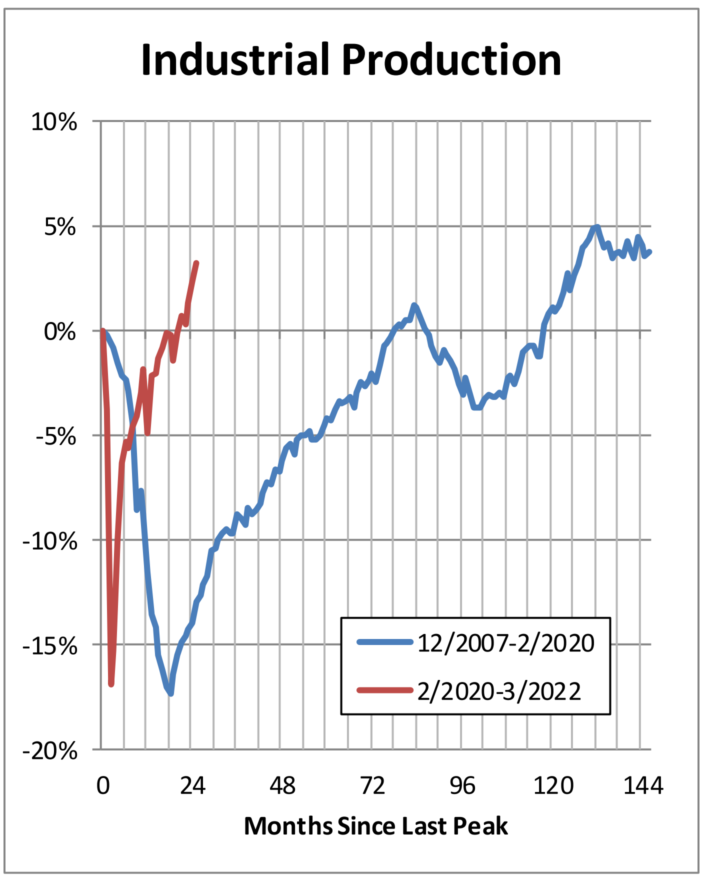
Years ago, economist Paul Samuelson once quipped that the stock market had predicted nine out of the last five recessions. Somehow that quote has morphed into "economists have predicted nine out of the…" If you do a web search for "why are economists so bad at predicting recessions" you'll get a lot of hits. If you search for "why are economists so good at predicting recessions", well… Predicting recessions is way beyond my pay grade. I will say it's extremely unusual for GDP to be negative and for industrial production (+2.9 percent), retail sales (+3.6 percent) and nonfarm employment (+1.1 percent) to be expanding quite strongly at the same time. Things are a bit weird out there, and not conducive to confident predictions. April labor market trends will be covered in the next issue.

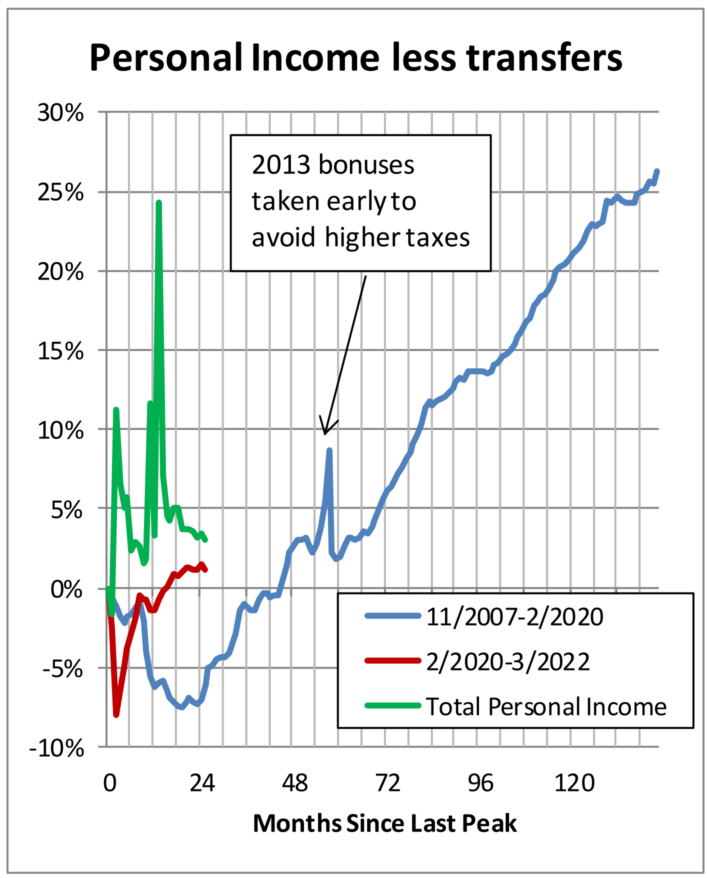
- GDP did decline in the first quarter of 2022, by -1.4 percent. While consumer spending (+2.7 percent) and investment (+2.3 percent) both increased, less was spent on domestic goods and services and more on imports. Exports, after a big jump in 2021 Q4, dipped a bit, and were still 8 percent below pre-COVID levels, a reflection on the weakness of economies around the world and supply chain issues.
- Total personal income slipped by 0.4 percent in March; income during the month was still 3.1 percent higher than February 2020. When transfer payments like Social Security, Medicare and unemployment insurance benefits were factored out, income was off by 0.3 percent over the month, and was only 1.1 percent higher than two years earlier. The difference was due in large part to the continued unwinding of stimulus-related transfer payments (see below).
- Industrial production continued to climb, increasing by 1.0 percent in January, 0.9 percent in February, and 0.9 percent in March, with sharp increases in manufacturing and mining (mostly petroleum).
- Retail sales declined by 0.7 percent over the month, but food service sales increased.

