



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Saskatchewan

July 2019



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of Saskatchewan, including Regina-Moose Mountain, Swift Current-Moose Jaw, Saskatoon-Biggar, Yorkton-Melville and Prince Albert and Northern economic regions.

### OVERVIEW

Employment in Saskatchewan stood at 579,700 in July 2019, down 2,200 compared to the previous month. Considerable losses in full-time employment (-10,900) overshadowed gains in part-time positions (+8,800) during this period. Nonetheless, Saskatchewan's labour market is performing significantly better compared to this time last year; there are 11,300 more people employed in the province than there were in July 2018.

#### Saskatchewan Monthly Labour Force Statistics

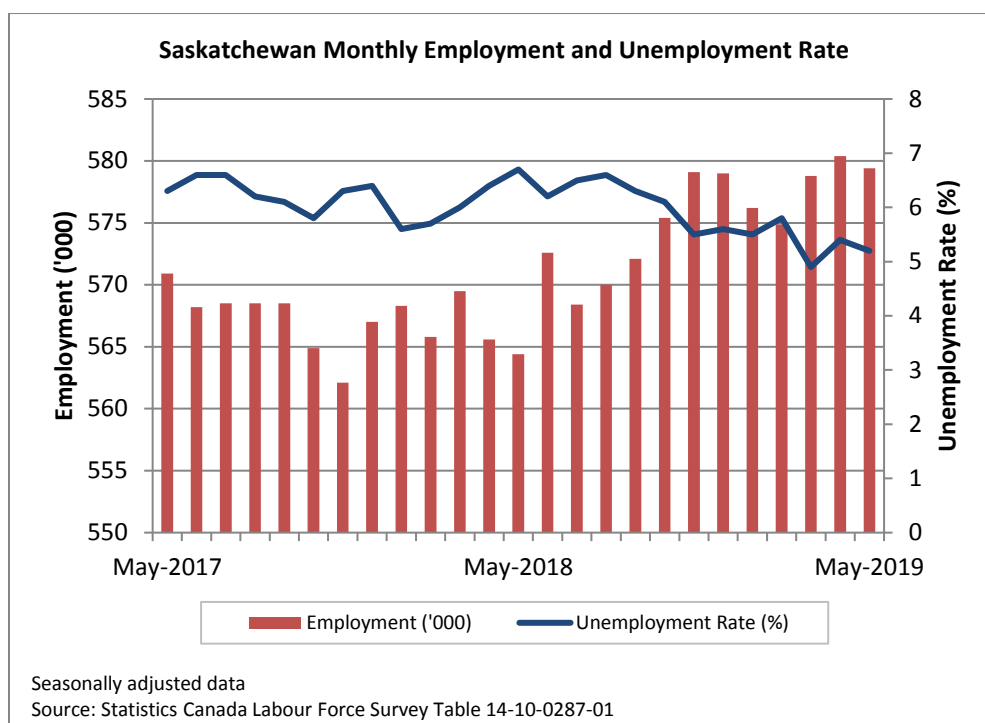
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	July 2019	June 2019	July 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	889.6	888.9	885.3	0.7	0.1	4.3	0.5
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	613.0	613.4	608.2	-0.4	-0.1	4.8	0.8
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	579.7	581.9	568.4	-2.2	-0.4	11.3	2.0
Full-Time ('000)	467.6	478.5	466.0	-10.9	-2.3	1.6	0.3
Part-Time ('000)	112.1	103.3	102.4	8.8	8.5	9.7	9.5
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	33.3	31.5	39.8	1.8	5.7	-6.5	-16.3
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	5.4	5.1	6.5	0.3	-	-1.1	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	68.9	69.0	68.7	-0.1	-	0.2	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	65.2	65.5	64.2	-0.3	-	1.0	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287-01, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

On a monthly basis, both public and private sector employment is down – by 900 and 3,800, respectively. At the same time, the number of self-employed Saskatchewanians is up 2,700.<sup>1</sup>

To support female entrepreneurship, the federal government recently announced \$4.5 million in funding for 11 women-owned businesses in Saskatchewan. The funding is a part of the Government of Canada's \$2 billion Women Entrepreneurship Strategy that aims to double the number of women-owned businesses by 2025.<sup>2</sup>



The number of unemployed in Saskatchewan increased 1,800 in July, while the unemployment rate nudged up 0.3 percentage points to 5.4%. Overall, Saskatchewan's unemployment rate remains below the national average of 5.7%.

