

# PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

## Range Resources projects 1,000 jobs

By Kim Leonard

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Range Resources Corp. could employ 1,000 workers in Western Pennsylvania five to eight years from now, an executive said Wednesday as the natural gas producer marked the start of construction on its new Appalachian offices.

The Fort Worth-based company has 300 employees now in the region and 400 across Pennsylvania. All but about 20 are from Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio, Ray N. Walker Jr., senior vice president of Marcellus operations, said at the building site in the Southpointe II complex in Cecil in Washington County.

"We are hiring the whole gamut," Walker said, from office workers to roustabouts who labor at drilling sites, plus welders and fitters, geophysicists and geologists.

"There will be a whole lot more of the hourly workers that we will hire going forward, as we get more wells," Walker said, estimating Range Resources has hired just over 100 people in Western Pennsylvania this year.

The company will have 180,000 square feet of space in its new building on 13 acres of a hillside above Consol Energy Inc.'s headquarters.

Range Resources will lease the five-story building from developer Horizon Properties Group. Construction should be complete in November.

Workers will move from the 90,000 square feet that Range Resources leases now in two other Southpointe buildings. A proposed second phase would add 75,000 square feet to the new building later.

"Brick and mortar is one of the most visible signs of the hiring and the permanent commitment that (gas production) companies are making in Pennsylvania," said Kathryn Klaber, president and executive director of the Marcellus Shale Coalition trade group.

Besides gaining more space from the move, "This will be space that is better fitted to our business," Walker said. "It's very important to get all our technical folks under one roof so they can interact a lot more."

Range Resources will be producing about 200 million cubic feet per day from its Marcellus operations by year's end, spokesman Matt Pitzarella said, and the company could double that by late 2011. Most of that production is in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania, and operations recently began in Lycoming County.

Walker said the decline in natural gas prices in the past year has delayed some of Range Resources' expansion plans.

Range Resources cited a 22 percent drop in gas prices as it reported an \$8.2 million loss for its most recent quarter, compared with a \$29.8 million loss a year ago. But the company said revenue grew by 11 percent to nearly \$227 million.

Southpointe houses offices for 58 energy-related companies, Walker said, and gas producers have other offices scattered around the region. Range Resources recently opened a field office near the Washington County Fairgrounds in Chartiers.

It's a far cry from 2006, when Walker arrived to open an office with about 10 people. The company then was concentrating on developing wells in a small area around Hickory in Washington County.

He leased 15,000 square feet on one floor. "I thought I was in danger of being fired for taking that much space," he said.

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