[1] Eerily paralleling the start of *The Ministry for the Future*, mentioned on these pages a few issues ago. Life imitates art. Again.


Retail/Food Service Sales
20%
10%
0%
-10%
-20%
-30%
-40%
-50%
-60%
0
24
48
72
96
120
144
Months Since Last Peak
11/2007-2/2020
2/2020-3/2022
Food Service

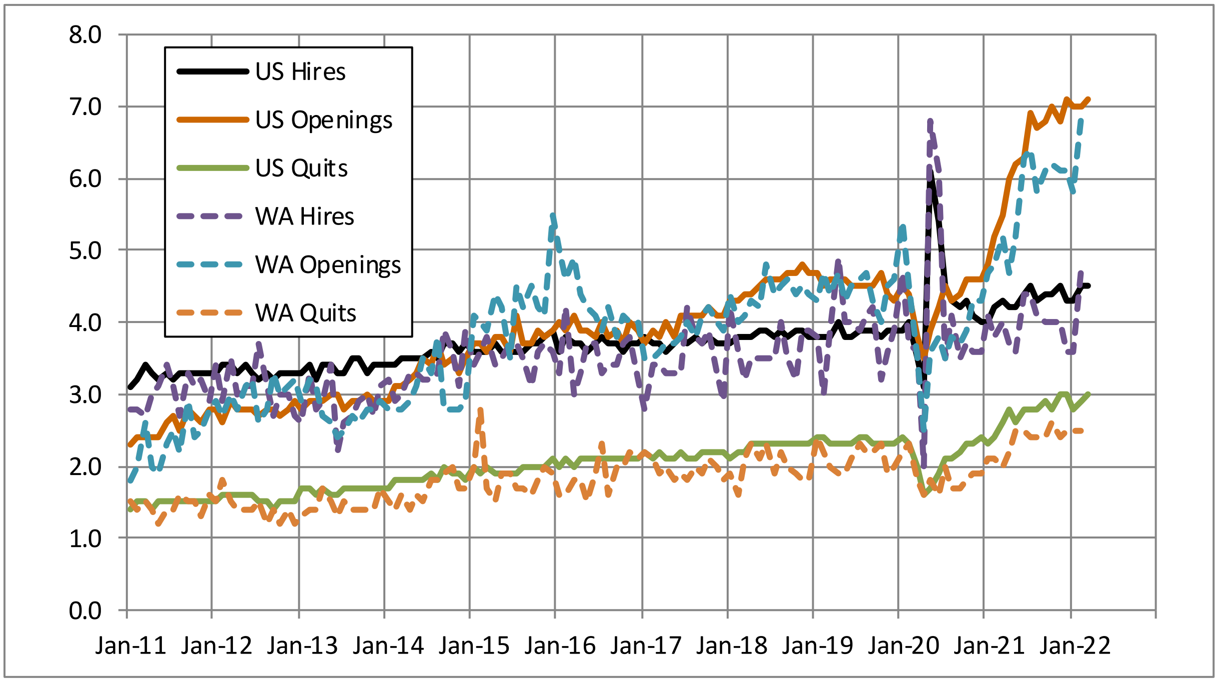

Nonfarm Job Loss in Recessions
10%
5%
0%
-5%
-10%
-15%
0
24
48
72
96
120
144
Months Since Last Peak
Average 1947-1982
1991
2001
1/2008-2/2020
2/2020-3/2022


Industrial Production
10%
5%
0%
-5%
-10%
-15%
-20%
0
24
48
72
96
120
144
Months Since Last Peak
12/2007-2/2020
2/2020-3/2022


