

SADC

Gatineau Valley Société d'aide au développement des collectivités

RELEASE

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Espace économique francophone canadien

The Gatineau Valley SADC aims to do business with Nova Scotia

Maniwaki, January 27, 2010 – Through the Espace économique francophone canadien pilot project officially launched in June 2007 by the Réseau des SADC du Québec and the Réseau des sociétés d'aide au développement des collectivités (RDÉE) (Economic Development and Employability Network), the Gatineau SADC is seeking to uncover business opportunities with the agency responsible in Nova Scotia, the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle Écosse (CDÉNÉ) (Nova Scotia Economic Development Council). The Centre d'aide en affaires et en entrepreneuriat (CAAE) (Business and Entrepreneurship Assistance Centre) and Université Ste-Anne will also join the networking process.

You will recall that the purpose of the Espace is to promote economic exchanges to benefit Francophones and the Canadian economy in general. More specifically, its objective is to help Francophone entrepreneurs in Canada take advantage of business opportunities and gain access to markets and business networks in Canada and abroad. Another objective is to promote economic diversification of regions where Francophone SMEs have difficulty accessing the Canadian market due to various cultural and linguistic problems. "For our businesses, this initiative does offer hope that they will gain openings to new geographic markets," said Pierre Monette, the Director General of the Gatineau Valley SADC.

Last September, SADC travelled down to Halifax. Its representatives managed to meet with businesses in the region who gathered at the Expo Commerce at Université Ste-Anne. This event provided SADC with an opportunity to learn about the products and services being offered by small businesses in all communities in the south-west corner of Nova Scotia. The next day was devoted to visits by companies such as a hardware store, a wood yard and a boat and ship manufacturer. However, since wood is already being supplied by Atlas in Quebec and since ships and boats are now being made of fibreglass, agreements could not be reached. SADC also met with president of the Forêt acadienne, but there did not seem to be any potential businesses where exchanges could be made between both provinces. Efforts will nonetheless be made to determine whether any opportunities exist in the current market.

Last January 18, Nova Scotia paid a return visit to Maniwaki. Two full days were needed to uncover opportunities that would enable both provinces to do business or share knowledge and expertise. On the whole, the Nova Scotia delegation was keenly interested in several initiatives that flowed from the Vacationer Symposium held in February 2007. Various businesses on the territory such as Les Portes Excellor and Menuiseries Martin Lafrenière were visited. The Louisiana Pacific and Bowater plants also received some exposure. The Nova Scotia delegation stopped over at the Société sylvicole where they learned about the shore revitalization project, and they were given samples of cedar produced by the Scierie Messines (sawmill) to take home with them.

The two days also included presentations by Julie Oliver and Angélique LeBlanc on the activities of the CDÉNE and the CAAE. The final presentation by Allister Surette, who is the President of the CDÉNE and represented Université Ste-Anne as the vice-rector of development and partnerships, dealt with a pilot project under way at Université Ste-Anne where a biomass was used to store energy. He also spoke to us about an on-line training platform concerning business succession. SADC sees this as highly relevant expertise that could be folded into the strategy it is developing for succession requirement planning for companies in the Gatineau Valley.

“In the coming weeks, other discussions will be held to determine the priority leads with the greatest potential of generating new business partnerships,” concluded André Galipeau, the Chair of the Gatineau Valley SADC Board of Directors.

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(Caption)

From left to right: André Riopel (Société sylvicole Haute-Gatineau), Julie Oliver (Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse, CDÉNE), Allister Surette (President of the CDÉNE), Angélique Leblanc (Centre d'aide en affaires et en entrepreneuriat, CAAE) and Patrick Feeny (Société sylvicole Haute-Gatineau)