

THE NEXT GENERATION

Meeting young entrepreneurs...

Name of Company:	Gestion forestière ACFOR (Forest Management)
Date Established:	July 2006
Owner:	Mathieu LeBlanc
Owner's Age:	28 years old
Location of Business:	Saint-Thomas-de-Kent
Products or Services:	Private wooded lot evaluations
Number of Employees:	1

Products or services offered:

- Sustainable forest management plans
- Wood volume evaluations
- Clearing, gardening and reforestation
- Identifying land boundaries with GPS
- "Turnkey" project management

I offer owners of wooded lots a sustainable method of management that is based on a renewed approach to forestry. This method, which is more and more recognized across Canada and elsewhere, allows the forest to remain productive so it can reach its full potential while conserving its biodiversity. My services help the client manage his forest according to his personal vision and attain the specific objectives that have been set. Sustainable forest management plan is one of the services I provide. The plan is designed according to the owner's vision and needs. For example, if in addition to wanting to draw financial benefits, one of the owner's objectives is to favour the presence of deer or partridges, the plan will suggest landscaping that will attract these animals. Another service I provide is that of evaluating the volume of wood on a lot. I come to the site with my technical equipment whereby I calculate the market value of the wood, by evaluating how much is available for cutting. I also offer a service whereby land boundaries are identified for the owners by using the most recent GPS technology. Finally, I provide "turn-key" project management services, meaning that I work with the various entrepreneurs in forestry in the area, which makes it possible for me to take care of every aspect of the work, including cutting, landscaping, etc.

How did the idea of starting your own business first come to you?

After having spent many years in Québec, I wanted to come back home to work at my trade and by so doing, contribute to the sustainable management of Acadian forests. There were no other businesses like this in the region and I saw the potential in setting up my forest management business here.

As an entrepreneur, my main objective is to provide people with a current and recognized approach, based on modern forest management practices and techniques. This sustainable method of management favors optimal exploitation of the forest in various stages.

What kind of training have you had?

I got my college degree at the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles in 2000. I am a certified forest management technician. I just recently got a certificate in project management at the Cité collégiale in Ottawa.

Where are you originally from?

I was born in Saint-Antoine and I am a graduate (1996) of Clément Cormier.

Did you have any experience in this field before you went into business?

When I finished by technical course in college, I decided it would be better for me to go and work for an established company in order to gain experience. I thought of starting my own business right after college, but realized the importance of getting experience before launching a business. So I worked during six years for a forestry company in Québec that preferred sustainable forest development. The company trusted me and gave me enormous flexibility in my work. I had the opportunity to work on a wide variety of projects and I learned a lot, all the while developing management abilities, since my work demanded that I manage a project from A to Z.

Have you ever won prizes or received any distinctions?

Yes. While I was studying at the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, I received the certificate of distinction for the year 1998-1999, given to the student from the 1st to 3rd year who distinguished himself the most by his grades and his participation in class.

Tell us about an accomplishment that you hold dear

A few years ago, someone very special to me requested my services. I had the honor and the pleasure of doing some forest management work on the private land of Frédéric Back, the famous author who wrote *L'homme qui plantait des arbres* (*The Man who Planted Trees*) and many other animation films. This was a very intense meeting, rich with experience. I will forever cherish the memory of the many hours spent in his company.

Business Hours:

Monday to Friday – 9 a.m. to 5 p.m - For further information: **743-8526 or 531-8526**