Personal Income less transfers
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
-5%
-10%
0
24
48
72
96
120
Months Since Last Peak
2013 bonuses taken early to avoid higher taxes
11/2007-2/2020
2/2020-3/2022
Total Personal Income

- The labor market continued to recover, with good job gains (+438,000), lower unemployment (3.6 percent, down two tenths) and higher labor force participation (62.4 percent). Employment was 1.6 million jobs/1.0 percent below pre-COVID levels, but 3.7 million/2.4 percent short when population growth is factored in.
- There was little change in the rate of hiring, job openings, and quits in February. Compared with the U.S., in January, Washington state had lower rates for hiring, job openings, and quits—in other words, less turnover in the labor market here. Does that mean we have happier/better paid workers in our state?

Job opening, hire and quit rates, adjusted for seasonal patterns
United States, January 2011 through February 2022
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics/JOLTS



Inflation, the stimulus, supply chain, corporate profits and the labor market

Inflation by any measure continued to be high in March. The consumer price index for urban consumers (CPI-U) was up over the month at an annualized 15.9 percent, and has risen by 8.6 percent over the year. The technically more accurate chained index (CPI-C) increased 15.2 percent monthly, 8.1 percent over the year. Ouch! Looking at price increases for individual items was sobering (bacon, +18.2 percent! coffee, +11.2 percent! doughnuts, +10.4 percent! how are we supposed to make it through the day?). There were some exceptions, notably: cable/satellite service, +4.2 percent; ice cream, +3.3 percent; cheese, +3.1 percent; store-bought alcoholic beverages, +2.7 percent; internet service, +2.3 percent; wireless service, +-0.8 percent. So apparently, the universe is telling us to stay glued to our devices and pound down cheese, ice cream and alcohol.

More seriously, the rate of inflation is shown for broad categories in the table below, along with their importance in the overall inflation rate. Dissecting the 8.5 percent inflation rate, 3.475 of those percentage points (42 percent) came from travel-related expenditures, with (duh) gasoline being the biggest contributor. Food costs accounted for 1.209 points (14 percent), and 2.689 points (32 percent) came from housing-related spending. Another point came from other items like recreation, medical care, apparel, education and communications.

So what's causing the first bout of serious inflation in 40 years, and what should policymakers do about it? Any economics textbook will tell you that inflation has two causes—supply factors and demand factors.

A classic explanation of inflation is that there's too much money chasing too few goods and services. The classic policy response is to slow the economy down by raising interest rates.

- This is certainly a factor in today's economy. Retail and food service sales, for example, increased by 2.6 percent in the two years prior to COVID—see the contrasting trend lines in the graphs above. In the two years since COVID, sales were up 14.1 percent. COVID stimulus payments clearly helped support a rapid recovery (again, note the contrasting pace of recovery in the graphs above for employment, industrial production and income, comparing 2009 with 2020).
- The Federal Reserve Bank ("The Fed") lowered interest rates to rock bottom in 2008, and also engaged in quantitative easing to inject more funds and stability into the banking system. This was a key policy move that helped prevent a depression and, along with the $800 billion stimulus passed by Congress, helped a recovery start to take hold in 2010. The Fed, knowing that monetary policy has limited effectiveness in battling deep recessions, begged Congress to extend the stimulus. Congress refused, and instead started to cut the budget deficit in 2010—which slows the economy down and was a major reason why the recovery took so long. The Fed correctly chose to continue its expansionary policies as the economy remained well below full employment.
- Unfortunately, the Fed waited too long to end quantitative easing and to bring interest rates back to normal. The initial result was too much money at the top of the income distribution, which led to assets like the stock market—and houses—being bid up.
    - Private equity groups and similar corporate investors have been steadily increasing their ownership of apartment complexes for the past decade.
    - Their purchases of single-family residences, which was almost insignificant two years ago, has exploded in the past year, making up about 18 percent of home purchases in the last half of 2021, many of which were converted to rentals. This effectively lowers inventories for individual homebuyers by 20 percent; lower supply means higher prices.
    - As Professor Desiree Fields writes, "Corporate landlords are outcompeting would-be owner occupiers with all-cash, no-contingency offers; they're charging rent increases averaging 20 percent for new move-ins; and they're more likely to pursue eviction than mom-and-pop landlords, even during the pandemic." Private equity is known for minimizing operating costs—in this case maintenance—and raising prices, in order to increase profits. This will likely mean a long-term deterioration of the housing stock.
- The upshot—COVID stimulus payments, when weighed against the costs of buying a home or ongoing rent payments, probably had little impact on housing prices and rent. The culprit here was Fed policy and our unregulated predatory financial markets. And, yes, a shortage of housing units has also played a role, but that doesn't begin to explain the recent boom in prices.

