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Update of the Census for Lea County: Survey of Lea County Employers

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THE UNIVERSITY *of* NEW MEXICO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) at the University of New Mexico (UNM) surveyed businesses in Lea County as part of a project to analyze the changing economy of Lea County and to develop new economic forecasts and population and demographic projections for the area. The survey was conducted on-line using *Survey Monkey*. While the completed surveys, which numbered 117, were reasonably reflective of the underlying distribution of establishments by industry, some industries, like mining, transportation, and accommodations and food services, were under-represented both in terms of respondents and, particularly for mining, in terms of total industry employment. Others, like healthcare and social assistance, were over-represented.

BBER explored employer overall satisfaction with the business climate and the local workforce. Over 70% of responding employers indicated considerable satisfaction with the local business climate, with only 7% indicating some dissatisfaction. As was true back in 2007, employers generally like the overall business climate but many seem to have concerns about the local work force: 21% indicated some dissatisfaction with work ethic and habits of those hired locally, while 22% expressed dissatisfaction with their education and training.

These issues were further explored by asking employers to review a list of potential challenges and rank using 1, 2, and 3, the top three they currently face. The greatest challenges facing Lea County firms appear to be labor related. Of all employers, 31.4 percent identified their greatest challenge as “finding good workers and keeping them”, and 57.4 percent of all responding employers including this challenge among their top three. This is lower than the 70.2% who responded the same back in 2007, but it still very high. Ranked number two was “the lack of affordable housing here” which was ranked among to top three by almost 36%. The housing situation has made more difficult attracting and keeping good workers. The third top concern was the “education and training of the workforce.”

Relatively few responding employers indicated that they were directly dependent on the oil and gas industry, although this may simply reflect the under-representation of the industry in the survey. Some sell to this industry among others, some depend on exports, and many more (63%) are more affected by the general state of the local economy.

When asked about their plans over the next couple years, a majority (59%) indicated they planned to continue operating at current levels, while 37% indicated plans to expand. although 14% had no firm plans. Three were planning to cut back; 2 said they were shutting down. Over 70% of those in health care was planning to expand, as were almost 55% in retail trade, and over 40% in both manufacturing and mining. In terms of the job numbers, major increases are expected over the next few years in mining and manufacturing, while the increases in other industries will generally be small.

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SURVEY OF LEA COUNTY EMPLOYERS

The Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) at the University of New Mexico (UNM) conducted a study of employers in Lea County, New Mexico in order to understand current business concerns and to evaluate current and future labor requirements as a basis for projecting future employment growth. Labor force requirements include availability and suitability, in terms of education, training, experience, and motivation. Employers in Lea County, and especially those who are trying to expand their operations, are concerned about having access to a growing pool of qualified workers.

Methodology

Having had good experience with on-line surveys using Survey Monkey since the 2007 study was published, BBER decided to use this approach for Lea County. The challenge was to get email addresses for Lea County employers. In discussion with Dennis Holmberg, we decided to work through the chambers of commerce in different Lea County communities and the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County (EDCLC), all of which have mailing lists, with physical as well as email addresses. These business organizations were asked plug the importance of the survey and were each provided with a stack of postcards and a letter to be sent to their members electronically. A copy of the postcard and of the letter that was emailed can also be found in the Appendix. Members were first sent postcards through the mail informing them of the survey and its importance. The postcard included the URL for the survey on Survey Monkey. We then had Dennis Holmberg instruct the organization to send out the email letter, which included the same URL and would get them directly to the site. Two follow-up emails were sent over the course of the summer. To further bolster responses, we sent emails to a list of businesses that BBER had purchased a couple years ago, but this generated but a trickle of responses.

At the urging of our contacts in Lea County and in light of BBER's own experience, we designed a survey that was relatively short but got at essential issues. The survey instrument was reviewed by Dennis Holmberg and also Melissa Allen of the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County and revised. A copy of the final instrument is provided in Appendix 2.

