



**Media release from the Southern Wood Council  
July, 2009**

**Profile: Kevin Marsh**

**There's an underlying long-term commitment to forestry in Otago and Southland despite the current recession.**

The on-going investment in forestry is more than money and technology; it's also in equipping people to ensure a skilled workforce continues to base themselves in the region.

One such person is Kevin Marsh, a Forestry Supervisor with City Forest, who is currently overseeing replanting in the company's Waipori and Milton forests.

A winner of the modern apprentice of the year - Forestry in 2006, the Dunedin-based 30-year-old is in charge of silviculture, supervising the crews contracted to plant the 400,000 seedlings going into City Forest blocks this year.

Kevin's commitment to the industry is his dedication to training, having recently presented with another national forestry certificate at the recent FITEC regional awards, his ninth in an 11 year career.

His latest certificate is a supervisory one, having worked his way up as a trainee gaining fundamental forestry harvesting and logging skills, through to acquiring more challenging silviculture and health and safety qualifications, all in his spare time.

Kevin's been explaining to Dunedin students thinking about a career in forestry that there is a much bigger variety of career options in the industry than people are aware, and a lot of different training options for qualifications that involve work-based assessment as well as study.

And he hasn't just been telling them about forestry, he's got young people out into forestry blocks and looking at what silviculture and harvesting means. "Hopefully we've opened some people's eyes to the opportunities. We want to make sure students get that it's an industry that's here for the long-haul, and that they have a chance to train and study on the job with very good support."

He sees training and supporting staff being one of the industry's strengths locally. "The opportunities are there, the people that work in the industry are totally behind helping and supporting fellow workers. The rewards are there if you put the effort in – you don't have to have a degree to move up the ranks."



There are over 200,000 hectares of trees in Otago and Southland, and Kevin says that's also a big positive for the region, something the Southern Wood Council also advocates. "I think there's a future for wood and we're well placed locally to make the most of that."

Kevin gained his first forestry skills at Telford, then worked for forestry contractors around Otago before taking on the City Forest supervisor role almost three years ago, and believes his training and award helped him land the position. "Forestry's in my blood; I love it."

*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 m<sup>3</sup> 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 Grant Dodson on 03-467-7722.**