

A HITACHI CONSTRUCTION AND MINING PRODUCTS PUBLICATION

# BREAKOUT

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# Pacific Pile and Marine



## finds success with environmental clean-up

**“W**e’re a new company looking at new ways to implement lessons learned from our past,” says Greg Anderes, project manager for the former Scott Paper Mill site environmental clean-up being done by Pacific Pile and Marine for the City of Anacortes,

with a Hitachi EX1200 as their first major equipment purchase. They equipped it with multiple bucket options and GPS positioning for accurate digging. Then they set the 1200 on a work barge so that it could operate in marine applications.

Pacific Pile and Marine saw the Hitachi excavator as a way to be both flexible and precise.

### SPECS RULE

The Scott Paper Mill project by the City of Anacortes dredges the channel leading to the existing Flounder Bay Marina and will provide a new recreational park. Estimated by the project-engineering firm to cost \$2.4 million, Pacific Pile and Marine Construction Company won the contract at 1.9 million.

The high-profile project required digging down beyond the muck into hard clay to remove all environmental hazards, while also providing depth

**“The hydraulic force of our 1200 allows us to really grab a bucket of material and know that you’ve got something.”**  
— Greg Anderes



“Crane rigs,” says Anderes, “have the advantage of easily providing flexibility in bucket size. But, they’re all about simply dropping the round-bottomed clamshell bucket down into the muck and raising up whatever might be in the bucket. And, they’re not too flexible in what they can do.”

Washington. “Our owners were part of a company doing similar work that was sold a few years ago.”

In 2008, two owners from the old company, Eric Reichelt and Wil Clark, started Pacific Pile and Marine, and almost immediately won some bids based on their past background and their decision to move away from the conventional spread of equipment most marine contractors offer.

Instead of buying the typical crane with a clamshell bucket, they started



*The EX1200 operator selects the right “next rock” from a companion barge and then places it underwater, based on GPS direction.*



*"The 1200's precise controls allow me to place each rock according to plan," says Dustin Slump. "We really rigged this machine to be guided by precise coordinates. You can go online to see how the actual construction matches the design specifications on a daily basis."*



*Each day, the work plan is updated to account for tidal activity and work progress compared to the plans and specifications provided by the Port of Anacortes. The Hitachi EX1200 is stationed on a barge that includes maintenance supplies, additional buckets, and repair tools. It is tugged into place each day as high tide comes in and then moved into deeper water as low tide approaches. Another barge filled with select material and a John Deere 624 wheel loader feeds the 1200.*



for future sailboat traffic. Plans provided by the Port of Anacortes required specific digs to specific depths, and then specific construction of a breakwater — all done within a specific set of days to allow ensure completion of certain phases prior to a January “fish window” that seasonally prohibits in-water activity to protect migrating juvenile salmon.

“The hydraulic force of our 1200 allows us to really grab a bucket of material and know that you’ve got something. And, with the GPS and computerized digging screen in the cab, each dig is precise.”

### **BREAKWATER TACTICS**

After the digging was completed, the EX1200’s bucket package was changed to include a thumb. A supply barge was brought to the job for a constant supply of rock to build the breakwater.

“We used the 1200 to hog the rocks in place during high tide. After we got some height and stability to the breakwater, we transported a Hitachi 270 onto the breakwater so that it could carefully place the rocks above water,” explains Anderes.

“The key for making the breakwater a success is that the rocks are keyed or locked into each other. They can’t be loose. So, the 270 operator’s work is at low tide so that we can carefully create the breakwater in a way that it will last.”

To keep on schedule, the company often works a second shift with the 270 because of the low-tide limitations. “Our 270 also has a computer-based screen with GPS, same as the 1200. By putting navigation gear on the excavator, we have centimeter accuracy and we eliminate a surveyor spotter who could have been in a pretty precarious position — especially in the dark. As you can imagine, we also have tight specifications for the breakwater slope based on wave analysis.”



*A Hitachi ZX270-3 is positioned on top of the breakwater to carefully key or lock the rock above the low tide line. The Hitachi ZX270-3 also has the same computer-based GPS screen and internet connectivity as the EX1200.*

### **ON LAND**

On this project, Pacific Pile and Marine is also doing the “upland” work along the shoreline and interior of the site.

“We’re doing remedial excavation,” says Anderes. “We’re using a Hitachi 450 to skim an inner tidal area 3-feet deep plus there are some old pilings. The 450 has enough ‘snort’ that it can pull them out of the ground just with the thumb and bucket.”

“Further inland, we’re using smaller Hitachis to do test digs, looking for contamination. When it’s found, we’re told where to dig and how deep. Sometimes we’ll dig for 20 feet or so to clean out whatever goo of mud and chemicals might be found. Some of this work is being done with a subcontractor, Construction Unlimited.”

### **FUTURE JOBS**

“As much as we like this project,” says Anderes, “we’re also excited about

how we can use the 1200 on other projects. As soon as we’re finished here, we have a new job that’s a pier demolition. We’ve bought a shear for the 1200 that we’ve modified, and we’re going to reach down underwater and snip each pole off within six inches of the bottom’s surface. No one has ever done that before. So, we’ll have underwater cameras to direct the operator and to prove that we cut where we said we would. Again, we bid based on specs for minimal sawdust, no mess, and minimal time to complete the job.”

And thanks to their Hitachi 1200, they’re looking forward to even more opportunities providing creative solutions for the marine industry.

 **To view the video go to:**  
[www.hitachiconstruction.com/pacificpile](http://www.hitachiconstruction.com/pacificpile)

*Pacific Pile and Marine Construction Company is serviced by Papé Equipment Company, Tacoma, Washington branch.*