The second classic explanation for inflation has to do with supply factors. For example, when the supply of oil was constrained in 1973 and 1979, inflation shot up because oil was such an important input into so many goods and services. We're all aware of the many supply constraints currently due to supply-chain issues, and now with the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine—especially on oil and wheat. Price hikes for heating and electricity accounted for more than half a point of the inflation rate. COVID shutdowns in China will likely complicate supply chains issues.

A word about housing in the CPI: direct housing costs are divided into three components—rent on rental units, lodging away from home (mostly hotel/motel), and "owners' equivalent rent" (OER). Economists consider home ownership to be both an investment and a consumable service. For the purposes of inflation, they calculate what homeowners would have to pay if they were renting their current house as a consumable service. That equivalent rent measure will follow the trend of the actual rental housing market. However, it is not an actual cost that consumers pay out. Roughly a third of households are homeowners who have paid off their mortgage, and another third are paying off a mortgage, but mostly at a fixed interest. So most households have zero inflation when it comes to the cost of shelter (again, not counting maintenance, taxes, home furnishings etc.). As shown in the table below, the OER accounted for 1.1 points out of the 8.5 percent inflation rate, so adjusting for that would take a whole point off the inflation rate.

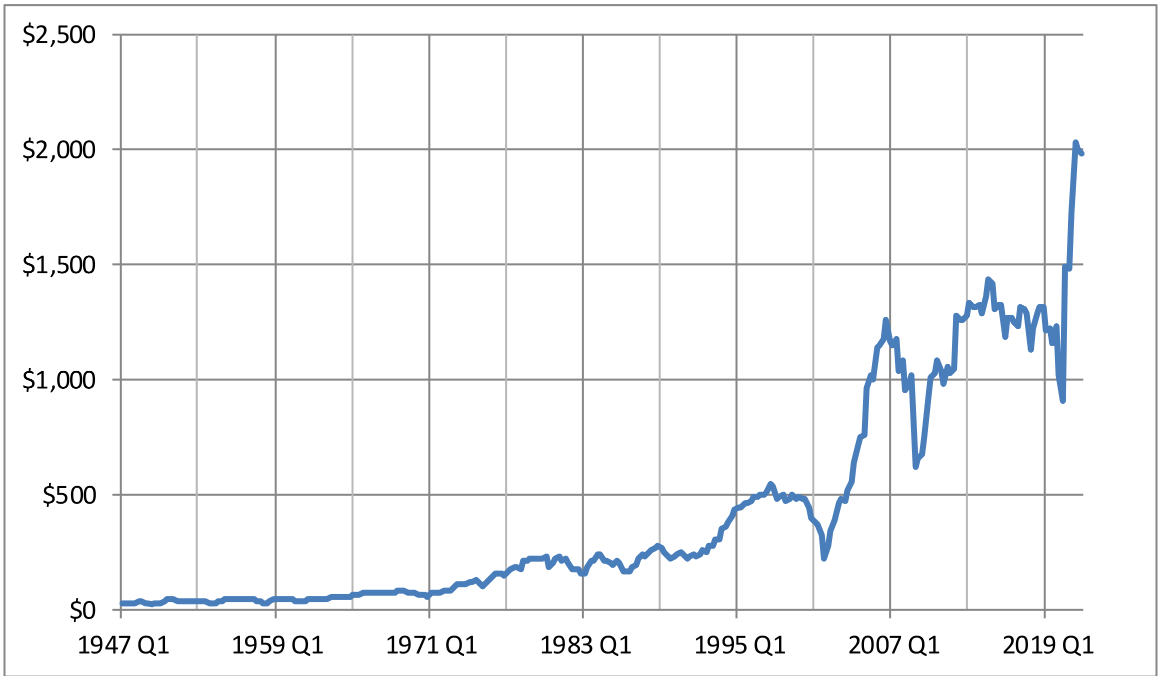
Another potentially confusing issue: the headlines are full of stories about double-digit inflation in rent, while the CPI shows only a 4.4 percent increase over the year. In reality, tenants usually experience a smaller annual increase in their rent, while the double-digit increase is (usually) only applied when rental units turnover. Annual turnover rates are in the neighborhood of 15 percent, so only a relatively small portion of units experience large increases in rent (there may occasionally be large across-the-board increases in an apartment complex, however, often after a change in ownership).

