

A LOGGER'S EVOLUTION INTO ORGANICS, C&D RECYCLING

Material is single-ground (right) in a Peterson grinder to a 3- to 5-inch minus size (1). Company founder Duane Stroupe (left) and his son Casey (right) have grown the company to where it processes 300,000 cy of material between six locations (2). Size segregation of final products is done by track-mounted CEC screens (3).

S&H Landscape & Recycling in Oregon manages a full plate of waste streams, generating products ranging from mulch and compost to boiler fuel and road aggregate.

Larry Trojak



board feet in 1972. According to company president Duane Stroupe, a need to find an alternative market for their services was painfully apparent.

"Luckily for us, at the same time we were logging, we had also started a service providing firewood to our customers," he says.



"That seemed like a natural extension of our business and it worked out real well as we were transitioning away from logging. Before too long, we were probably cutting 6,000 cords of wood for area cus-

S&H Landscape & Recycling's route to becoming one of Oregon's leading landscape material providers was, like that of many other similar companies, a roundabout one. In the late 1970s, with more than a decade committed to serving the logging market, the firm saw the writing on the wall in terms of both worsening economic conditions and changing environmental perceptions. Anticipating a downturn in logging activity, company founder Duane Stroupe made a lateral move, first to becoming a large-scale provider of firewood, and later, along with son Casey, to material processing and composting. Today, logging is just a distant (though fond) memory and the Stroupe's company has become one of the Portland area's primary recyclers of wood waste, green waste and concrete.

Established in Tualatin, Oregon in 1968 as S&H Logging, the company played a role in some of logging's glory years. By late 1979, however, demand for Oregon's lumber and other wood products collapsed. Soaring oil prices and federal economic policies resulted in high interest rates, a deep recession, and a downturn in the commercial construction and housing markets. Environmental challenges made a dismal situation worse. By 1981, timber harvests had fallen to 5.7 billion board feet from a peak of 9.7 billion



tomers a year." As is often the case, however, creating one product resulted in generation of another waste product and the Stroupes were suddenly confronted with a growing volume of bark and wood chunk residue. The solution to that problem was to start an operation committed to grinding and composting green waste and wood waste material.

MULTIPLE LOCATIONS, SERVICES

S&H Landscape & Recycling has several different locations in and around the Portland area, each committed to a common goal of providing high quality landscape-related products or services. The focus of the operation is relatively balanced, with half of the output being composted material and the other half general landscaping materials.

Individuals and commercial firms (the

company presently has no contracts with area municipalities) can bring self-hauled items to S&H locations as well. The company charges \$10/cy for grass, sod, leaves, weeds, brush and stumps. It also accepts clean lumber and chips for fuel wood recycling, charging \$7/cy.

In addition, the company also grinds material for use as hog fuel for area paper plants and recycles limited volumes of concrete and asphalt on a regular basis. "We have 40 employees working in four separate locations," says Casey Stroupe, company vice-president. "We are proud of the fact that we are able to offer one of the area's best selections of materials, including blended soil, bark, shavings, and compost products, as well as decorative landscape rock and pavers."

Stroupe is hardly exaggerating his claim about choices available to area customers. The company creates better than a dozen products in its bark and mulch category alone, including Fresh Fir Bark in a medium and fine grade; fine grade Dark Fir Bark; Medium Dark and Medium Fresh Hemlock; bark nuggets in sizes ranging from 3/8-inch to 3- to 5-inches; Cedar Chips; Fir Shavings, Sawdust and material it ships for hog fuel. Delivery options are also available including straightforward truck delivery or direct application using the firm's Express Blower truck.

MATERIALS PROCESSING

The grinding facet of S&H's operation is handled by a pair of 1000 hp Peterson Pacific Model 6710B track-mounted horizontal grinders. Generally speaking, material is single-ground to a 3- to 5-inch minus size then either used as a mulch product, chip or nugget in landscaping applications. All green waste is single ground, then sent off for composting. Recognizing the growth in popularity of colored mulch in and around the Portland area, S&H is looking into a number of coloring systems with plans to add colored products to its mix sometime in the not-too-distant future.

