



## Railport growth remains strong

December 28, 2011 Andrea Glover, Staff Writer, *Elko Daily Free Press*

ELKO — Growth has been coming in steady at the Northeastern Nevada Regional Railport.

Since opening in February 2010, the railport has continued to develop with a flurry of new companies locating at the facility east of Elko — providing services to local companies and economic growth to the county.

“The county had a fabulous vision and (the railport) is doing everything it was intended to do, in terms of growth in the county and diversification,” said Pam Borda, executive director of the Elko County Economic Diversification Authority.

A survey conducted by the University of Nevada, Reno and presented by the Elko County Economic Diversification Authority in October 2010, stated that the railport was expected to have a \$21.5 million impact to Elko County by the end of 2010.

While ECEDA did not have another economic impact report drafted this year due to cost restraints, Borda said “it’s safe to say if we did another one this year (the economic impact) would easily be doubled that.”

When the survey was conducted SAS Global Corp. did not have its facility finished, National Oilwell Varco hadn’t begun its project and Pacific had only been open a year.

According to the Elko County Treasurer’s office, SAS pays \$29,055.28 in annual property taxes, NOV pays \$1,793.61 in property taxes, Pacific pays \$19,671.95 and Liebherr pays \$20,466.58.

Tawni Christ with the treasurer’s office said these property taxes are based off the land and buildings on the property.

The growth of the railport has left a positive economic impact on Elko County in more ways than one. In addition to providing increased revenue with property taxes, the railport has allowed for a number of new part-time and full-time jobs to be created as new companies locate to the facility.

Two companies have located to the railport during the last year, Savage Services and Pacific Hide and Fur.

SAS was under construction for much of 2011, and is now in the process of hiring approximately 20 employees. The newest company to locate at the railport is NOV, which is still under construction and has an anticipated finish date of April 2012.

“The construction alone has been huge,” Borda said.



The railport continues to receive interest from a number of other companies looking at the facility as a potential location, Borda said. All the lots that front the tracks have been sold, however, a number of parcels are still available for use in the back 200 acres of the railport.

Marketing and developing this area into parcels to be sold is the second phase of the railport project. Before ECEDA begins actively marketing for phase two, Borda said installation of a gas line by Southwest Gas must occur. She anticipated phase two being at least a year out.

According to Borda, creating the much needed infrastructure for the railport has been a long process that is still not entirely complete.

“What they bought was raw land, so there wasn’t automatically power and gas and water and sewer and all those things,” she said. “Companies have had to deal with some fairly significant issues.”

Throughout the past six months, Borda said Southwest Gas and companies at the railport have worked to access the feasibility of bringing in a natural gas line.

“It is looking very, very promising,” Borda said, who added that a gas line to the railport will “be a major savings for all of (the businesses) over propane.”