Survey Coverage

Table 1 provides a comparison of the survey business respondents by industry to the underlying distribution of establishments in the 2014 NM Department of Workforce Solutions *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages* (QCEW) data for Lea County. Overall, the coverage is reasonable. Mining firms are under-represented as are those for transportation and warehousing, and for accommodations and food services, while finance and insurance and health care and social assistance are over-represented. No agricultural/natural resource businesses responded and there are no wholesalers represented.

Table 1: Industry of Respondents

Industry	Survey Businesses		Lea Co QCEW Establishments % of Total	Difference (Respondent - QCEW)
	Frequency	Percent		
Mining ¹	14	12%	19.5%	-7.6%
Utilities	4	3%	1.1%	2.3%
Construction	8	7%	8.3%	-1.5%
Manufacturing	7	6%	2.3%	3.6%
Retail Trade	11	9%	10.5%	-1.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	1	1%	7.7%	-6.9%
Information	2	2%	1.3%	0.4%
Finance and Insurance	10	8%	3.6%	4.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	7	6%	4.0%	1.9%
Professional and Business Services	10	8%	9.6%	-1.1%
Educational Services	5	4%	0.8%	3.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	14	12%	7.3%	4.6%
Arts, Entertainments, and Recreation	3	3%	1.3%	1.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	3	3%	7.3%	-4.8%
Other services	9	8%	6.3%	1.3%
Public Administration	9	8%	3.1%	4.5%
No response	1	1%	6.3%	-5.5%
Total Responses ²	118	100%	100%	-0.3%

1 - Mining responses compiled from "Oil & Gas Extraction", "Oil & Gas Support Activities", and "Other Mining"

2- Industries not self reported from survey omitted from Industries as a Percent of Total

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Table 2 compares employment by industry for respondents with the Lea County QCEW employment by industry in 2014. Here the differences are larger, particularly for mining, which is under-represented by 20%, and construction, underrepresented by 7.8%, and for professional and business services and health care and social assistance, over-represented respectively by 10.7% and 13.4%. In the case of mining, larger companies are apparently not well represented among respondents.

Table 3 presents a simple frequency distribution of respondents by the location(s) of their operations within Lea County. As would be expected, Hobbs accounted for the largest number of respondents (90) indicating at least one establishment, followed by Lovington (21), by Eunice (20), by Tatum (9) and by Jal (8). Eleven employers indicated that they were located elsewhere in Lea County, perhaps an unincorporated area.

While the completed surveys were reasonably reflective of the underlying distribution of establishments by industry, some industries, like mining, transportation, and

accommodations and food services, were under-represented both in terms of respondents and, particularly for mining, in terms of total industry employment, while others, like business and professional services and healthcare and social assistance, were over-represented.

Table 2: Respondent Employment by Industry Compared with Lea County QCEW
Employment by Industry

Industry	Industry Employment Reported	As a % of Total Employment Reported	Lea Co QCEW Employment % of Total	Difference (Respondent - QCEW)
Mining*	623	6.2%	26.5%	-20.3%
Utilities	237	2.3%	1.3%	1.0%
Construction	213	2.1%	9.9%	-7.8%
Manufacturing	541	5.4%	2.9%	2.5%
Retail Trade	427	4.2%	9.7%	-5.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	29	0.3%	5.5%	-5.2%
Information	97	1.0%	0.9%	0.1%
Finance and Insurance	284	2.8%	1.9%	0.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	65	0.6%	1.6%	-1.0%
Professional and Business Services	1,783	17.7%	7.0%	10.7%
Educational Services	1,680	16.6%	6.9%	9.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,118	21.0%	7.6%	13.4%
Arts, Entertainments, and Recreation	180	1.8%	1.4%	0.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	96	1.0%	7.2%	-6.2%
Other Services	449	4.4%	2.5%	1.9%
Public Administraton	1,272	12.6%	2.5%	10.1%
No response	-	0.0%	4.5%	-4.5%
Grand Total	10,094	100.0%	99.8%	0.2%