Inflation rate for different items, and their contribution to the 8.5 percent rate of inflation					
Item	**Inflation rate**	**Amount contributed to inflation**	**Item**	**Inflation rate**	**Amount contributed to inflation**
Getting from here to there	**NA**	**3.603**	**Home basics**	**NA**	**2.689**
New vehicles	12.5	0.466	Rent of primary residence	4.4	0.342
Used cars and trucks	35.3	0.977	Lodging away from home	25.1	0.220
Motor fuel	48.2	1.683	Owners' equivalent rent of residences	4.5	1.098
Motor vehicle parts and equipment	14.2	0.056	Natural gas and electricity	13.5	0.425
Auto-related services	7.7	0.293	Heating oil	51.7	0.088
Public transportation	14.9	0.128	Household furnishings and supplies	10.8	0.412
Food	**8.8**	**1.209**	Other shelter	NA	0.104
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	13.7	0.238	**Other items**	**NA**	**0.994**
Cereals, bread and bakery products	9.4	0.096	Apparel	6.8	0.175
Fruits and vegetables	8.5	0.118	Medical care	2.9	0.253
Dairy products	7.0	0.054	Recreation	4.8	0.262
Nonalcoholic beverages	8.0	0.075	Education and communication	1.5	0.104
Other food at home	10.3	0.210	Other	NA	0.200
Food away from home	6.9	0.418			

The third “un-classic” explanation for inflation is an increase in corporate profits. As the graph below shows, corporate profits have risen to unprecedented levels in the past year (even with a slight decline in 2021 Q4), with a significant impact on prices. Food prices, for example, contributed 1.209 points of the 8.5 percent inflation rate. Increasing incomes do not generate a commensurate increase in demand for food. Aside from closures in meat-packing plants, COVID has had little effect on food prices. The cost of farming inputs has gone up, in part due to increased energy and labor costs, but the big factor has been monopolists in the food processing chain flexing their muscles to raise prices and profit margins. Let’s not forget that Pfizer and Moderna pushed up the price of COVID vaccines in the middle of a pandemic. According to one estimate, half of all inflation is due to increased corporate profits.

Raising interest rates will do little to address supply chain issues and soaring corporate profits. Further, “slowing the economy” usually means slower hiring or perhaps even job losses—both having huge racial equity issues, as well as disproportionately impacting whites with less than a college degree in formal education. A slower labor market will likely put a damper on wage increases. What we could end up with is an economy with high profits, continuing inflation, stagnant wages, and a stagnant labor market—making the distribution of income and wealth even more skewed.

Nonfinancial corporate business: Profits before tax (without IVA and CCAdj)
United States, first quarter 1947 through fourth quarter 2022
Billions of dollars, not adjusted for inflation
Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



State of the States—and PDX

After an incredibly hot February (+31,700 jobs!), Washington had a more good/normal month in March, adding 8,800 jobs. That brought the state within 30,300 jobs—0.9 percent—of the pre-COVID level. The state's population has grown during COVID, so adjusting for the additional working-age residents, the "job gap" was closer to 100,000 jobs.

Some key industries updated: leisure & hospitality, despite solid hiring in the past three months, remained in a catch-up mode, with an 8.1 percent loss (28,300 jobs) during COVID. Within that sector, food services had closed to within 8,300 jobs/-3.2 percent of recovery, while lodging, still feeling the loss of business travel, was down 8,100 jobs/-21.4 percent. Arts, entertainment & recreation was almost as bad at -11,900/-21.5 percent. Manufacturing continued to make little headway (-31,600 jobs/-10.7 percent), with aerospace still struggling (-22,600, -25.1 percent). Fabricated metals, machinery and electronics (which probably include some aerospace suppliers) were also hurting. On the nondurable side of production, food processing (outside of fruits and vegetables), paper products and printing all still had large deficits. Nursing and residential facilities still have major shortages: -7,000 jobs/-11.0 percent. While we don't estimate childcare services on a monthly basis, the latest data (December 2021) show an 11.9 percent drop from two years earlier. Other services, which include personal services like hair salons and many non-profits, were still 11.3 percent below pre-COVID levels. Higher education continued to struggle, with public university/community college staffing off by 11,700 jobs (-14.4 percent, probably due to lower enrollment).

Now the good news. Construction was up 7,900 jobs/3.5 percent over the business cycle. Retail trade had 17,300 jobs/4.4 percent more employment, with most segments doing well: building materials & garden supply, grocery stores, health & personal care stores, general merchandise and "other retail trade"—which includes electronic shopping. The exceptions: auto-related retail and clothing stores. Transportation services has added jobs on balance, with warehousing and storage up 6,100 jobs (+36.5 percent!) but transportation support activities lagging (-3,000/-13.8 percent). Employment in prepackaged software (+8,600 jobs/+11.6 percent) and computer systems design (+8,500 jobs/+14.2 percent) has accelerated, reflected strong demand for technology services.

