



NPFL committed to the region forever

NGATI Porou Forests Limited (NPFL) general manager Daniel Williams was destined to follow his late father Jim, grandfather and great grandfather into high country farming, but could see there was a change coming.

"I was in my last year at Gisborne Boys' High School and was all prepared to go to Lincoln or Massey to study agriculture. In doing so I would be a fourth generation farmer on our farm at Wharekopae, however, my dad was growing increasingly despondent with farming and recommended I pursue another career path," he said.

"We discussed my options and both saw the emergence of forestry in our region, with numerous farms being purchased and planted, and decided a bright future lay ahead in this industry."

In 2001 Daniel completed a Bachelor of Forestry Science with Honours from Canterbury University. Following this he gained work experience as a harvest planner in Rotorua, soil technician for Ground Engineering Ltd in Scotland and operations manager for Ernslaw One in Gisborne. "I have been fortunate enough to work with several experienced people from all walks of life."

In 2011, Daniel was approached to lead NPFL in the next steps of the company's journey. Daniel's heart is tied to the land and he accepted the role feeling it was important to give back the knowledge and experience he has gained in order to help prosper his people. "This was a chance to make a difference on the coast where my nan, who brought me up, was from," he says. "It was a chance to work for Ngati Porou and our own land and forest owners... My grandfather was from Te Aitanga a Mahaki so there is still a desire to help there in the future as well. My nan

and grandpa raised me, in Kaiti, after mum passed away when I was young. This allowed dad to run the farm. I went to school at Waikirikiri, Ilminster and then Gisborne Boys."

When Daniel joined the company, the initial priority was to register forests into the post-1989 Emissions Trading Scheme. Thus, providing an annual income for forest owners whilst they wait for their forest to be harvested. Following this, it had to develop systems to begin harvesting.

"We had to finish the tendering on the existing estate but also continue to increase the size of our forest estate. In doing so creating sustainable opportunities for our people. With the support of my team around me, we implemented new, strategies, systems and processes which have helped us succeed in the start of our harvesting programme and also increasing the land area we manage." Since 2011 the area NPFL manages has increased by 50 percent to 14,500 net stocked hectares and continues to expand.

The ultimate goal is to provide sustainable employment for Ngati Porou people NPFL is owned by 38 land blocks in Te Tairāwhiti. The vision is "Kei te whenua te waiu mo nga uri whakatipu (the land will provide sustenance for future generations)."

A key difference within Maori businesses is the long-term wider perspective that is considered, said Daniel.

"We have many more stakeholders who have a chance for input and while that can be challenging it is rewarding when the job gets done. Our decisions are ones that impact on us and need to be thoroughly



Daniel with children Lily, Andie, Jack, and wife Shannon.

consulted on."

NPFL supports student's education and annually, offers two scholarships for aspiring descendants of their 38 blocks. It also supports staff working towards their higher education.

"Two of our current management staff have received the scholarships in the past."

It's clear Daniel, who is also the current chair of the Eastland Wood Council, loves what he does. He is driven to create a secure future for his three young children.

"A family needs a good sustainable income to ensure there is kai on the table and the children have the necessary home environment, clothing and books/tablets to go to school and get an education so they can have the opportunity to have a successful career."

Kim's comments

Kim Holland, chief executive, Eastland Wood Council

WITH the increase in harvesting, the Billion Trees planting programme and new and exciting opportunities in the wood processing industry, it's a good time to consider a career in forestry.

There are lots of great stories out there about our people who have progressed through the industry, and we

share two of those this month. We also hear from a young student, Connor Fahey, who interned in the region over the summer. Connor is looking forward to starting his career in the forest industry here when he has completed his forestry engineering degree at Canterbury University.

Whether you enjoy science, technology, maths, working inside/outside, problem-solving, fixing things, working with machinery, working with people, engineering, the environment — forestry offers something for everyone.

The Careers Expo early next month is the perfect opportunity to find out more about the range of career pathways available in the industry. Come and talk to the people who are already involved and they can share what they love about working in forestry.



Great to be part of an industry that is 'really going somewhere'

MATT Strybosch discovered forestry in his 20s and has never looked back. In the ensuing decades, he's worked right across the industry, giving him an understanding and appreciation of all facets and making him an invaluable addition to any team.