* Mining responses compiled from "Oil & Gas Extraction", "Oil & Gas Support Activities", and "Other Mining"

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Table 3. Lea County Communities Where Respondents Have At Least One Establishment

Businesses with at Least one Location in ...	Frequency	Percent	% of County Population*
Hobbs	90	56.6%	53.0%
Lovington	21	13.2%	16.9%
Eunice	20	12.6%	4.5%
Jal	8	5.0%	3.2%
Tatum	9	5.7%	1.2%
Other	11	6.9%	
Respondents/ Census population	159	100%	69,999

* 2014 estimates from the US Census Bureau

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Local Business Climate and Challenges

BBER explored employer overall satisfaction with the business climate, with the work ethic and habits of the local workforce, and with the education and training of those hired locally. Employers were asked to indicate their responses to each of these dimensions on a 5 point scale, where 1 was very dissatisfied and 5 was very satisfied. The results are reported in **Table 4**. Of the 111, or 93%, who responded, 71.2% of employers answered 4 or 5, indicating considerable satisfaction with the local business climate in Lea County, while only 7.2% indicated some dissatisfaction by answering 1 or 2. Greater dissatisfaction was found with the work ethic and habits of those hired locally. Here 20.7% indicated some dissatisfaction (1 or 2), while only 12.6% answered 5, indicating they were very satisfied, and 35.1% answering 4. When asked about the education and training of those hired locally, there was a slightly higher percent (21.6%) who expressed their dissatisfaction by answering 1 or 2, while only 8.1% responded that they were very satisfied. As was true back in 2007, employers generally like the overall business climate by many seem to have concerns about the local work force.

Table 4. Overall Satisfaction of Lea County Employers, 2015

	Overall Satisfaction With...		
	business climate in Lea County	the work ethic and habits of those you have hired locally	the education and training of those you have hired locally
1 - Very Dissatisfied	1.8%	6.3%	5.4%
2	5.4%	14.4%	16.2%
3	21.6%	31.5%	32.4%
4	50.5%	35.1%	37.8%
5 - Very Satisfied	20.7%	12.6%	8.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

111 out of 117 responding, 94.9%

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These issues were further explored by asking employers to review a list of potential challenges and rank using 1, 2, and 3, the top three they currently face. **Table 5** provides the results, indicating from high to low the challenges that were ranked 1, 2, and 3 by the most employers.

The greatest challenges facing Lea County firms appear to be labor related. Of all employers, 31.4 percent identified their greatest challenge as “finding good workers and keeping them”,

and 57.4 percent of all responding employers indicated “finding good workers and keeping them” was one of their top three challenges. This is lower than the 70.2% who responded the same back in 2007, but it is a very high percentage and is more than 20 points above the next contending challenge.

Table 5: Major Challenges Facing Surveyed Businesses

Challenges	#1	#2	#3	Total in Top 3
Finding good workers & keeping them	31.4%	18.8%	6.9%	57.4%
Lack of affordable housing here	4.9%	14.9%	15.8%	35.6%
Lack of educated/trained workforce	4.9%	9.9%	18.8%	33.7%
Boom & bust nature of local market	15.7%	5.0%	9.9%	30.7%
Government regulations	8.8%	10.9%	5.9%	25.7%
Cost of benefits, particularly healthcare	5.9%	9.9%	6.9%	22.8%
Wage/salary costs	3.9%	6.9%	10.9%	21.8%
Keeping up with demand	9.8%	3.0%	5.9%	18.8%
Increased competition	2.9%	4.0%	9.9%	16.8%
Inadequate infrastructure	4.9%	5.0%	3.0%	12.9%
Drug problems	2.0%	4.0%	3.0%	8.9%
Difficulties in raising capital, financing	3.9%	2.0%	0.0%	5.9%
Facility costs (mortgage, rent, utilities, upkeep)	0.0%	4.0%	2.0%	5.9%
Slack demand	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	2.0%
Other (please specify and rank)	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%	2.0%

