

Martin Marietta Materials Contributes to Strait Area Economy

Mike Shea¹

Great product, people and location. These are classic ingredients for success in business, and ones that the folks at Martin Marietta Materials in Aulds Cove appreciate. The company is a leading producer of construction aggregates—crushed stone, sand and gravel—used to make concrete and asphalt for roads, buildings and infrastructure.

Martin Marietta Materials Canada Limited has operated the Porcupine Mountain Quarry at Aulds Cove, near the Canso Causeway, since 1995. In fact it was the construction of this causeway joining Cape Breton Island to mainland Nova Scotia that led to quarrying in the area in the first place. Martin Marietta has provided the company with access to new markets and capital to modernize equipment and infrastructure.

Located on the shore of the Strait of Canso, a deep water channel that can accommodate 70,000 tonne capacity cargo vessels, Porcupine Mountain ships its granite up and down the east coast of the United States and into the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. The amount of material mined and shipped has increased dramatically over the past 15 years. In 1995, throughput was 1.2 million tonnes. Today the company is one of the top aggregate producers in Canada with the ability to produce over 4 million tonnes per year. The quarry can operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week for nine months of the year and with the ice-free port, they can ship 12 months a year. The quarry's location next to a water distribution route gives it a cost advantage over operations that have to ship granite by truck or rail.

There is one more important ingredient that contributes to the operation's success—the quality of its workforce. Martin Marietta Materials employs approximately 100 people at the Porcupine Mountain quarry. On December 8, 2009, the company congratulated the workers for a significant achievement in workplace safety—they reached 1 million hours without a lost-time incident in rugged terrain and sometimes harsh weather conditions.

Martin Marietta is strategically positioned to participate in a global economic recovery, including improved market demand.

¹Martin Marietta Materials Canada Ltd., Plant Manager, Porcupine Mountain Quarry, Aulds Cove, N.S.