Young women (15 to 24 years) saw a significant increase in their unemployment rate this month (+5.7 percentage points). In contrast, the unemployment rate for young men declined one full percentage point and now stands at 11.4% - nearly three percentage points lower than their female counterparts.

**Saskatchewan Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age**

Seasonally Adjusted Data	July 2019 (%)	June 2019 (%)	July 2018 (%)	Monthly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	5.4	5.1	6.5	0.3	-1.1
<b>25 years and over</b>	4.2	4.3	5.4	-0.1	-1.2
Men - 25 years and over	4.4	4.4	5.3	0.0	-0.9
Women - 25 years and over	4.1	4.0	5.4	0.1	-1.3
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	12.6	10.6	13.8	2.0	-1.2
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.4	12.4	16.2	-1.0	-4.8
Women - 15 to 24 years	14.1	8.4	11.1	5.7	3.0

*Note: Totals may not add due to rounding*

*Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087*

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment losses were spread across multiple industries in July. Employment in the services-producing sector decreased 2,800 on the month, with educational services (-2,700), and business, building and other support services (-1,600) seeing the most significant losses.

Meanwhile, employment in the province's professional, scientific and technical services industry has picked up during the past year. The industry employs 2,300 more people than it did in July 2018 and this trend is expected to continue over the medium-term. For instance, Saskatoon-based Vendasta Technologies Inc. – a software firm that provides digital solutions to small- and medium-sized businesses – has raised \$40 million in capital. This investment will be used to enhance Vendasta's platform, expand its services and enable the company to hire 365 new employees over the next three years.<sup>3</sup>

**Saskatchewan Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry**

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	July 2019	June 2019	July 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	579.7	581.9	568.4	-2.2	-0.4	11.3	2.0
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	146.4	145.7	144.9	0.7	0.5	1.5	1.0
Agriculture	39.7	38.7	36.3	1.0	2.6	3.4	9.4
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	23.2	23.4	23.4	-0.2	-0.9	-0.2	-0.9
Utilities	5.8	6.6	7.1	-0.8	-12.1	-1.3	-18.3
Construction	47.1	46.1	50.2	1.0	2.2	-3.1	-6.2
Manufacturing	30.6	31.0	27.9	-0.4	-1.3	2.7	9.7
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	433.3	436.1	423.5	-2.8	-0.6	9.8	2.3
Trade	87.8	88.5	90.7	-0.7	-0.8	-2.9	-3.2
Transportation and warehousing	26.3	25.7	26.5	0.6	2.3	-0.2	-0.8
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	29.1	29.4	29.2	-0.3	-1.0	-0.1	-0.3
Professional, scientific and technical services	28.6	28.8	26.3	-0.2	-0.7	2.3	8.7
Business, building and other support services	14.8	16.4	14.9	-1.6	-9.8	-0.1	-0.7
Educational services	41.3	44.0	42.3	-2.7	-6.1	-1.0	-2.4
Health care and social assistance	81.1	80.3	78.4	0.8	1.0	2.7	3.4
Information, culture and recreation	21.3	21.9	19.8	-0.6	-2.7	1.5	7.6
Accommodation and food services	42.8	41.9	36.9	0.9	2.1	5.9	16.0
Other services	28.3	27.7	26.8	0.6	2.2	1.5	5.6
Public administration	32.0	31.6	31.6	0.4	1.3	0.4	1.3

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

Employment in transportation and warehousing increased 600 in July, following three consecutive months of employment losses. The Canadian National (CN) Railway is planning to spend over \$245 million in 2019 to expand and improve its rail network in Saskatchewan – up \$35 million compared to 2018 levels. As part of their capital-spending program, CN plans to expand about 35 miles of double track and upgrade 66 miles of rail line. Overall, CN Railway has spent about \$700 million on Saskatchewan's railway infrastructure over the last five years. The

company employs approximately 1,300 people in the province, and has major terminals in Saskatoon, Regina, and Melville.<sup>4</sup>

Turning to the goods-producing sector, the agriculture industry added 1,100 positions in July. However, trade uncertainties continue to pose challenges for Canadian farmers. China has stopped buying Canadian canola and meat products. In June, China banned the export permit of Quebec-based Frigo Royal after finding ractopamine residues – a banned additive in China – in their product. China also suspended the export permits for two pork producers in early May due to labelling issues, creating uncertainty for Canadian pork and beef producers.<sup>5</sup>