* 102 correctly responded to the question
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While a small percentage of employers (4.9%) ranked “the lack of affordable housing here” as their number 1 challenge, altogether 35.6% included this among their top three. In our in-depth interviews with key stake-holders, BBER heard time and again this mentioned a major problem in efforts to recruit and keep good people. The third major concern based on inclusion in the top three was the lack of educated/trained workforce, and this was ranked in the top three by 33.7% of respondents. However, only 4.9% indicated this was their number one concern. In contrast with 2007, when many employers mentioned drugs as a major problem, this was the number one concern for only 2% of respondents and it appeared in the top 3 challenges for only 8.9% of employers. On the other hand, costs of benefits and wages drew slots 6 and 7 for being ranked among the top three.

Maybe not surprising given the recent plunges in the oil price, “boom and bust nature of local market” was ranked #1 by 15.9% of respondents and in the top three by 30.7%, putting it fourth place. Interestingly, “keeping up with demand” was ranked #1 by 9.8% of

respondents, although it appeared in the top three for only 18.8%, putting it in 8th place. Government regulations was ranked #1 by 8.8% of respondents and #2 by 10.9%, placing this challenge fifth on the basis of being ranked in the top three.

As noted above, the boom and bust nature of the local market was ranked by many as a major challenge. Because of the declines in oil prices seen over the past year, BBER decided to add a question that would explore the dependence of Lea County employers on the oil and gas industry. The responses are recorded in **Table 6**. Somewhat to our surprise but consistent with the underrepresentation of the industry among respondents, we found that only 7% answered “100%, this is what we do” with 8% responding, “Oil and gas industry is our major customer”. Ten percent did say that they “sell directly to this industry but have a range of other customers.” Fully 63% of those responding to the survey, however, said that “Our activity is affected by the overall health of the local economy”, while 11% rely on “sales outside the region”.

Table 6. Dependence of Lea County Employers on Oil and Gas Industry

	Frequency	Percent
Our activity is affected by the overall health of the local economy	69	63.3%
100%. This is what we do	8	7.3%
Sell directly to this industry but have a range of other customers	11	10.1%
Most of our sales are outside the region	12	11.0%
Oil and gas industry is our major customer	9	8.3%
	109	100%

* 109 out of 117, or 93.1% responded.

Current and Future Plans

Lea County employers were given a series of choices regarding their plans over the next couple years and asked to check the box which most accurately reflects their plans. The results are reported in **Table 7**. Sixty-nine employers, or 59%, indicated that they planned to continue operating at current levels. Twenty-seven, or 23.1%, said they were planning to expand, while another 16, or 13.7%, said they had plans to expand but no firm plan regarding additional plant or employees. Three employers (2.6%) indicated they would continue operating but would scale back their operations and employment. Two employers (1.7%) indicated they would be shutting down.

Table 7: Future Plans of Responding Businesses

Category	Frequency	Percent
Plan to expand operations here within the next 2 years.	27	23.1%
Plan to expand operations here within next 2 years but have no firm plans regarding additional plant and/or additional employees	16	13.7%
Plan to continue operating in Lea County at current levels	69	59.0%
Plan to continue operating in Lea County but will be scaling back employment	3	2.6%
We are closing down our Lea County operations within 2 years	2	1.7%
Total	117	100.0%

*Response rate 117 out of 117, or 100%.

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Table 8 provides the industry detail on future plans, the industries where employers are expanding and where they will be scaling back or shutting down. It is interesting that none of the respondents from the mining industry indicated plans to scale back or shut down their Lea County operations. Indeed, 42.8% indicated their intention to expand. Less surprising was the finding that more than half (54.6%) of the retailers were planning to expand. Twenty-five percent of the utilities responding indicated plans to expand, which might be expected given the growth in demand and the difficulties at least one firm has had completing projects because of labor shortages. More than half (54.6%) of those in retail are planning to expand, as are forty-three percent of responding manufacturers. One of the most welcome changes, however, may be the 71.5% of those in healthcare and social assistance that are planning to expand. As noted elsewhere, this industry has sustained employment losses since 2006.