Finally, preliminary estimates for employment services (mostly staffing services aka temp agencies) showed a huge jump over the past few months to record highs (+8,300 jobs/+14.6 percent over the business cycle). We'll have to wait another month to see if these initial estimates were too optimistic.

Monthly and cumulative employment change for the COVID recession by area					
Month	Washington	Seattle Metro	Oregon	Portland Metro	US
March 2020	-23,600	-15,500	-17,400	-16,000	-1,498,000
April	-393,900	-195,600	-264,600	-163,800	-20,493,000
May	-14,600	-12,000	18,300	6,000	2,642,000
June	84,800	34,600	57,600	30,200	4,505,000
July	50,800	19,300	29,000	14,700	1,388,000
August	30,500	13,000	18,400	13,600	1,665,000
September	14,200	13,000	8,500	5,900	919,000
October	1,400	0	7,300	5,800	647,000
November	6,200	700	2,900	3,700	333,000
December	-13,000	-7,200	-18,500	-12,600	-115,000
January 2021	400	-5,000	300	2,200	520,000
February	22,000	10,000	14,900	8,600	710,000
March	22,300	7,400	24,000	10,400	704,000
April	21,700	10,200	7,700	4,200	263,000
May	2,400	500	1,100	3,300	447,000
June	17,800	9,200	2,600	4,000	557,000
July	38,400	17,300	34,800	14,600	689,000
August	13,400	11,300	-1,500	2,700	517,000
September	10,100	12,300	900	2,200	424,000
October	11,800	13,700	-900	5,000	677,000
November	13,200	7,600	11,600	7,600	647,000
December	13,600	10,000	6,600	6,500	588,000
January 2022	3,000	4,100	5,100	3,500	504,000
February	28,000	8,100	9,700	4,700	750,000
March	8,800	7,000	5,600	2,600	431,000
Net change	-30,300	-26,000	-36,000	-30,400	-1,579,000
Percent	-0.9%	-1.5%	-1.8%	-2.4%	-1035.4%

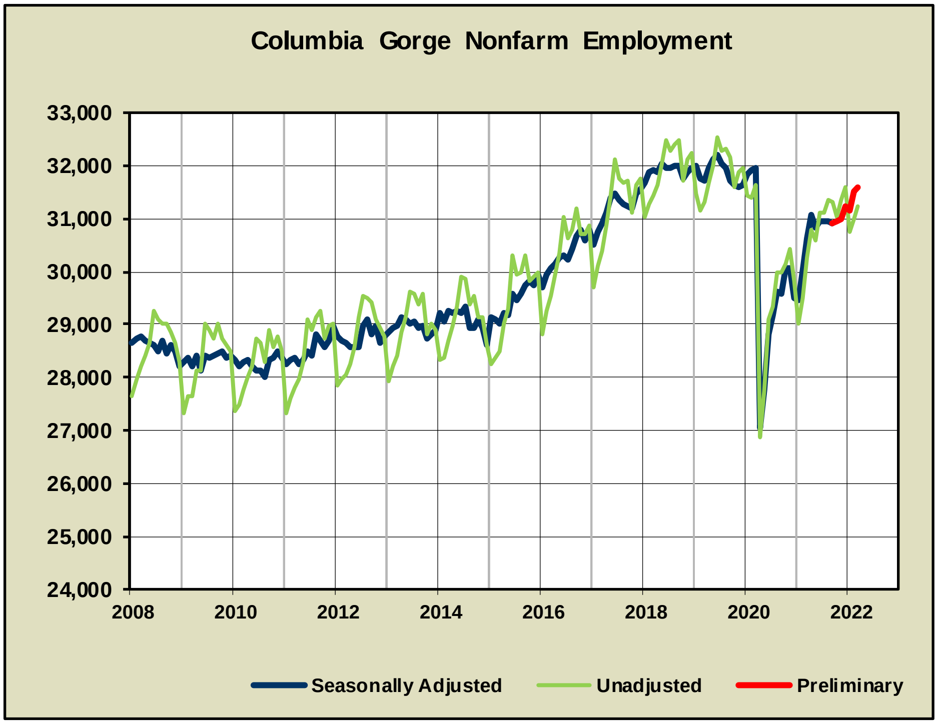
Oregon opened the year with strong job growth, adding 5,100 jobs in January, 12,300 in February and 5,600 in March. Leisure & hospitality continued to recover, adding 5,100 jobs in those months, but still had a long ways to go, needing 14,600 more jobs (a 6.7 percent deficit) to return to pre-COVID levels. Transportation and warehousing has had the strongest recovery of any industry (+5,300, +7.2 percent), while professional services dropped to second (+5,200 jobs, +5.1 percent). Other industries which have recovered: construction (+4.6 percent), real estate, rental & leasing (+4.4 percent), information services (+0.8 percent), retail trade (+0.7 percent) and wholesale trade (+0.4 percent).