The number of people working in Saskatchewan's resource extraction industry (forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas) fell 200 in July. Weakness in the global potash market has resulted in producers curbing production. For example, Nutrien curtailed production at its Vanscoy potash mine in June. And more recently, The Mosaic Company announced it is indefinitely shuttering its Colonsay mine located southeast of Saskatoon. The closure will leave approximately 350 employees out of work, effective September 10, 2019. Only 52 workers will continue working at the mine to keep it operational. The decision to shutter operations is a result of challenging farming conditions across North America; this has been one of the wettest springs on record in the US. Mosaic is idling its Colonsay facility until market conditions improve, to lower its potash inventory levels and to eventually shift production to its lower-cost Esterhazy K3 project, which is expected to be completed in 2024.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile, Northern Wild Fishery – a fish processing plant in Northern Saskatchewan – recently closed its doors in Wollaston Lake. Lack of an all-season road, which resulted in higher transportation costs, has been cited as the reason behind the closure. The plant opened its doors in the fall of 2015, and was one of the two fish processing plants in Saskatchewan approved to export fish. The closure impacts 20 workers at the plant, as well as five employees employed at the Northern Wild Fishery retail store in Prince Albert. The plant primarily employed members of the Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation.<sup>7</sup>

Employment in utilities is down 1,300 on an annual basis. However, there is a positive development on the horizon for the utilities industry. The James Smith Cree Nation signed a memorandum of understanding – worth \$2 billion – with AECOM and the Tesla Energy Institute to construct a new hydroelectric plant. The proposed facility will be built about 60 kilometres southeast of Prince Albert, along the North Saskatchewan River in the James Smith Cree Nation territory. Before the project moves forward, it will need to pass an environment assessment by the provincial and federal governments, which could take up to two years. The Pehonan hydroelectric project is expected to produce up to 250 megawatts of electricity and is anticipated to create between 300 and 400 permanent positions once operational.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, the province's manufacturing industry shed 400 positions this month. On May 17, Canada reached an agreement with the US to end tariffs on Canadian metal. The 25% tariffs on steel and 10% tariffs on aluminum were introduced by the US almost a year ago under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act. In Saskatchewan, the steel tariffs affected EVRAZ Regina. The Regina plant is the longest-running Large Diameter Welded pipe producer in North America, employing approximately 1,000 people.<sup>9</sup>

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Employment is up in all five of Saskatchewan's economic regions on an annual basis. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate has declined in all regions.

## Saskatchewan Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	July 2019 ('000)	July 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	July 2019 (%)	July 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	587.5	575.6	2.1	5.4	6.5	-1.1
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Regina - Moose Mountain	190.0	186.7	1.8	5.2	6.0	-0.8
Swift Current - Moose Jaw	51.3	50.2	2.2	4.3	4.7	-0.4
Saskatoon - Biggar	207.1	204.5	1.3	5.6	6.7	-1.1
Yorkton - Melville	39.4	35.3	11.6	2.5	6.4	-3.9
Prince Albert and Northern	99.6	99.0	0.6	6.9	8.1	-1.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0293, formerly CANSIM 282-0122

Employment in Saskatoon-Biggar is up 2,600 compared to levels a year ago. Significant gains in the services-producing sector (+9,800) surpassed losses in the region's goods-producing sector (-7,100). The largest gain in employment was registered in the region's professional, scientific and technical services industry (+2,700), which is a hub for Saskatchewan's tech firms. To support growth in Saskatchewan's tech industry, the federal government is granting funds to two firms through Canada's Innovative and Skills Plan. 7shifts Employee Scheduling Software Inc. and Coconut Software Corporation are receiving over \$3 million in funding apiece to innovate and develop new products. The funding is expected to create new jobs, as well as provide skills training to a significant number of employees.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, employment in Regina-Moose Mountain is up 3,300 on a year-over-year basis. The federal and provincial governments have signed an Equivalency Agreement that will allow Boundary Dam Units 4 and 5, located near Estevan, to operate longer. The Boundary Dam Power Station is the largest coal generated thermal electric power plant in Canada, employing 369 people. Under the federal government's Climate Action Plan, the units were initially set to close this year. However, with the agreement coming into force on January 1, 2020, Boundary Dam Units 4 and 5 will remain open until 2021 and 2024, respectively.<sup>11</sup> To support coal workers and communities in transitioning to a clean growth economy, the federal government is providing nearly \$1.3 million in funding to support skills development and economic diversification activities.<sup>12</sup>

