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NB TRENCHLESS

Colorado family members team up to form three-fold business venture

The number three keeps coming up in reference to NB Trenchless. The Penrose, Colorado, company started three years ago, it has three owners and its work falls into three categories.

NB Trenchless is a family-owned business, led by President Maria Larsen. Her brother-in-law, Colby Larsen, is Vice President and his wife, Kelsey, is Secretary. Maria and

Kelsey handle billing and other paperwork, while Colby runs field operations.

“There are three basic aspects to the business – excavation, directional drilling and utility pipeline installation,” said Maria. “Often, all three come together on the same job, allowing us to provide full-site packages. The bulk of our contracts are comprised of federal, state, municipal and county road projects.”

Excavation services include mass and fine grading, subgrade preparation and base material. It also involves excavating trenches for utility installation.

“Putting in oil, gas, water, sewer, communications and storm lines is a specialty for us, especially tough assignments,” reported Kelsey. “That’s generally done in conjunction with a road job, but we also do utility contracts separately. The same goes for directional drilling.”

Branching out

NB Trenchless began with directional drilling, then expanded into other services in short order.

“Before starting NB, we had some experience in construction, so we already had a lot of clients, and they were familiar with us and the quality results we provided,” noted Colby. “That helped us get a foothold, and we built from there. Nearly everything we do now is for repeat customers on both hard-bid and time-and-material projects. Our customers know we are committed to meeting their schedules. We have expanded to meet their needs.”

NB Trenchless recently completed a large assignment on County Road 77 near the Tarryall Reservoir. Working as a subcontractor, NB Trenchless moved nearly 100,000 yards of

(L-R) Owners of NB Trenchless include President Maria Larsen, her brother-in-law and Vice President Colby Larsen, and his wife and Secretary Kelsey Larsen. The Penrose, Colorado-based company specializes in excavation, utility installation and directional drilling.



▶ VIDEO

An NB Trenchless operator loads a Komatsu HM400 articulated dump truck with a PC490LC excavator on County Road 77 near the Tarryall Reservoir.

▶ VIDEO





▶ VIDEO

earth and rock and installed 70 culverts as part of realignment and subgrade prep for the new 7.4-mile stretch.

“There was massive rock excavation, so it had to be hammered and blasted,” recalled Maria. “We imported all of the road base and riprap and put in approximately 2,000 feet of pipe.”

On another job, NB Trenchless subcontracted subgrade prep for two miles of road reconstruction on Highway 285 in the town of Buena Vista. The project also involved a small amount of drainage work. In addition, the company recently completed 40,000 feet of directional drilling in Rangley and is currently on a different project in the same area that has a similar amount of drilling.

“We typically have three or four jobs going at one time,” said Kelsey. “For the most part, our work falls within the governmental sector. We’re a women-owned, veteran-owned business that is also located in a HUBZone (a Small Business Administration program for small companies that operate and employ people in Historically Underutilized Business Zones, such as rural areas), so there are some advantages to concentrating on that particular market.”

NB Trenchless currently employs 12 to 20 people, which is a 400-percent increase since the Larsens founded the company in 2013.



NB Trenchless uses Komatsu *intelligent* Machine Control dozers, including a D61EXi and a D51EXi (inset) for subgrade prep on road projects. “We can run the dozers in third gear, and the system will keep up with no issue,” said President Maria Larsen. “Because there are no cables or masts to install or take down, we spend more time working and less time setting up. Just power up the machines in the morning and away you go.”

Key employees include Oliver Livermont, Don Gillespie and Lucas Hays.

Komatsu, Power Motive take care of equipment needs

The crucial machines in NB Trenchless’ equipment fleet are all Komatsu, including *intelligent* Machine Control D51EXi and D61EXi dozers, which are mainly for road building. The company also uses a GD655 motor grader equipped with an aftermarket GPS system.

“The GD655 is great, and the aftermarket system is good, but the integrated GPS on the dozers is excellent and has improved our production as well as quality,” reported Maria. “We can run the dozers in third gear, and the system will keep up with no issue. Because there are no cables or masts to install or take down,

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Customers appreciate the hands-on approach

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we spend more time working and less time setting up. Just power up the machines in the morning and away you go.”

NB Trenchless also runs a WA270 wheel loader and Komatsu excavators (PC490LC and PC240LC), which often load HM400 articulated dump trucks. The Larsens depend on Power Motive Regional Sales Manager Kurt

Gossage and Area Manager Jim Schmitt to acquire Komatsu equipment, as well as Sakai and Takeuchi machinery.

“Production is key in our operations, which is why we have used Komatsu excavators for many years,” related Colby, who was previously involved in businesses that used Komatsu equipment. “They are powerful, reliable and have good cycle times. The HM400s work well under all conditions, even when the ground is soft or wet. Komatsu serves us well all around.”

The Larsens say the same about Power Motive. “Dealer service plays a major role in our equipment-buying decisions, and the fact that we have so many pieces of Komatsu and other brands that Power Motive carries speaks for itself,” stated Kelsey. “Kurt, Jim and everyone else we rely on at Power Motive have been great, including Telematics Manager Mike Snediger, who helps us with our GPS systems. We like that they track our machines with KOMTRAX for service-related items. Oftentimes, they let us know when a machine has an error code before our operators do.”

“Power Motive takes care of all our maintenance through Komatsu CARE (scheduled services for the first 2,000 hours or three years) on the newer Tier 4 machines or through a RAMP (repair and maintenance program) on the others,” added Maria. “That ensures our equipment is maintained on time, so we can focus on getting the job done. When Komatsu CARE expires on the Tier 4 machines, we’ll switch those to a RAMP as well.”

In three years, NB Trenchless has grown from zero to nearly \$13 million in revenue. The Larsens credit this rapid growth to a great deal of hard work and the family’s willingness to put in long hours.

“We each have our specific roles, but we’re not limited to them,” said Maria. “Whatever needs to be done, we are all willing to pitch in to make it happen. Kelsey and I help in the field by running equipment whenever necessary. There is a shared commitment to making the business successful, and we believe that NB Trenchless has made great strides in a relatively short time because of that.” ■



(L-R) NB Trenchless President Maria Larsen, Vice President Colby Larsen and Secretary Kelsey Larsen meet with Power Motive Regional Sales Manager Kurt Gossage and Telematics Manager Mike Snediger on a jobsite. “Dealer service plays a major role in our equipment-buying decisions, and the fact that we have so many pieces of Komatsu and other brands that Power Motive carries speaks for itself,” said Kelsey. “Power Motive takes excellent care of us, from equipment acquisitions to service. They are great to work with.”

In addition to Komatsu, NB Trenchless uses other equipment from Power Motive, including this Sakai roller, which is composting base material on the County Road 77 project.