Seattle still lags the state in terms of recovery, needing another 26,000 jobs (1.5 percent) to match pre-COVID employment. Aerospace (-19,100 jobs, -22.9 percent) and leisure & hospitality (-25,800, -14.8 percent) remain the biggest challenges, along with state educational services (-7,700 jobs -19.3 percent). On the plus side: retail trade (+10,900, +5.4 percent), software (+7,600, +10.6 percent) and professional services (+15,100, +10.1 percent), which includes computer systems design (+5,600, +11.5 percent). In contrast with the state as a whole, transportation & warehousing has not yet recovered.

Unemployment rates varied from 4.2 percent in Washington, Seattle Metro's 3.1 percent, 3.8 percent in Oregon and Portland—none significantly different from the national rate of 3.6 percent. The broader U-6 labor utilization rate (which also includes "marginally attached" workers who have been in the labor force in the past year but not in the current was probably close to the U.S. rate of 6.9 percent.

The Gorge

Preliminary estimates showed the Gorge gained 40 jobs in March, after a 420 job gain in February, on a seasonally-adjusted basis. Much of the increase over the past two months came in the beleaguered leisure & hospitality sector, and there were smaller advances in trade, transportation & utilities and local government.



Unadjusted employment expanded by 260 jobs in March, to a total of 31,240. Almost every industry added jobs, topped by local government (+70), followed by construction, manufacturing and professional & business services (each +40) and leisure & hospitality (+35).

Comparing March 2022 with February 2020, before COVID struck:

- Total nonfarm employment declined by 330 jobs, or 1.0 percent. This was about the same as the U.S. and Washington, and better than Oregon and the Portland and Seattle metro areas (see table below).
- Mining, logging & construction employed 1,510 in March, which after seasonal adjustment was 60 jobs more than February 2020 (+4.1 percent).
- Manufacturing employed 3,940; after adjustment, that was a drop of 145 jobs, a 3.5 percent decline.
- Trade, transportation & utilities had 5,550 employees, a gain of 300 jobs/5.4 percent after adjustment.
- Professional & business services employed 2,130, matching its pre-pandemic level.
- Education & health services, with 4,790 jobs, a decline of 50 jobs (-1.1 percent) from February 2020.
- Leisure & hospitality employment was estimated at 4,555 jobs, down 340 jobs, a 6.9 percent decline.
- All other service industries—including information services, finance and real estate and other services—employed 2,715, a loss of 80 jobs (-2.8 percent) over the course of the downturn.
- Government declined by 70 jobs to 6,050, a -1.1 percent decline. The loss remained concentrated in K-12 education.

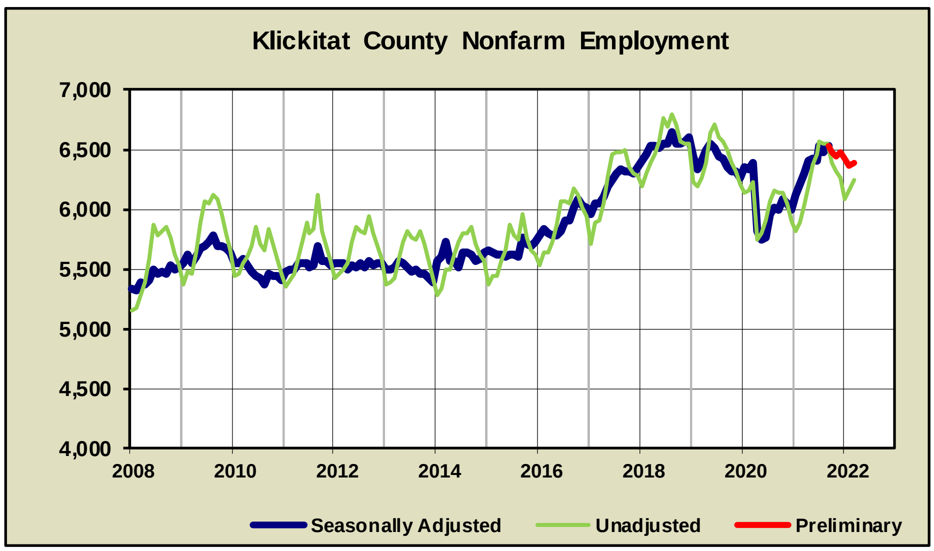
The unemployment rate for the Gorge was estimated at 4.6 percent. That was almost two points lower than the 6.5 percent from last February. Almost 2,100 Gorge residents were looking for work, about 770 less than a year ago. The very unofficial seasonally-adjusted rate was 3.9 percent in both February and March.

