



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

LOCAL MAINTENANCE WORKER Donnie Kirby operates DOT's new Dondi ditching machine on Old Lennon Road off N.C. 211.

DOT Acquires New Tool To Keep Ditches Clean

BY RAHN ADAMS

If the ditches are less than five feet deep and run along certain rural roads, the Brunswick County Department of Transportation office now has just the thing to keep them clean: the first ditching machine of its kind to be used in the state.

According to local highway maintenance engineer David Thomas, Brunswick County recently began using an Italian-made Dondi ditcher that will allow DOT to do planned ditch maintenance and at the same time free up standard equipment for other maintenance jobs.

"I think it has great potential," Thomas said of the new piece of equipment. "Over the long run, it's going to be very beneficial."

The \$43,000 ditcher, which Thomas said is the first to be used in North Carolina, was purchased last month for the DOT district that covers Brunswick and New Hanover counties. South Carolina's highway department has successfully used Dondi ditchers for about eight years, Thomas noted.

District Engineer Jim Cook said the ditcher will be used mostly in Brunswick County. "Right now the need for ditching and maintenance of that type is in Brunswick County," he said, adding that the machine probably can be used on 60 percent of the county's 753 miles of state-maintained roads.

The hydraulic ditcher is pulled by a 100-horsepower tractor that was customized with a slow-moving "creeper gear." Sets of blades in the ditching machine take in soil, then casts it away from the road.

Until now, DOT has had to clean ditches with a backhoe, then haul away the excess soil. The ditcher's benefit is that nothing is left behind. "It's much faster, and you don't have to haul anything away," Cook said.

As an example, Thomas estimated that the ditcher can open a ditch in 45 minutes that would take a backhoe over a day to clean.

He said the machine can be used on ditches that are less than five feet deep and have no more than a 16-degree slope. Cook added that the

ditcher will be used mainly on roads adjacent to woodlands and unplanted fields, since it spreads soil away from the road.

"Those are things we'll have to work around," Thomas said. "It's not going to be an 'every ditch in the county' type thing."

For the first couple of months that the local DOT has the ditcher, maintenance personnel are being trained to use it, Thomas said. The training initially is being done on dirt roads where traffic is light.

When the ditcher is in full use, DOT will begin planned ditch maintenance. "We plan for this machine to go in and do whole sections of road at one time," Thomas said.

Cook noted that DOT crews currently are six to eight months behind on ditching requests in Brunswick County. While most of those jobs will be handled with backhoes, as usual, Thomas said use of the ditcher should prevent future backlogs of spot maintenance calls.

County Residents Pitch In To Finance Governor's Races

The 1988 race for governor has been an expensive proposition, with Gov. Jim Martin raising nearly \$5 million in the last two years and Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan raising about \$4.1 million.

According to the N.C. Campaign Reporting Office, the following Brunswick County residents contributed to a gubernatorial campaign during the most recent filing period for the candidates.

MARTIN

Jerry D. Lewis, Shallotte, \$1,000; J.C. Meisner, Long Beach, \$125; M.K. Mitchell, Southport, \$3,000; Lyman E. Clark, Yaupon Beach, \$170; Dinah E. Gore, Sunset Beach, \$1,000; Helen O. Pope, Ocean Isle Beach, \$1,000; Robert H. Wilson, Yaupon Beach, \$1,075; Edna Milliken, Shallotte, \$200; Robert Bellamy, Shallotte, \$200; B.M. Long, Shallotte, \$300; Dan Harrelson, Southport, \$375; H.B. Lee, Leland, \$125; J.M. Pope, Ocean Isle Beach, \$1,250; W.A. Roach, Shallotte, \$1,200. Also, Carolyn R. Roberts, Supply, \$250; Robert E. Smith, Southport, \$125; Michael Bauerschmidt, Holden Beach, \$250; H.M. Brazeal, Sunset Beach, \$250; Larry W. Brown, Shallotte, \$1,000; C.B. Caroon, Southport, \$250; Brenda Causey, Ocean Isle Beach, \$250; W.A. English, \$250, Shallotte; Annette T. Carringer, Shallotte, \$250; John T. Fazekas, Shallotte, \$300; Gregory Gore, Sunset Beach, \$500; W.D. Harrelson, Shallotte, \$250; Davis Herring Jr., Southport, \$250; Ernest Hewett, Supply, \$350; Michael Hobbs, Holden Beach, \$1,000; Alan Holden, Holden Beach, \$250.

Also, Delores Holden, Supply, \$500; Scott Irby III, Shallotte, \$1,000; Rick Joyner, Shallotte, \$500; Lee Langston, Shallotte, \$250; Alan C. Lewis, Shallotte, \$250; Robert Long, Shallotte, \$250; Gerald Long, Shallotte, \$300; W.J. McLamb Jr., Shallotte, \$250; James H. Milliken, Shallotte, \$125; Alan L. Morrison, Shallotte, \$1,000; Coolidge Murrow, Long Beach, \$250; Al Odom, Sunset Beach, \$250; William Powell, Shallotte, \$250; Bruce Quaintance, Ocean Isle Beach, \$250; Alphonza

Roach, Shallotte, \$800. And, Douglas Scott, Shallotte, \$500; Robert Sellers, Shallotte, \$250; Wallace Smith, Supply, \$250; Walter G. Smith, Supply, \$1,000; Davey L. Stanley, Shallotte, \$250; Wyarian Taylor, Shallotte, \$250; R.S. Ward, Shallotte, \$125; Donald E. Warren, Shallotte, \$250; R.D. White III, Shallotte, \$500; W.J. Wiggs, Yaupon Beach, \$250; John Williams, Shallotte, \$15; Tommy Bradsher, Supply, \$250; W.P. Rabon, Southport, \$1,000; Patrick Howe, Southport, \$500.

JORDAN

John T. Rose, Sunset Beach, \$500; Joey Shreve, Shallotte, \$200; Mike Easley, Southport, \$250; Larry J.

Shreve, Shallotte, \$200; Paul D. Dennis, Shallotte, \$1,000; Kemp M. Causey, Ocean Isle Beach, \$250; E.J. Prevatte, Southport, \$169; Linda Phillips, Southport, \$200; B.S. Ward, Shallotte, \$250; Scot Benton, Shallotte, \$250; Dean A. Walters, Ocean Isle Beach, \$250; G.V. Barbee, Long Beach, \$1,000; Scott W. Lander, Shallotte, \$250; Bill English, Sunset Beach, \$250; Edward M. Gore, Sunset Beach, \$250; John W. Williams, Ocean Isle Beach, \$250; Don Warren, Shallotte, \$250; Carvin Robinson, Supply, \$275; Alan Holden, Holden Beach, \$250; Floyd Kirby Jr., Shallotte, \$1,000; Albert H. Parker Sr., Supply, \$2,128; and Nancy W. Barbee, Ocean Isle Beach, \$250.

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