



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT · COMO HARBOR AT COMO PARK ZOO, ST. PAUL, MN

The Como Park Zoo and Conservatory in St. Paul, Minn., opened an exhibit with help from Bulach Custom Rock and Shotcrete by TCC Materials. The Como Harbor is the newest addition to Como Park Zoo, which was established in 1897. The seal and sea lion exhibit provides a year-round indoor and outdoor exhibit and helps draw thousands of visitors each day, including over 500,000 school-age students that enjoy field trips from all around the state of Minnesota.

TCC Materials played an important role in this project by supplying the “dry” shotcrete product used to create the exhibit’s stone surround which mimics the animals’ natural habitat. Dry shotcrete refers to the process where water is added at the application nozzle. The dry material (packaged at a TCC Materials manufacturing facility) is placed in a hopper, delivered by a silo, and then is pneumatically (compressed air) propelled through a hose while the nozzle operator controls the addition of the water.

John Thomas, a sales representative for TCC Materials, has worked on many shotcrete projects across Minnesota and Wisconsin. He partnered with Bulach Custom Rock to supply this project to the Zoo’s new exhibit. “Shotcrete is a very technical sale,” says Thomas. “It requires significant support from our technical and lab staff to help develop the mix design. Shotcrete needs to perform consistently out of the nozzle, or we hear about it.”

Thomas notes that Bulach was a strategic partner in the process. Test panels were shot prior to starting and sent to an engineering lab for verification. “The test resulted in positive feed back from the Bulach’s nozzleman,” said Thomas. “This job went very smoothly thanks to the attention to the details that our production and customer service staff put into this project.”

