

60th anniversary in 2009 a significant milestone for Lounsbury & Associates

Lounsbury websites offer more than services: a free snowmachine training course and animated guide for negotiating traffic roundabouts

Lounsbury & Associates has provided surveying, planning, civil engineering and project management services on a statewide basis for 60 years and takes pride in its reputation for excellence and reliability.

Q. Where is Lounsbury & Associates located?

A. Our headquarters office is at 5300 A Street in Anchorage. We have had an office in Wasilla since 2001 at 3161 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy. We have also maintained an office on the North Slope at the Kuparuk Office Complex for over 25 years. We regularly establish field offices as required to support major projects.



Ken Ayers, PLS vice president, answered these questions

Q. When was the company founded? Who founded it, and what was its original name?

A. The company was founded as Hewitt V. Lounsbury & Associates in 1949.

Q. Who heads up your company and who is on its senior management team?

A. Jim Sawhill PE, is president and principal in charge of engineering. Ken Ayers PLS, is vice president and principal in charge of surveying. A.J. Rookus PLS, and Brian Mangold PLS, are the project managers at Kuparuk. Tom Adams PE, manages engineering and Tim Mullikin PLS, manages surveying at our Valley office.

Q. What services do you offer?

A. We provide surveying, planning, civil engineering and project management services. We typically focus on our core expertise but are experienced at building and



Lounsbury surveyor setting grades for ice pad construction

managing design teams with experts of many disciplines to best serve our clients or the project at hand.

Q. What is your company's primary business sector?

A. We maintain a diverse clientele. In the oil and gas sector we provide services to ConocoPhillips, Chevron, ENI Petroleum, Pioneer Resources, Chevron and others. We also provide surveying and engineering services to state and local governments for transportation, highway, traffic safety, drainage, utility and right-of-way projects.

We provide commercial site development surveying and engineering services for retailers such as Wal-Mart and Lowe's. And we work with many local developers, such as The Petersen Group, Hickel Investments and Carr-Gottstein properties, on commercial and residential development projects.

Q. How many employees do you have?

A. We have around 65 employees although the number increases during the summer.

Q. Describe your essential equipment in general terms and planned purchases.

A. One of our business strategies is to stay on the leading edge of technology, so we constantly evaluate new hardware and software platforms to increase efficiency and better serve our clients. We recently invested in a Leica ScanStation 2, a laser scanner that creates three-dimensional point clouds that we model in CAD software. This technology is well suited to piping and process facility work but has many other applications including earthworks, structures and civil design.

Q. Is Lounsbury expanding any of its operations?

A. Sustainable growth over the long term is our priority. We're always looking

QA AND

By Paula Easley

to expand into new markets and provide additional services to existing clients.

Q. What is your company's main strength?

A. We work as partners with our clients to create cost-effective designs. We face tough challenges every day in our work, and that's one reason our clients keep coming back; they know they can trust us to get the work done right. Our clients know a thorough engineering analysis and innovative design solutions built upon quality survey data can significantly reduce construction costs and sometimes cover the entire design budget.

Q. What new markets, clients and/or projects did you attract in the last year?

A. The laser scanner has started to build momentum in piping and process facility projects for, not only our direct clients, but through other engineering firms that use Lounsbury as a specialty sub-consultant to obtain existing conditions data for their use in design projects.

Q. Has the company invested in any new technology in the last two years?

A. One recent investment was switching to AutoCAD Civil 3D. This is a major departure from traditional 2D design that required a significant training effort and changing the way we approach projects. 3D scanning technology is also a substantial investment as each scanner costs \$100,000 and the software is another \$50,000 - plus the training and marketing costs.

Q. What is the most challenging job you've undertaken?

A. There have been many. Notably, I'd say developing the Swanson River oil field; reconstruction and repair work following the 1964 earthquake; and design and construction of the Alyeska Pipeline, Prudhoe Bay & Kuparuk.

Engineering the roundabouts for Dowling Road and reconstructing the Sterling Highway into Homer were also challenging projects. Certainly the many quality neighborhoods we designed over the decades—with Southport in Anchorage a leading ex-



Lounsbury surveyor sets GPS control for Colville River flood plain study (Alpine project 1996)

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let anyone forget these memorable moments. We have had guys treed by moose and chased around by rabid foxes and other wildlife—luckily all without any serious incident. Facial hair frozen to equipment is always pretty funny—unless you're the one whose eyelashes are stuck to the instrument at minus 40F.

Q. Does Lounsbury have an anniversary or other landmark event coming up?

A. Our 60th anniversary is in 2009. We'll have an open house for our clients this spring and a company celebration this summer to commemorate the occasion. We're proud to be Alaska's oldest continuously operating surveying and engineering company.

Q. What is the average length of time employees work for the company? Are you hiring?

A. We're equally proud of our low employee turnover. Lounsbury is a great place to work. Many employees are in the 5-10 year range and quite a few are in the 15-25 range. Dave Marquiss a pastry chef at Kuparuk wins the longevity title with 30 years' service. We are always looking for qualified civil engineers and surveyors and are currently seeking a platting manager for our Anchorage office.

Q. What is your company's safety record?

A. In 2007 we were incident free and this year we had one very minor hand injury. We haven't had a lost-time incident for many years. Safety is a value we live with every day and is a core component of our work.

Q. Website information?

A. Lounsburyinc.com generates quite a bit of traffic from prospective employees, our clients and probably our competitors too. We have a Web-based snowmachine safety training program created for our employees that is available to the public. When we started designing roundabouts, we created alaskaroundabouts.com as a resource for designers, media and the general public. It gets a lot of worldwide attention.

ample—are part of Lounsbury's legacy.

Q. What are the biggest obstacles to completing work the company undertakes?

A. Without a doubt permitting and timely reviews by contracting and regulatory agencies.

Q. What do you see as your company's biggest challenge in the next five years?

A. Given the current economic uncertainty, that is a tough question. If a natural gas pipeline is built we expect to play a significant role in its design and construction, which will certainly be a challenge. Finding and training the next generation of surveyors and engineers is also an ongoing challenge.

Q. What do you see as future trends or opportunities for your company from, say, political events or long-term weather fluctuations?

A. The loss of Senator Ted Stevens and his ability to steer federal funds to Alaska projects will probably have the largest immediate impact on our economy. A lot of this money was for road and utility projects that improved living standards for many Alaskans. Global warming could also impact existing roads and utilities due to melting permafrost and, with this in mind, could change the way we design and build projects in the future.

Q. Is there a humorous story you can share from doing business in Alaska?

A. In general, engineers are kind of boring, but surveyors tend to get themselves into some pretty sticky situations. We never