



Pacific Crest Trail Association



**Pacific Crest Trail
Association**

Lessons Learned

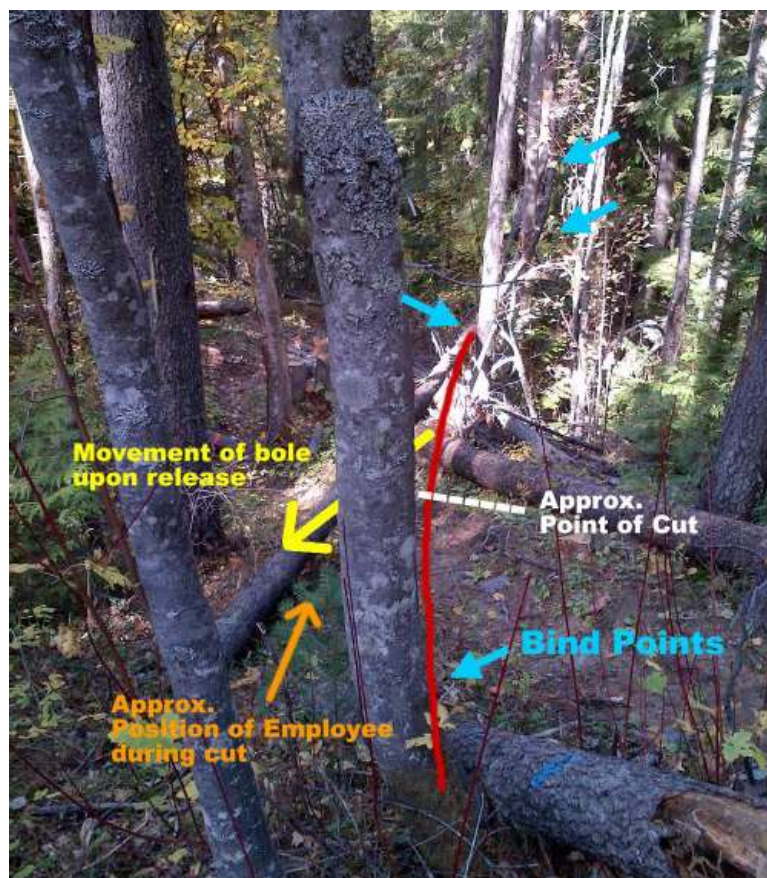




Lodgepole Bucking Injury

- Bucking injury associated with felling operation, but pertinent to our trail work
- C Sawyer had felled 8" Lodgepole pine and then concentrated on felling 24" Western Larch
- Operations were late in the afternoon, after long day
- Sawyer didn't evaluate the Lodgepole and began bucking cuts without recognizing the Lodgepole was under intense side bind
- Sawyer was standing in the wrong location and when the log released, the log impacted and broke his leg, throwing sawyer onto running saw







Lodgepole Bucking Injury

● Lessons Learned:

- ▶ The log was only 8" in diameter.
Small logs can injure and kill – Don't underestimate them!
- ▶ Although there were two sawyers, they were working independently with no swampers and one first aid kit.
Sawyers never work alone and each saw crew has a first aid kit!
- ▶ Injured sawyer was an experienced "C" level feller-bucker.
This can happen to anyone!
- ▶ If the full length of the log had been examined, the side bind would have been obvious.
Never buck a log without performing a thorough size-up!





Lodgepole Bucking Injury

● Lessons Learned:

- ▶ The accident occurred late in the shift.

Fatigue may have been an issue.

- ▶ In addition to the broken leg resulting from the springback, the sawyer experienced severe cuts on his left wrist and forearm and the chain saw was still running.

Keep the left thumb firmly wrapped around the handle of the saw to ensure the chain brake is activated.

- ▶ Sawyer may have been “target-focused” on the larger tree and didn’t focus on the lodgepole and the hazards.

Keep focused on the task at hand and always assess risks.

● [Link: Back to Binds and Cuts](#)





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Hazard Tree Study

Warm Springs Indian Reservation
July 2012





Scenario

- High winds caused two trees to uproot and fall across the PCT.
- On their way down, they collided with the crown of a third tree, just a few feet from the trail, causing its trunk to shatter vertically and the tree to lean over the trail.
- The third tree did not fall because its crown became entangled in the crowns of two trees on the other side of the trail.





Proximity of Trees to Trail





Condition of Leaner





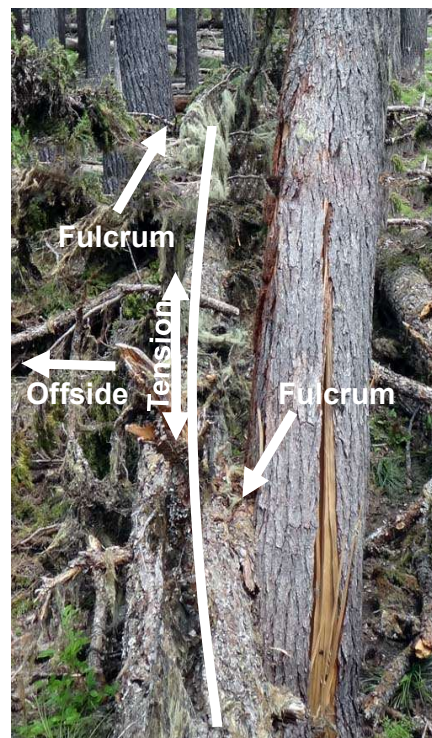
Side Bind

- Because the northernmost blowdown was wedged between the leaner and a sound tree on the other side of the trail, it developed a severe side bind.
- This tree had approximately 6 feet of horizontal bend over a distance of 50 feet.





Side Bind





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Marked Hazard Area





Two Weeks Later ...

- A second crew of volunteers plus a USFS recreation manager returned to site.
- Decision was made to temporarily reroute trail 15 feet west to avoid leaner.
- Area was cleaned up. Log with side bind severed (with 3 feet of springback). All logs bucked, opening temporary bypass.
- Long-term plan: return trail to original route after subsequent winter winds take down leaner.





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Reroute



[Link: Back to Binds and Cuts](#)

