Western Forest Products
Hazard Alert

Date of Incident: June 2, 2009 **Site:** Port McNeill Forest Operation
Experience: 11 Years with GLM and CFI

Incident : Coast Forest Industries – Faller struck by pivoting chunk

Description:

The Faller was opening up on the low side of the right of way (RoW) and was falling an 11" hemlock danger tree. He tried to fall the danger tree downhill but it sat back and broke off falling uphill at a 45º angle. There was adequate holding wood on the danger tree stump and the undercut depth was approx. 50%.

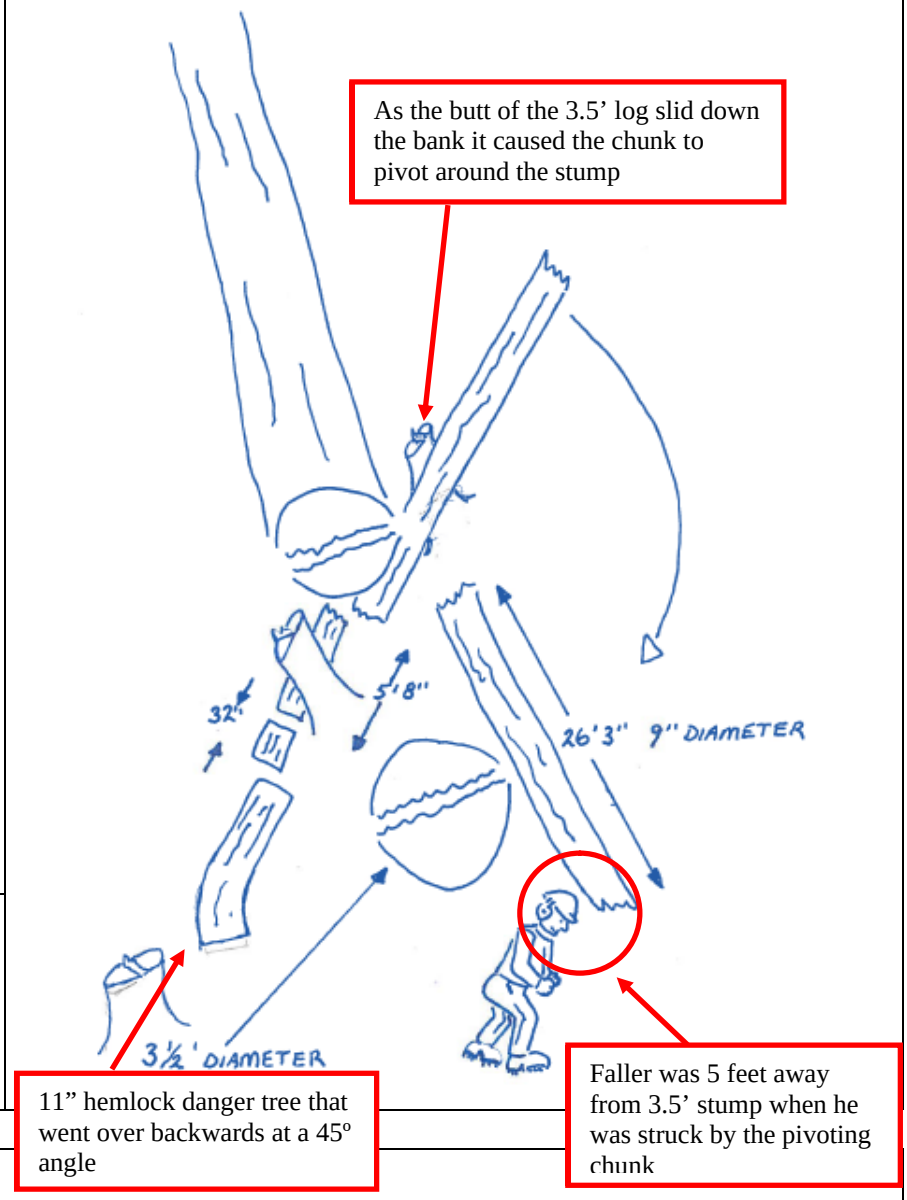
The Faller then continued opening up the bottom of the RoW face. Once opened up, he headed uphill to the high side of the face to remove a 3.5' hemlock. On route he bucked a small chunk out of the 45º hemlock danger tree and walked through to the 3.5' hemlock.

The Faller fell the 3.5' hemlock and moved back approx. 5' from the stump. When the tree hit the ground, the butt slid down the bank and hit the top piece of the fallen danger tree (26' long/9" in diameter) causing it to upend, swing towards the faller and strike him on the left side of his face. After striking the Faller, the piece of the fallen danger tree came to rest 7' past the stump of the 3.5' hemlock on the high side.

The Faller was examined and x-rayed by a Physician and only had bumps and bruises.

Upset Condition:

1. 11" hemlock danger tree did not fall in intended direction.
2. Faller did not get 10' away from the stump or have an adequate escape trail.



Learning and Suggestions:

1. Fallers MUST always ensure they get a minimum of 10' away from the stump.
2. Fallers MUST always ensure they have adequate escape trails.
3. Always assess the hazards of falling timber on top of logs that are out of lay. Where safe to do so, logs that are out of lay should be bucked above and below the location the next tree will land – to minimize the potential a chunk will come back at the Faller.
4. Bullbuckers to observe work practices during audits to ensure falling standards are adhered to.

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