Construction is the major industry where there are plans for scaling back (12.5%) or closing down (25%), although 10% of those in both finance and insurance and professional, scientific, and technical services indicate their intention to keep operating but to scale back employment.

Those planning to close down their operations were asked why they were closing. One business answered “oil prices”, and the other answered “lack of work.” One of those shutting down had 45 employees; the other did not provide a figure for their current employment.

Table 8: Future Plans of Lea County Businesses by Industry

Industry	Plan to expand operations here within the next two years.	Plan to expand but no firm plans regarding additional plant and/or employees	Plan to continue operating in Lea County at current levels	Plan to continue operating in Lea County but will be scaling back employment	Plan to close down Lea County operations within 2 years
Utilities	25.0%		75.0%		
Construction	12.5%	25.0%	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%
Manufacturing	28.6%	14.3%	57.1%		
Retail Trade	45.5%	9.1%	45.5%		
Transportation and Warehousing			100.0%		
Information			100.0%		
Finance and Insurance		10.0%	80.0%	10.0%	
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	28.6%		71.4%		
Professional, Scientific, and Technic	30.0%		60.0%	10.0%	
Educational Services		20.0%	80.0%		
Health Care and Social Assistance	42.9%	28.6%	28.6%		
Arts, Entertainments, and Recreatic	33.3%		66.7%		
Accommodation and Food Services			100.0%		
Public Administration	22.2%	33.3%	44.4%		
Other	11.1%		88.9%		
Grand Total	23.1%	13.7%	59.0%	2.6%	1.7%

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Employers were asked about the positions they currently need to fill, those they expect to fill in the next year or two, and those in the next 3-5 years. For each time period they were asked about the average skill level of the positions to be filled, their average education requirement, and whether prior work experience was required. The responses by industry are tabulated in **Table 9**. Some of the larger numbers are not a surprise. BBER had early intelligence from Melinda Allen of the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County.

Respondents from the Health Care Services industry indicated that they were currently trying to fill 59 positions and expected to fill 175 positions within the next two years and another 175 within 3 to 5 years. It is impressive to see the efforts to expand operations and employment in health care and social assistance. The declining employment in this industry has been an area of concern, since having good access locally to quality health care is extremely important for a community and keeps dollars flowing within the local economy. Indeed, with federal (Medicare and Medicaid) and state (Medicaid) governments often the primary payers for health care services, this industry actually brings dollars into the local economy.

Looking beyond health care, economic base jobs typically include mining and manufacturing, as businesses in these industries look to markets beyond the local market and bring dollars into the community from outside. Over 40% of the responding employers in these industries

in Lea County are planning to expand their operation over the next couple years. Employers from the mining industry reported they expected to fill over 400 jobs within the next 2 years, with further growth in the 3 to 5 year period. According to Table 11, responding manufacturers were expecting to increase employment by over 100 within the next couple years and by close to 500 in 3 to 5 years.

Some 55% of responding retailers are also planning to expand operations, although the cumulative employment numbers reported are less than 100 jobs. Retailers typically serve the local market, but the pull factor analysis reported in the main body of our report indicates this is an industry that is serving a population well beyond Lea County. Also looking to expand are employers providing professional, scientific and technical services as well as one of the utilities and those in real estate, rental and leasing services, but the numbers, if reported, are quite small.

