Abstract

Louisiana and Mississippi share many important features that make an understanding of green related economic activity crucial to the future of the region. Therefore, the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Mississippi's Department of Employment Security will create a consortium to research green related economic activity with the Louisiana Workforce Commission as the project lead. Both states possess great potential for growth in the green economy. To capitalize on that potential, research is needed to understand occupational requirements in green industries. This research effort will include conducting one-on-one interviews and focus groups in Louisiana and Mississippi and collecting financial data on public and private investments with potential to create green jobs in the region. A primary component of the proposed research will be a survey of 10,000 employers in each of the two states to elicit information related to green jobs. In addition, the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Mississippi's Department of Employment Security will conduct mining of UI claims and job banks. The analysis of data gathered through the various aspects of this project will better identify green jobs in the region and their skill requirements, estimate current employment and wages, estimate the number of open positions and estimate the skill deficits of the current workforce. In addition, the proposed research will project future green job employment over several time horizons. The wealth of knowledge gathered through the proposed research will allow the State Workforce Investment Boards and education administrators plan training and certification curriculum for the most prominent occupations. In addition, detailed data on the human capital of the current workforce and will help economic development officials in each state attract new projects in the target industries. Finally, dissemination of the results of this research will also aid students, high school counselors, and the unemployed plan careers in a new green economy.