

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Emerald Forest Products Sawmill

The Newly Constructed Sawmill Will Create 47 Jobs Thanks To the Recovery Act

Gem County Commissioners and the Gem County Chamber of Commerce unveiled and cut the ribbon for the new Emerald Forest Products sawmill on May 21, 2010 in Emmett, Idaho with the support of over 200 people attending the event.

Emerald Forest Products received \$4 million dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through the U.S. Forest Service which played a key role to achieve the completion of the sawmill, dry kiln, planer mill and shavings mill. The new sawmill facility will create 47 jobs on site, with additional jobs created through the logging and trucking industries. Currently, 44 people are working at the mill site. The dry kiln and the planer mill should begin operations by the end of June 2010.

Emerald Forest Products already has an agreement with a national hardware and lumber chain store to provide lumber for the 8 – 12 foot board market, helping ensure the long-term viability of the operations. Emerald Forest Products is investigating the possibility of installing an onsite biomass cogeneration facility to create heat and power fueled by slash to cover mill operations. Excess power would be sold to Idaho Power.

The mill began construction in 2002 but stalled because of a poor lumber market and funding challenges. The Recovery Act dollars made it possible for Emerald Forest Products to complete the project. The community support for this project has been outstanding with the inclusion of Gem County, City of Emmett, Idaho Department of Commerce, USDA Rural Development, and the Woody Biomass Utilization Partnership led by coordinator Morris Huffman.

“Through the U.S. Forest Service and the Recovery Act money we have been able to put this together,” said Emerald Forest Products Sawmill Owner Richard Vinson. “Our goal is to bring the slash out of the woods and make renewable energy with it. We named it Emerald Forest because we want to be the greenest mill in the country.”

State of Idaho Lieutenant Governor Brad Little said, “It’s a win for private business that we are going to have those dollars circulating through the economy. Every single component of the local economy is going to benefit from the multiplier of this facility.”

Cecilia Seesholtz, Boise National Forest Supervisor said, “The passage of the Recovery Act clearly has helped create jobs, both here on site, and in the woods.”

General Manager Dennis Drake said, “I am home, and it is nice to be working close to home. This is a sweet spot for our mill and the best spot to create American jobs!”



Owner Dick and Trisha Vinson Cut the Ribbon for the opening of the Emerald Forest Products sawmill. Looking on are Lt. Governor Brad Little and approximately 200 well wishers.



Worker at the Emerald Forest Sawmill in Emmett Idaho.