Finally, employment in Prince Albert and Northern region increased 600 between July 2018 and July 2019. There have been several positive developments in the region over the past few months. For example, the federal government is granting \$975,000 to the Keewatin Community Development Association to increase production from Northern Saskatchewan's non-timber forest sector. Approximately 50 new jobs will be created as a result of the funding.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the federal government is granting \$52.5 million to build the Meadow Lake Tribal Council Bioenergy Centre. The new centre will replace the current beehive burner at the NorSask mill, and is expected to create enough energy to power 5,000 homes.<sup>14</sup>

**Note:** In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.

**Prepared by:** Labour Market Information (LMI) Directorate, Service Canada, Saskatchewan

**For further information,** please contact the LMI team at: [http://www.esdc.gc.ca/cqi-bin/contact/edsc-esdc/eng/contact\\_us.aspx?section=lmj](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/cqi-bin/contact/edsc-esdc/eng/contact_us.aspx?section=lmj)

**For information on the Labour Force Survey,** please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada as represented by Employment and Social Development Canada, 2019, all rights reserved

---

<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada (Accessed June 9, 2019). Table: 14-10-0288-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0089) Employment by class of worker, monthly, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, last 5 months (x 1,000). Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410028801>

<sup>2</sup> CBC News (July 26, 2019). Feds announce \$2B for women who operate their own business. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/women-entrepreneurship-strategy-announcement-1.5226056>

The Government of Canada (July 25, 2019). Minister Goodale announces Women Entrepreneurship Strategy investments. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2019/07/minister-goodale-announces-women-entrepreneurship-strategy-investments.html>

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Newswire (July 17, 2019). Vendasta raises \$40M in growth capital. Retrieved from: <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/vendasta-raises-40m-in-growth-capital-825008544.html>

Saskatoon StarPhoenix (July 17, 2019). Tech company Vendasta lands \$40 million in new venture capital funding. Retrieved from: <https://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/vendasta-lands-40-million-in-new-venture-capital-funding>

The Globe and Mail (July 17, 2019). Vendasta secures largest-ever venture-capital investment in a Saskatchewan tech company. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/article-vendasta-secures-largest-ever-venture-capital-investment-in-a/>

CBC News (July 17, 2019). Saskatoon software company to hire 365 people after record-breaking \$40M cash injection. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/saskatoon-vendasta-record-breaking-venture-capital-hiring-1.5212798>

<sup>4</sup> Swift Current Online (March 19, 2019). CN Rail Invests In Upgrades For Saskatchewan. Retrieved from: <https://swiftcurrentonline.com/ag-news/cn-rail-invests-in-upgrades-for-saskatchewan>

Canadian National Railway Company (March 18, 2019). CN investing more than \$245 million to expand and strengthen Saskatchewan's rail infrastructure in 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.cn.ca/en/news/2019/03/cn-investing-more-than-245-million-to-expand-and-strengthen-sask/>

<sup>5</sup> CBC News (June 25, 2019). China considering halting all meat products from Canada over fake veterinary health certificates. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/china-ban-canadian-meat-1.5189874>

CTV News (June 25, 2019). China asks for suspension of Canadian meat, citing forged certificates. Retrieved from: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/china-asks-for-suspension-of-canadian-meat-citing-forged-certificates-1.4482411>

<sup>6</sup> CBC News (May 14, 2019). Nutrien laying off 80 workers at Vanscoy potash mine. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/nutrien-vanscoy-workforce-cuts-1.5135162>

Saskatoon Star-Phoenix (May 14, 2019). Nutrien to cut 80 jobs from Vanscoy potash mine. Retrieved from: <https://thestarphenix.com/news/local-news/nutrien-to-cut-80-jobs-from-vanscoy-potash-mine>

650CKOM (May 14, 2019). Nutrien lays off 80 workers at Vanscoy mine. Retrieved from: <https://www.ckom.com/2019/05/14/nutrien-lays-off-80-workers-at-vanscoy-mine/>

Global News (August 6, 2019). Mosaic laying off more than 300 workers at Colonsay potash mine. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/5731184/mosaic-laying-off-more-than-300-workers-at-colonsay-potash-mine>

Saskatoon StarPhoenix (August 6, 2019). Mosaic to indefinitely shut down Colonsay mine next month. Retrieved from: <https://thestarphenix.com/news/local-news/mosaic-to-indefinitely-shut-down-colonsay-mine-next-month>

CBC News (August 6, 2019). Roughly 350 workers laid off as Mosaic indefinitely shuts down Colonsay potash mine. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/colonsay-mine-layoffs-mosaic-1.5237586>

The Mosaic Company (August 6, 2019). The Mosaic Company Reports Second Quarter 2019 Results. Retrieved from: <http://investors.mosaicco.com/file/Index?KeyFile=399063711>

