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J-2 CONTRACTING

Greeley company provides exceptional service with excavation, quarry operations



Chris Leone,
President



Chance Brown,
Vice President

The history of J-2 Contracting goes back nearly 23 years, but the last decade-plus is when it made its mark. During that time, Chris Leone bought the company from his father and brother – both named John, hence J-2 – who were looking to sell.

“In 2004, it was a basically an earthwork and utilities company,” said Leone, who is President of the Greeley, Colorado, business. “I was in computer manufacturing and wanted to get out of that, so the timing was perfect. I had worked in construction during the summers while in high school and college, so there was some background there. Dad stayed on for more than a year to help me thoroughly learn the ropes. I think the first year we did approximately \$2 million in volume. This year, we hope to reach \$15 million.”

Not long after Leone purchased the business, he brought Chance Brown on board. Brown is now Vice President and a co-owner of J-2 Contracting, which today has two

components: earthwork and quarry. Between the two areas, the company employs about 40 people. Operations Manager Mike Sturdy oversees the quarry, and Project Manager Ryan McConnell is another key member of the J-2 team.

Quarry operations include two aspects. One is the quarry itself, located just outside of Greeley. The company makes five products, including coarse concrete aggregate, Class 6 and Class 7 road base, Number 8 stone and concrete sand.

“Materials from the quarry are used in our own projects, and we sell to outside customers,” said Sturdy. “We opened up the quarry nearly six months ago, and it’s proven to be a good move. We’re already supplying some fairly large jobs, including the County Road 49 project, which is 22 miles long and needs roughly 180,000 tons of rock and 217,000 tons of sand.”

Well-established mobile crushing

The second aspect of the quarry operation is mobile crushing, which has been ongoing since 2004 and mainly involves recycling concrete and asphalt for customers in Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas and New Mexico. J-2 Contracting began with one impact crusher that was used for recycling concrete at the company’s yard in Greeley.

“That work transitioned into assignments for larger ready-mix companies, crushing their washout, and then to projects for highway contractors where it’s more economical to recycle concrete and asphalt to reuse as base material under new roads,” explained Brown. “Close to 95 percent of our crushing is now for outside customers with our mobile spreads. The remainder of the crushing is for our own jobs, such as the high school in Kersey where we tore out the parking lot, crushed it and left the material for the school district to use.”

J-2 Contracting crushes material at its quarry with a KPI-JCI K300/6203 crushing and screening plant, and some of the material goes into an 1830 PH wash plant. The company also uses KPI-JCI jaw and impact crushers in its mobile operations.

▶ VIDEO





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J-2 Contracting currently runs four mobile crushing spreads. Three of them stay primarily in Colorado, while one runs nine months out of the year in Kansas. It mostly works in landfills and then spends the rest of the year in the Centennial State.

Turnkey excavation work

J-2 Contracting's excavation side operates mainly in the governmental markets throughout Colorado's Front Range. Leone and Brown estimate that 80 percent of the company's jobs consist of hard-bid public-works projects where J-2 serves as the general contractor.

"We complete all the earthwork and utilities and then subcontract paving, restoration, surveying and other ancillary items," Leone pointed out. "That generally holds true on the commercial earthwork contracts as well for select general contractors we choose to work with, often on a negotiated basis. We give them a turnkey site package."

Ongoing projects include a new storm-sewer outfall for the city of Greeley where the company is serving as the general contractor. Crews are installing box culverts with large inlet galleries on each side to alleviate flooding, a continuing concern for Greeley in the past 30 to 40 years.

"There is roughly 800 feet of culvert and a couple hundred feet of large diameter pipe later in the assignment," said Brown. "We are setting some 60-inch pipe in Brush, Colorado, along with large boxes."