Gorge Nonfarm Employment		
	Monthly Change	
Month	Unadjusted	SA
March 2020	210	45
April	-4,750	-4,920
May	890	735
June	1,330	1,035
July	230	360
August	670	455
September	5	-50
October	165	495
November	250	-5
December	-570	-555
January 2021	-825	-60
February	480	565
March	770	615
April	510	430
May	-180	-240
June	530	140
July	-30	5
August	240	-20
September	-35	-35
October	-285	30
November	335	50
December	255	240
January 2022	-860	-80
February	235	360
March	260	80
Net change		-330
Percent		-1.0%

Klickitat Summary

Preliminary estimates showed Klickitat County nonfarm employment increasing by 20 jobs in March. Unadjusted employment rose by 80 jobs to a total of 6,240 jobs. Over the month, most industries had at least a small gain, including 20 each in construction, professional & business services and leisure & hospitality.

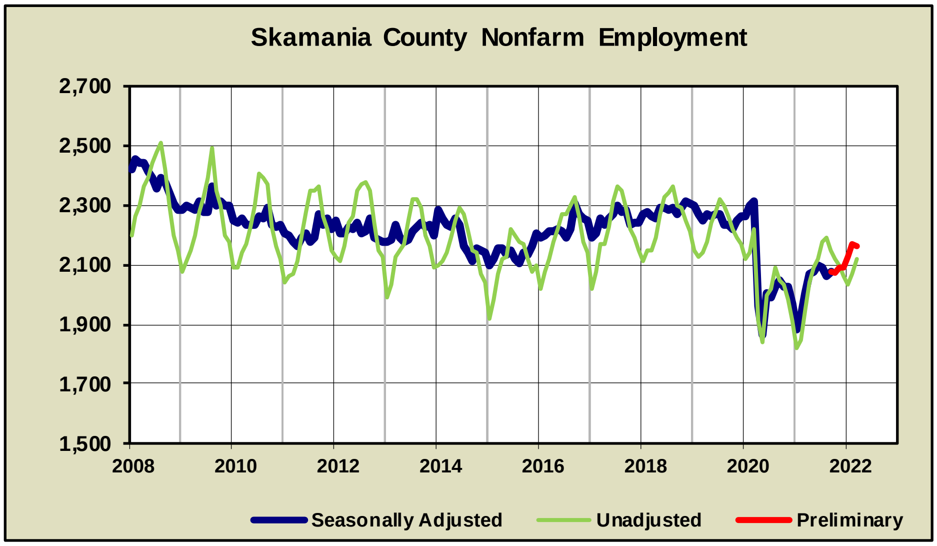
Employment was slightly above (30 jobs, +0.5 percent) above its pre-COVID level—which was still better than the nation, two states and the two closest major metro areas. On the plus side: retail trade (+50 jobs), transportation services (+30 jobs), professional & business services (+70 jobs), and all other services (+50 jobs). On the down side: manufacturing (-150 jobs), leisure & hospitality (-10 jobs), and K-12 education (-60 jobs).



Job Loss Since February 2020	
Klickitat	0.5 percent
Skamania	-5.9 percent
The Gorge	-1.0 percent
U.S.	-1.0 percent
Washington	-0.9 percent
Seattle Metro	-1.5 percent
Oregon	-1.8 percent
Portland Metro	-2.4 percent

The county unemployment rate was estimated at 6.0 percent, compared with 7.3 percent last March. About 630 county residents were jobless and looking for work, 80 fewer than a year ago.

Skamania Summary



Skamania County nonfarm employment increased by 40 jobs on a seasonally-adjusted basis in February, and was unchanged in March. Unadjusted employment also rose by 50 jobs in March, to a total of 2,190 jobs. Manufacturing and accommodations & food services each added 20 jobs during the month.

The county was still 135 jobs (on a seasonally-adjusted basis) below the pre-COVID total—the worst percentage loss (-6.1 percent) in the state. Trade, transportation & utilities has gained 30 jobs, and manufacturing and local government excluding K-12 education were both up 10 jobs. Accommodations & food services was 110 jobs below pre-pandemic levels, while "all other services"—information services, financial services, professional & business services, and other services—has dropped by 50 jobs. K-12 education was down by 30 jobs as well.

The county's estimated unemployment rate of 6.1 percent was almost two and a half points below last March's 7.3 percent. About 350 county residents were jobless and seeking work, 50 less than a year ago.