

At this year's YSC AGM, we introduced a new award to recognize young and upcoming individuals who have a passionate interest in forestry: the *Emerging Youth in Forestry* award.

The idea for this award came about at last year's District meeting, actually the final meeting of the schedule—when someone asked if we had an award dedicated to young people involved in forestry. At the time, we didn't. It was a great idea, but unfortunately, there wasn't enough time before the AGM to properly give the award the time it needed. I want to thank Bob McLaughlin for bringing up the idea—it sparked something important.

This year, I presented the idea at all of our district meetings and asked each district to send in any nominations they had. The criteria were simple but meaningful: a young person who is still in school, actively involved in some way in the forestry sector, interested in managing a family woodlot, possibly owns or operates equipment, essentially someone who shows real promise and passion for the future of forestry.

With this award, we wanted to promote and celebrate the youth who are stepping forward with the drive and commitment to carry the industry into the future.

So, this year, we are proud to recognize and present two individuals who fit this description. Interestingly, both are following similar paths and share comparable goals, making them ideal recipients of this inaugural award.

## Matt Jones



Matt has just completed Grade 11 at Oromocto High School. He and his family own 400 acres of land, which he began working on at the age of 14 when he cut his first trees. With the guidance of a neighbor, he learned how to work safely in the woods. Together with his father, Jim, Matt harvests firewood and saw material for their personal use, using a chainsaw, tractor, and winch. Just over a year ago, Matt purchased his own sawmill—an HM130 MAX Woodland Mill with a 23.5-foot-plus bed. This stationary

mill was mounted on a school bus frame for added rigidity, allowing it to handle large logs with ease. The mill is housed in a building that Matt constructed himself using lumber he milled from his own woodlot.



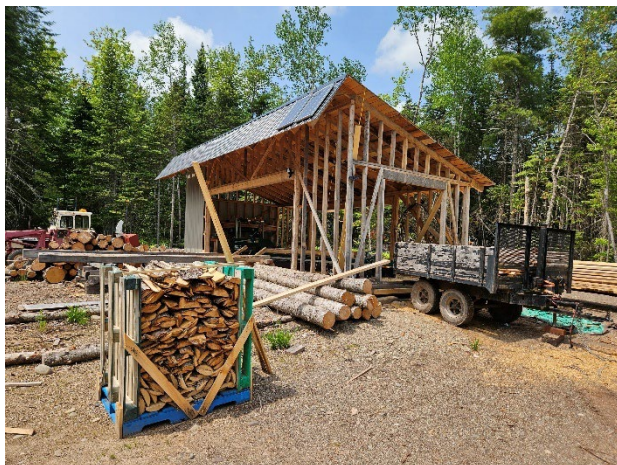




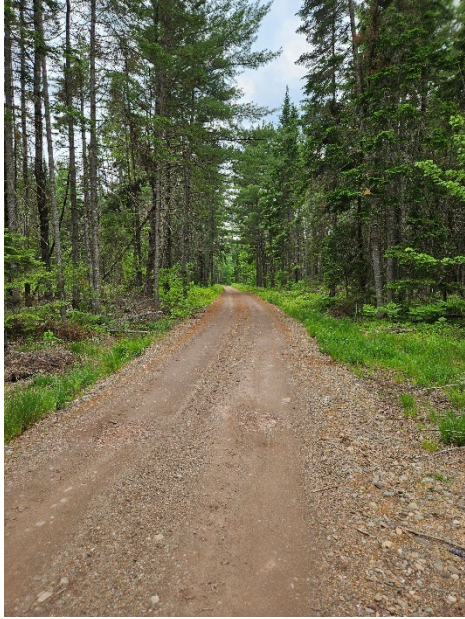
In addition to milling, Matt is a self-taught carpenter, supported in part by his high school shop teacher. He harvests timber from the family woodlot, mills it himself, and uses it to build mini barns—right down to making the shiplap siding that finishes them. So far, Matt has built and sold ten barns and has orders for four more. His barns are known for their quality and sturdiness, featuring cross bracing in the outer walls to enhance stability and strength. Matt credits Everett Charleton with teaching him how to mill and get started in the trade.



At this time, Matt does not sell any lumber; everything he mills is used in his own projects. He ensures that nothing goes to waste—small-diameter tops are cut for firewood, and slabs are given away to neighbors. His mill operates off-grid, powered by a gas engine, with solar panels providing electricity for lighting. Nearby, a camp overlooking Three Tree Creek offers a warm retreat in the winter and a peaceful place to enjoy lunch or watch the wildlife.







Matt also sharpens his own blades and has recently begun offering blade sharpening services to other small sawmill operators in the area. Beyond his milling and carpentry work, he assists his father with cutting firewood and building new roads on their property, adding to their existing road network. He is already thinking ahead, with plans to add a planer to his mill setup.

After high school, Matt is considering the Maritime College of Forest Technology to build on his forestry knowledge and to help with his future forestry plans. Deeply passionate about harvesting, milling, and construction, Matt shows strong promise and will undoubtedly be a valuable asset to the forestry industry in whatever area he chooses to pursue.

YSC is happy to present our 2025 recipient of the Emerging Youth in Forestry Award.

Congratulations Matt, your involvement and interest in the forestry will benefit all of the forestry sector. We wish you all the best in your future forestry path.



## Max Smith



Our next recipient is Max Smith. Max is 19 years old and has just completed his first year at the Maritime College of Forest Technology, where he achieved an impressive GPA of 4.0.



Max and his family own woodlots and also operate a boarding facility that houses up to 22 horses at a time. In addition, the family keeps a couple of sheep and one pig, affectionately named Betty.



About a year and a half ago, Max acquired a new mill, a Wood-Mizer LT40 Super Hydraulic Sawmill, which became the foundation of his growing operation.

Max's operation has grown to include a second planer, after wearing out the first one, yard space to store inventory, Deere 35 P excavator to move chips and mill residue, and John Deere tractor with forks to feed the logs into the mill and move the milled lumber to the planer area. Max also sharpens his own mill blades to ensure quality and reduce downtime.



Both the mill and planer are under shelter in buildings that Max built.



*Some of Max's yard equipment.*



Max is very entrepreneurial and a hard worker with a strong work ethic. Depending on the time of year, he employs three to four workers—who are all still in high school.



Max primarily works with cedar, sourcing it from local contractors and woodlot owners. One of his key markets for finished products is in Nova Scotia, where he supplies cedar squares used in the construction of playgrounds. Energetic and ambitious, Max maintains a highly organized yard with designated areas for various products and waste materials.



He “shares” his slabs with neighbors, who use them for kindling or firewood. However, his biggest current challenge is finding a sustainable outlet for the chips and sawdust produced during milling.

Looking ahead, Max will return to MCFT in the fall and is considering several career paths. One possibility is becoming more involved in harvesting so he can supply his own cedar—perhaps even purchasing a processor in the future. Whatever path he chooses, one thing is clear: Max’s future will definitely continue to revolve around his sawmill.

YSC is happy to present our 2025 recipient of the Emerging Youth in Forestry Award.

Congratulations Max. Your entrepreneurial spirit and strong work ethic will excel you into the forestry sector. We wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors.



## Congratulations to both of our inaugural award recipients!

YSC is proud to recognize and support youth who show a strong interest in forestry. It's encouraging to see such promising individuals dedicated to the future of private woodlot forestry. We are confident they will help drive the sector forward with innovation and passion.