While a limited number of different sized products can be achieved by changing grinder screens, the overwhelming majority of material size segregation is achieved through track-mounted CEC Screens that the firm rotates between its various sites. S&H currently operates three 5 by 12 Screen-It® Track Mobile units that focus on the green and wood waste operations and one 6 by 16 Track Screen-IT unit.

Stroupe says they chose CEC for a number of reasons including location (like S&H, CEC is a Tualatin-based company), a solid reputation among other processors in the area, and a willingness to work with S&H. "It meant a lot to us that they were willing to come out and demonstrate their products; that really helped solidify our decision."

The company's choice to go with an almost exclusively track-mounted fleet is based on a single huge benefit: cleanup. "Efficiency is key for anyone in this business, and for us that means eliminating any unnecessary downtime," explains Stroupe. "If we had a screen unit on wheels we would need to have a person dedicated to keeping the area under the screen shoveled — or at least cleaned up enough where we could hook up a truck, move the screen, have a loader come in to clean it up, then move it back. With the unit on tracks, our loader operator simply presses a button to move it aside, comes in, makes one pass with the bucket and we're back at it."

The lower loading height of CEC's screens (on the 5 by 12 unit the height is 9-feet 11-inches without a grizzly, and 10-

feet 6-inches with one) was also key in S&H's decision to choose that brand. The ease of accessibility makes that facet of the job far more efficient, eliminating the need for ramps. The company opted for the larger 6 by 16 screen in its composting operation because it generates the larger volumes it is seeking. "That unit is also well-suited, by design, to a composting operation," says Stroupe. "It seems to handle the material extremely well without any of the sparring we've gotten in other equipment like trommels."

S&H's composting is done on a seven-acre site in nearby Clackamas, Oregon. In addition to the CEC screen, the firm employs a host of equipment to get its material to a prepared state. That lineup includes a Wildcat Cougar Model 626 Trommel, a Link Belt 330 LX excavator equipped with a Jewell MH112GR Grapple Rake and several John Deere wheel-loaders. After screening, material is windrowed, turned monthly over the course of six months, then rescreened to create a 5/8-inch minus product that is certified to meet the US Composting Council's Seal of Testing Assurance quality requirements.

C&D DEBRIS PROCESSING

While S&H's primary area of expertise is creating landscaping products, the firm has seen surprising growth in the volumes of concrete and asphalt it processes. It uses a CEC 102 by 115 Track Mobile Impactor for crushing concrete and asphalt. "This is not even a side of the business which we actively sought to grow," says Stroupe. "Yet it seems to be taking on a life of its own. We generally get such material from landscapers and homeowners who might be tearing up a patio to do some remedial yard work. It allows them to both dispose of that old debris and pick up new, replacement material, be it topsoil, mulch, etc. It used to be a very small part of the business, but now, between the three yards we have that accept such material — our main site, Clackamas and Hillsboro — we take in about 30,000 cubic yards a year. So we've been bringing the Track Mobile Impactor to each of those locations and, like its counterparts on the wood waste side, it's done a great job for us in terms of power and efficiency, creating a pair of products, one a 1 1/2-inch to 3/4-inch size, and another 3/4-inch minus product."

Despite the growth in this area, Stroupe adds that, rather than address the needs of larger demolition contractors, they've chosen to limit the amount of concrete and asphalt material they take in. "This too might change in the future," he says, "but right now we're keeping things on a fairly small scale and both selling the resultant material to landscapers and using it ourselves as road base at our various locations."

Need further proof as to how far the company has come from a logging/fire wood firm? Consider the fact that S&H Landscape & Recycling took in better than 300,000 cubic yards of material between its six locations in 2006 and is on pace to exceed that this year.

"We did 800 yards of wood waste at the main yard alone the other day," says Casey Stroupe. "That's a very nice day. We've really put together a great combination of manpower and highly-productive — and efficient — equipment that will set us up nicely for even more growth in years to come." ■

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