Table 9. Positions Employers Need or Expect to Fill by Industry of the Respondent

Industry	Positions Currently Need to Fill				Positions Expect to Fill Within Next 2 Years				Positions Expect to Fill Within the Next 3-5 Years			
	Number	Average Skill Level	Average Education	Prior Work Experience	Number	Average Skill Level	Average Education	Prior Work Experience	Number	Average Skill Level	Average Education	Prior Work Experience
Mining	10	Medium skill	CDL to Vocational	Yes	420	Medium skill	CDL to Vocational	Yes	485	Medium skill	CDL to Vocational	Yes
Construction	3	Unskilled	Less than High School	No	7	Unskilled to High	Less than High School to Associate	No	6	Unskilled to High	Less than High School to Associate	No
Manufacturing	4	High skilled	Vocational to Bachelors	Yes	112	High skilled	Vocational to Masters	Yes	470	Medium to High	Vocational to Bachelors	Yes
Retail	33	Unskilled to Medium	None	No	57	Unskilled to Medium	None	No	63	Unskilled to Medium	None	No
Professional, Scientific, Technical	6	Medium to High	Vocational to Bachelors	Yes	6	Medium to High	Vocational to Bachelors	Yes	4	Medium to High	Vocational to Bachelors	Yes
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2	Medium	None	Yes	1	Medium skill	None	Yes	2	Medium skill	None	Yes
Health Care and Social Assistance	59	Medium to High	Bachelors to		175	Medium to High	Bachelor's to Professional	Yes	175	Medium to High	Bachelor's to Professional	Yes
Public Admin	49	Unskilled to Medium	Bachelors to Professional	Yes/No	156	Unskilled to Medium	None to Professional	Yes/No	352	Unskilled to Medium	None to Professional	Yes/No
Total	166				934				1,557			

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Appendix 1. Survey of Lea County Employers

Survey Instrument: Survey of Lea County Employers

Post-Card

Letter E-mailed to Employers

Survey of Lea County Employers

About this survey

The University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) and Geospatial and Population Studies (GPS) were commissioned by the Lea County Community Improvement Corporation to conduct a population census for Lea County. To this end, BBER is gathering information about the labor force needs and future plans of Lea County area businesses. As an employer, you are an important part of our analysis. Please respond to our questions regarding the future plans for your business' operations and any associated changes in future labor demand.

All information provided will be kept confidential and only summary of aggregate data will be reported.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact Dr. Lee Reynis at 505-277-2216 (lreynis@unm.edu) or Dr. Doleswar Bhandari 505-277-7067 (bhandar1@unm.edu) at BBER.

Please tell us about your business.

1. Please enter your business email address.

2. In which city/town/place is your business located?

Hobbs

Lovington

Eunice

Jal

Tatum

Other (please specify)

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3. Which of the following best describes the principal industry of your organization?

- Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting
- Oil & Gas Extraction
- Oil & Gas Support Activities
- Other Mining
- Utilities
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale Trade
- Retail Trade
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Information
- Finance and Insurance
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Management of Companies and Enterprises
- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services
- Educational Services
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Arts, Entertainments, and Recreation
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Public Administration

Other (please specify)

Survey of Lea County Employers

4. Please indicate the number of paid full- and part-time employees currently on the payroll of this business/organization. Please also indicate the number of contract workers.

Total Full-time (35+ hours per week)

Total Part-time(1-34 hours per week)

No. of contract workers who are not on the payroll

5. Please check the one response that most accurately reflects your future plans regarding this business' operations in Lea County:

- We are closing down our Lea County operations within 2 years
- Plan to continue operating in Lea County but will be scaling back employment
- Plan to continue operating in Lea County at current levels
- Plan to expand operations here within next 2 years but have no firm plans regarding additional plant and/or additional employees
- Plan to expand operations here within the next 2 years.

6. Why you want to close down your business?

7. How many employees would be laid off?

8. In your guess, how many people will you add as:

Full-time

Part-time

Contract Workers

9. How many positions do you expect to fill?

Currently need to fill

Over the next 2 years

In 3-5 years

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10. We would like to know about the positions you currently need to fill, those you expect to fill in the next year or two, and those in the next 3-5 years. In the form below, please select these positions and their educational requirements, skill levels from the drop-down menus.