These days he is a harvest manager for Kohntrol Forest Services which brings together all that experience. Matt started an accounting degree on leaving school but quickly discovered that wasn't for him.

"I found out about the NZCF forestry certificate and never looked back," he says. It took him three-and-a-half years combining his study and work. He then moved from working in logging crews to a job with Fletcher Challenge as a harvesting supervisor which led to more roles within the international company including log sales and wood flow.

"I worked in the main office for about three years and it exposed me to a lot of things (in the industry) that I wasn't even aware of. I didn't even have to go out to the bush. But it was good because it gave me a better understanding of how the whole industry worked," he says.

Matt then established his own business as a logging contractor, basing out of Ruatoria for a decade, doing hauler and road line logging for various companies in the area. "This was great, but it was also challenging and I soon honed skills I didn't even know I had like fixing machines and all the other challenges that are associated with running a logging business."

When his health deteriorated he moved back to Rotorua and out of logging but remained within the industry as a dispatcher of log trucks for Trimble Forestry at Kinleith. "That was pretty different and I got a good look at a part of the forest industry that many struggle to understand. It is a complicated game trying to keep everyone happy in distribution."

Soon the coast was again calling and he returned to Gisborne in 2014 to take up his job with Kohntrol. "The job I do now is everything I have done before — it

is challenging but good and I enjoy it. It really helps to have that varied background and understand all parts of it. It keeps you busy and it is interesting looking after clients' forests and helping to manage the harvest with them."

Matt says it is the people who make the industry so attractive. "They are good people — right across it," he says. "A lot of the time too, you are doing something visual so you can see the results . . . whether that be roads or trees — I like that."

With so much happening within forestry, Matt says there is no time for boredom. "There are so many opportunities — it isn't just about looking after logging. There is marketing, shipping and so much more. If you are keen you can get into anything through forestry and it is very rewarding. It is a good industry to be involved with."

Matt feels there are a lot of challenges facing the East Coast industry including infrastructure, labour and roading, but that also creates huge opportunity to be part of something that is really going somewhere. "It is great to be in amongst it all."



Connor Fahey Forest Engineering Student

I AM a final year forest engineering student at the University of Canterbury. I'm originally from Tauranga, but went to boarding school in Auckland. I originally came to Canterbury to do a civil engineering degree, but once I discovered how much time a forest engineer spends out in the field, there was no going back.

I spent the summer working in the engineering team at Ernslaw One in Gisborne, and was involved in a range of tasks throughout my time there.

Some of the highlights included creating a company road engineering manual, due to my knowledge of this software from university. I also created a test case GIS file for one of our forests soon to be harvested. This was to be sent overseas and used to test some new software we could be interested in using in the future.

I also had plenty of time in the field, marking road lines for our roading crews, supervising road construction, and I also spent a fair bit of time creating pre-assessment thinning plots, to get an understanding of the importance of silviculture within the forest rotation.

I definitely enjoyed my stay in Gisborne, having the small-town feel, but also big enough to have everything I'd ever need. Everyone I encountered was friendly and welcoming, which made it a lot easier



getting stuck into the job. I loved the location of Gisborne, and spent a lot of time out in the East Coast surf.

I've signed with Ernslaw One as a harvest engineer commencing when I graduate, so that will be my first experience within the industry. I have no further plans after this, we'll just see what opportunities lie ahead.

In terms of further education in forestry, I would highly recommend it to anyone interested. It is a lot of work to get the qualification, and some people may be able to use practical on-the-ground experience to find employment in similar roles; however, the academic qualifications are looked on very favourably by employers, both in New Zealand and abroad, and from what I've seen, quite often lead to more opportunities and faster career progression.

Forest careers

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES

Wherever you start from in the forest industry, you will have clear pathways and many future career choices within the industry.

GREAT BENEFITS

People in the forest industry enjoy their jobs. You can earn good money, work in some amazing places and have great colleagues.

GREAT GROWTH

There is always something new to learn and the sky is the limit in forestry. There is a strong demand for staff at all levels, and opportunities to train and upskill throughout your career — from entry level training, on the job apprenticeships and traineeships through to forestry science and engineering degrees, there is something for everyone.

Check out the new forest careers website — <http://www.forestrycareers.nz>