



# Pacific Crest Trail Association

## Go or No Go?



Each limbing and bucking project along with its environment presents a complex set of factors. These must be evaluated to ensure effective and safe bucking practices are used.

This list is intended to be used as a tool for helping sawyers evaluate a cutting situation to see whether it is within their skill set and/or certification.

Trees within a cutting range should be evaluated with the following check list. This list is **NOT** a stand-alone size up list that leads the cutter through the hazards associated with a tree. It is only supplemental to a number of evaluating tools available. The sawyer is responsible to work safely within the skill level of the individual sawyer. **The sawyer should reject the project if he/she answers any of the questions with a NO.** The project needs to be assigned to a sawyer with advanced skill or referred to the local land manager for agency staff to address.

1. **HAZARDS:** Is there a safe position to work in without unacceptable exposure to hazards? The cutting area must be free of uncontrolled hazards if the crew is to work there. The release of the out cut log must not create a hazard to the sawyer, crew, or hikers.

**Evaluate:**

- a. Overhead (*Where did this log come from? Are there more coming? Wind problem?*)
  - b. Up slope (*Are you working under unsecured logs, rocks or root wads?*)
  - c. Down slope (*Will released pieces hit and knock out a tree top or release other hazards?*)
  - d. Both sides (*Will released pieces affect trees, logs or rocks?*)
  - e. Pivots (*Will an object send a released piece end, uphill at the cutter?*)
  - f. Snags (*Will my actions potentially cause a snag to fall?*)
  - g. Foreign objects on and under logs (*Will objects affect the movement of the piece?*)
2. **BINDS:** Is there a safe position to work in without unacceptable exposure to releasing binds during the bucking operation? Can you design a safe cut sequence for the binds that are present?

**Evaluate:**

- a. Top binds
  - b. Bottom binds
  - c. Side binds
  - d. End binds
  - e. Multiple binds
3. **CONSIDERATIONS:**
    - **PEOPLE, PROPERTY, AND TRAFFIC:** In the work area evaluate the cutting to make sure that the risks, if any, are acceptable. Can you absolutely guarantee the safety of the public?
    - **WORK PARTY SAFETY:** Too eager? Can I guarantee their safety? Is the crew fatigued, cold, hot, thirsty or hungry? Is there a safe area for the crew during the

cutting operation? Is there ample time to complete the job? Is the weather allowing for a safe project? (rain, snow, ice, wind, heat)

- **SAFE WORK AREA:** Can you control the work area, as well as the area below the work? Does the work area have good footing and allow unobstructed access to the escape route? Has the area been cleared of loose limbs and debris to provide a clear working area?
- **GOOD ESCAPE ROUTES:** Can you have a safe escape route from your planned cutting locations?
- **FIRST CUT LOCATION:** Does the first cut need to be made at a different location than the desired cut location, so that the desired cut can be made more safely?
- **RELEASE SPRING POLES:** Identify and release any spring poles. Cut any spring poles possibilities in the piece's track of the work area. (Are you comfortable dealing with spring poles or do you just think that things will work out?)
- **CUT PIECE TRACK AND PLACEMENT:** Do you have a safe place to put the cut piece? If in its release it rolls, is the track safe?
- **LEAVE A SECURE WORK AREA:** Can you leave all cut pieces in a safe position?
- **YOURSELF:** What is your gut intuition telling you? Are you being / feeling pressured to get it done? Are you uncomfortable, yet you cannot put your finger on what it is? Is there a safer time to do this project? Consider the distance to medical help. Does this project make sense?