	Average skill level	Average educational requirement	Prior work experience required
Currently need to fill	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Over the next 2 years	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
In 3-5 years	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

11. Is your business?

- Public (Federal, State, or Local Government)
 Private
 Non-Profit

Other (please specify)

12. How dependent is your operations on oil and gas activities?

- 100%. This is what we do
 Oil and gas industry is our major customer
 Sell directly to this industry but have a range of other customers
 Our activity is affected by the overall health of the local economy
 Most of our sales are outside the region

13. On a scale of 1 to 5, with "1" being very dissatisfied and "5" being very satisfied, please rate the following:

	1	2	3	4	5
Your overall satisfaction with business climate in Lea County	<input type="radio"/>				
Your overall satisfaction with the work ethic and habits of those you have hired locally	<input type="radio"/>				
Your overall satisfaction with the education and training of those you have hired locally	<input type="radio"/>				

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14. Please look over the list of choices below and indicate the first, second, and third greatest challenge facing your business (mark with a 1,2, and 3)

Keeping up with demand	<input type="text"/>
Boom & bust nature of local market	<input type="text"/>
Drug problems	<input type="text"/>
Increased competition	<input type="text"/>
Inadequate infrastructure	<input type="text"/>
Difficulties in raising capital, financing	<input type="text"/>
Facility costs (mortgage, rent, utilities, upkeep)	<input type="text"/>
Finding good workers & keeping them	<input type="text"/>
Government regulations	<input type="text"/>
Slack demand	<input type="text"/>
Wage/salary costs	<input type="text"/>
Lack of affordable housing here	<input type="text"/>
Cost of benefits, particularly healthcare	<input type="text"/>
Lack of educated/trained workforce	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify and rank)	<input type="text"/>

Post Card Mailed to Lea County Employers

Good decisions require good information

Lea County communities are experiencing changes. It is time to update the Census and provide the business community as well as government with reliable economic and demographic estimates and projections. With funding from the Lea County Community Improvement Corporation, UNM Bureau of Business & Economic Research is combining forces with UNM Geospatial and Population Studies to analyze the changing economy and demographics of Lea County and develop new population estimates and projections.

Critical to this effort is a workforce assessment. We want to understand your future plans, your current and future workforce requirements, and how the existing labor pool matches up. Please help us out by taking a short confidential survey on-line at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Lea-County-Employer-Survey>. Be sure to sign in using the business email address you typically use.

Thanks for your help!

Have input! 2015 Lea County Employer Survey

Letter E-Mailed to Lea County Employers



Bureau of Business &
Economic Research

Dear Lea County Employer:

Lea County communities are experiencing changes. It is time to update the Census and provide the business community as well as government with reliable economic and demographic estimates and projections. With funding from the Lea County Community Improvement Corporation, UNM Bureau of Business & Economic Research is combining forces with UNM Geospatial and Population Studies to analyze the changing economy of Lea County and Lea County communities and developing economic and population estimates and projections (to update the Census).

Critical to this effort is a workforce assessment. We want to understand your future plans, your current and future workforce requirements, and how the existing labor pool matches up. If you have not done so already, please help us out by taking a short confidential survey on-line at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Lea-County-Employer-Survey>. Be sure to sign in using the business email address you typically use.

Your organization is being sent this email by your local chamber or economic development organization. If you have already responded, thank you very much for your time and your input. If not, please take the Survey Monkey survey as soon as possible so we will have the benefit of your information in preparing our reports and completing our projections by September.

The survey will only take a few minutes to complete but we ask that you answer the survey as fully and accurately as possible. Any information you supply will be kept confidential by BBER, and only the aggregate results of the survey will be reported. Completion of the survey will constitute consent to participate. If you have any questions regarding the survey or confidentiality issues, please contact Dr. Doleswar Bhandari by email (bhandar1@unm.edu) or by phone (505-277-7067).

Thank you very much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lee A. Reynis
Research Professor of Economics