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Komatsu, KPI-JCI, Power Motive ensure productivity

J-2 Contracting's mobile operations are involved with several projects, including one that calls for crushing nearly 90,000 tons of old runway removed from the Denver International Airport. To handle large sections of rubble, J-2 set up a special spread that included a KPI-JCI Fast Track 2650 jaw used as a primary crusher to reduce the pieces to six inches. The resulting material goes into a 4250 impact crusher that condenses it to three-quarter-inch base for reuse at the airport. A Kolberg stacker moves the material from the 4250 to a stockpile.

KPI-JCI equipment is part of other J-2 spreads, including one at the quarry where it uses a K300/6203 crushing and screening plant to crush aggregate, some of which goes into an 1830 PH wash plant.

J-2 Contracting uses several Komatsu excavators, including PC490LC-10s, to dig trenches and set pipe on utility jobs and for removing overburden at its quarry. "Komatsu excavators have been in our fleet for nearly a decade," said President Chris Leone. "Komatsu equipment is reliable, productive and fuel-efficient, and that's why we acquired additional pieces."



► VIDEO
Mike Sturdy,
Operations Manager

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J-2 focuses on providing good value to customers

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"In less than a year we have added quite a lot of crushing equipment with the help of Power Motive and our Sales Rep Jeremy Griebel," explained Sturdy. "KPI-JCI gives us excellent uptime and production. We especially like the 4250 impactors because they are beefier and have higher horsepower than the competition. We purchased our first impactor three years ago for a mobile spread and have added more since, along with other pieces for both mobile and quarry operations."

J-2 removes overburden and mines aggregates at the quarry with a Komatsu PC490LC-10 excavator. It then loads the materials into two HM400 articulated haul trucks that move them to on-site stockpiles. To push piles and smooth haul roads, J-2 Contracting dozes with a D65WX-17 equipped with a six-way blade.

"Komatsu excavators have been in our fleet for almost a decade," said Leone. "When we

purchased our first, a PC400, we had a mix of brands. The PC400 performed well, and we decided that Komatsu was our brand of choice. Today, we have PC490s, as well as PC360, PC390 and PC138 models. Komatsu equipment is reliable, productive and fuel-efficient, and that's why we acquired additional pieces. All of our Komatsu machines perform very well, and I know that because I track them with KOMTRAX, especially the quarry machines, to check production rates and other valuable information."

"A big reason we have KPI-JCI and Komatsu equipment is Power Motive and Jeremy," Brown added. "They were extremely helpful in ensuring that we fully understood what equipment we needed in order to achieve the greatest efficiency and highest productivity in our quarry operation. That was no surprise, because they have taken exceptional care of us through the years on both the excavation and crushing sides. An example is the Komatsu CARE program that covers the scheduled maintenance for the first 2,000 hours or three years. Power Motive's techs do the work, so we can focus on production. It's a great value. In addition to Jeremy, we give a lot of credit to our Product Support Rep Roudy Redenbaugh, who makes sure that we have parts on hand when needed."

Focus on strengths

Leone and Brown say the pit likely will be completed within the next 10 years, and they hope to move on to a new one. They expect that mobile crushing and earthwork operations will remain strong.

"We know resources will be exhausted, so we're looking for a new quarry location now," said Leone. "It's doubtful that anything else will change, other than maybe a small amount of growth. There is a level we're comfortable with, and we're close to that now."

"We have expanded quite a bit in the past few months with the quarry addition, and it's time to slow down, reassess and focus on continuing to provide good value to our customers, which we believe is our greatest strength," added Brown. "If we get too big, we can't do that, and we won't let that happen." ■



Roudy Redenbaugh,
Power Motive PSSR

(L-R) J-2 Contracting Operations Manager Mike Sturdy and President Chris Leone meet with Power Motive Sales Rep Jeremy Griebel at J-2's quarry near Greeley, Colorado. "Jeremy and Power Motive take great care of us," said Leone. "In addition, we give a lot of credit to our Product Support Rep Roudy Redenbaugh, who makes sure that we have parts on hand when needed."



To push piles and smooth haul roads at the quarry, J-2 Contracting dozes with a Komatsu D65WX-17 equipped with a six-way blade.

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