

Southern Wood Council media release

August 2007

Forestry as a career

A DVD by the Southern Wood Council has put the region to the forefront in promoting forestry as a career to its young people.

The "Faces of Forestry" DVD is one of the first produced in New Zealand to promote career opportunities within the forestry and wood products industries.

Forestry requires a wide range of workers, and Southern Wood Council chairman Matt Hitchings says the DVD, produced in conjunction with the Southern Institute of Technology (SIT), is an ideal way to explain the depth of career prospects specifically to students.

Forestry and wood processing is a growing sector, employing around 2500 people in Otago and Southland, and that demand is likely to increase. "The forests of Otago and Southland are an asset for the region; an economic and environment powerhouse. We want people to recognise the opportunities available to them to play a part in this," Mr Hitchings said.

"Forestry companies use a broad range of skills to manage plantations or in timber processing or remanufacturing plants, including silviculture and harvesting knowledge, solid wood processing abilities, engineering (structural and roading), plant science, resource management, and business management skills," he added.

The 15 minute DVD profiles 16 people working in a variety of forestry positions, describing their jobs, qualifications, salaries and their enthusiasm for their profession, as well as the subjects that should be taken at school.

The Faces of Forestry DVD, released to schools and career advisers throughout the region, has been well received by jobseekers. It will feature on Cue TV during the week of August 6, and will also be at the Southern Wood Council's display at the Southland Careers Expo on August 23 and 24 in Invercargill.

Representatives of the Southern Wood Council are available to liaise with schools and students in the region. Contact details of member companies can be found on the Southern Wood Council's website.

The Southern Wood Council Inc was set up in 2001 to promote, encourage and coordinate the sustainable economic development of the forest products industry in Otago and Southland. One of a few truly independent groups of its type in New Zealand, it includes all the major forest owners within the region (ownership or management of over 140,000 hectares of production forests with an annual harvest of over 1.2 million m³ of wood), the larger wood processing and manufacturing companies, the port authorities and each of the three economic development agencies from local councils.

For further information contact Matt Hitchings on 03-204-8444.