



## Pay freeze on federal employees could affect nearly 6,000 employees in the two-county Pensacola Bay Area.

total jobs and 2.4 percent of wages in Santa Rosa.

Jamie Page • jepage@pnj.com • November 30, 2010

The proposed two-year freeze on federal employee wages could affect nearly 6,000 federal civilian employees in the two-county Pensacola Bay Area.

Locally, there are 5,390 federal jobs — not including military or Postal Service jobs — in Escambia County, paying total earnings of \$432 million with an average wage of \$80,000 a year, according to the Haas Center for Business Research and Economic Development at the University of West Florida.

There are 568 such federal jobs in Santa Rosa County, accounting for \$43 million in earnings with an average wage of \$75,000 a year.

Rick Harper, director of the Haas Center, believes the wage freeze is justified.

"Federal wages for non-military are not as important of an economic driver as are federal military wages, federal payments to retirees, and ... procurement spending," Harper said. "So, the wage freeze is a necessary step in bringing the federal budget into balance."

In Escambia, federal jobs affected by the wage freeze would include the Social Security Administration, U. S. District Court, the Federal Prison Camp at Saufley Field, Transportation Security Administration, U.S. National Park Service (such as Gulf Islands National Seashore), civilian U.S. Department of Defense employees and the Environmental Protection Agency lab on Pensacola Beach.

In Santa Rosa, it would include jobs such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture at the county Extension Office in Milton and civilian Defense Department employees at Whiting Field Naval Air Station.

Non-military federal jobs represent 3.1 percent of total jobs and 5.6 percent of total wages in Escambia County. They represent 1.2 percent of

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