650 CKOM (August 6, 2019). Mosaic laying off 395 workers at Colonsay mine. Retrieved from: <https://www.ckom.com/2019/08/06/mosaic-laying-off-395-workers-at-colonsay-mine/>

<sup>7</sup> CBC News (July 13, 2019). Northern Sask. fish processing plant closes 4 years after opening. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/northern-saskatchewan-fish-processing-plant-shuts-down-1.5211128>

Prince Albert Now (July 12, 2019). Wollaston Lake Fishery shuts down operations, owners blame lack of all weather road. Retrieved from: <https://panow.com/2019/07/12/northern-wild-fishery-shuts-down-operations-owners-blame-lack-of-all-weather-road/>

Undercurrentnews (July 16, 2019). Lack of all-weather road blamed for loss of Canadian processing plant. Retrieved from: <https://www.undercurrentnews.com/2019/07/16/lack-of-all-weather-road-blamed-for-loss-of-canadian-processing-plant/>

<sup>8</sup> 650 CKOM (July 26, 2019). James Smith Cree Nation signs on to build new power plant. Retrieved from: <https://www.ckom.com/2019/07/26/tesla-aecom-and-james-smith-cree-nation-agree-to-build-new-power-plant/>

CBC News (July 28, 2019) James Smith Cree Nation enters into partnership to create hydro-electric power plant. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/jscn-pehonan-hydro-electric-power-project-1.5228010>

The First Nations Canada (July 28, 2019). James Smith, AECOM, Tesla Energy Institute entered into partnership. Retrieved from: [https://thefirstnationscanada.com/current\\_news/social/racism/james-smith-cree-nation-enters-into-partnership-to-create-hydro-electric-power-plant/](https://thefirstnationscanada.com/current_news/social/racism/james-smith-cree-nation-enters-into-partnership-to-create-hydro-electric-power-plant/)

Prince Albert Now (July 27, 2019). James Smith Cree Nation signs on to build new power plant. Retrieved from: <https://panow.com/2019/07/26/james-smith-cree-nation-signs-on-to-build-new-power-plant/>



<sup>9</sup> 650CKOM (May 17, 2019). Regina steelworkers feeling ‘relieved’ as U.S. lifts tariffs. Retrieved from: <https://www.ckom.com/syn/648/518725/regina-steelworkers-feeling-relieved-as-u-s-lifts-tariffs/>

CBC (May 20, 2019). Steel and aluminum tariffs are gone, so now what?. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/steel-aluminum-tariffs-whats-next-von-scheel-1.5142253>

<sup>10</sup> Betakit (July 25, 2019). 7shifts, Coconut Software among 17 Saskatchewan projects receiving a collective \$21 million. Retrieved from: <https://betakit.com/7shifts-coconut-software-among-17-saskatchewan-projects-receiving-a-collective-21-million/>

Canadian Newswire (July 24, 2019). Innovative Saskatchewan employers receive federal support to create hundreds of new jobs and opportunities. Retrieved from: <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/innovative-saskatchewan-employers-receive-federal-support-to-create-hundreds-of-new-jobs-and-opportunities-847932655.html>

<sup>11</sup> Estevan Mercury (May 22, 2019). Equivalency agreement signed; will extend the life of two units at Boundary Dam. Retrieved from: <https://www.estevanmercury.ca/news/business-energy/equivalency-agreement-signed-will-extend-the-life-of-two-units-at-boundary-dam-1.23828918>

The Government of Canada (May 3, 2019). An agreement of the equivalency of federal and Saskatchewan regulations for the control of greenhouse gas emissions from electricity producers in Saskatchewan, 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/eccc/documents/pdf/cepa/Canada-SaskatchewanEquivalencyAgreement-eng.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> The Government of Canada (June 28, 2019). Minister Sohi announces support for fair coal and just energy transition. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/western-economic-diversification/news/2019/06/minister-sohi-announces-support-for-fair-coal-and-just-energy-transition.html>

<sup>13</sup> The Government of Canada (July 24, 2019). Government of Canada supports new business opportunities in northern Saskatchewan’s forestry sector. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/western-economic-diversification/news/2019/07/government-of-canada-supports-new-business-opportunities-in-northern-saskatchewan-forestry-sector.html>

<sup>14</sup> Meadowlake NOW (May 22, 2019). Federal government announce investment in a bioenergy centre at NorSask mill. Retrieved from: <https://meadowlakenow.com/2019/05/22/federal-government-announce-investment-in-a-bioenergy-centre-at-norsask-mill/>