

Sawyer Training 2015

On May 16, 2015 nine members of Squaw Butte meet up with four Boise National forest rangers for a sawyer recertification session. We met at the Triangle parking lot and truck pooled up to the third fork ranger cabin.



The weather was expected to be wet and windy so everyone dressed like they were going duck hunting in Maine. As it turned out, most of that wet weather gear was quickly shed, as while it stayed cloudy and at time was quite breezy, it didn't rain while we were in the woods. The training started with us all collecting our personal protection

gear, and making sure the saws all started. Todd DeMasters, BNF safety officer lead the training team, with two fire crew leads and John Hidy BNF trail supervisor. We did a full safety and hazard tailgate meeting followed by a quick tailgate lunch and then broke up into teams of two with a BNF member with each team and headed to the woods to re-qualify for either "A" or "B" sawyer cards.





In order to use a Chainsaw or Crosscut Saw on National Forest lands, in addition to the Volunteer Agreement you must be certified as a USFS Sawyer by attending a certification class. In order to attend the certification class and receive your Sawyer Card, you must show proof that you have a current CPR/First Aid Class issued by a nationally recognized organization. (Red Cross, ASHI, Hospital, Paramedic, etc.) A USFS Volunteer is considered a Forest Service employee while performing trail work when they have met these requirements and are eligible for Workman's Compensation.

Class A - Apprentice Sawyer

Employees certified at this level are required to complete *S-212 – Wildfire Chainsaws*, including the field exercises and will complete tasks required for completion of the "A" Task Book. The final evaluation for the "A" level saw operators must be verified or signed by a qualified "B" or "C" level saw operator. The field exercises will focus on hands-on chainsaw operation in the practices of felling, brush cutting, and bucking of material. Class A certification is primarily limited to brushing, bucking and felling in **the least complex situations**. The certifier has full authority to impose restrictions on apprentice sawyers, as deemed necessary.

Class B – Intermediate Sawyer

Employees certified at this level will complete individual tasks required for completion of the "B" Task Book and must be evaluated by a qualified "B" or "C" level operator. The Final Evaluator Verification for "B" level operators must be signed by a "C" level saw operator. Class "B" Intermediate Sawyer certification is limited to brushing, bucking and felling material 24 inches or less in diameter. The qualified certifier has full authority to impose restrictions on intermediate sawyers, as deemed necessary.

95% of the work a trail crew does is bucking and brush cutting which an "A" certification covers, but the Forest Service rules indicate that a "B" or "C" sawyer must be present when "A" sawyers are working. Squaw Butte has a

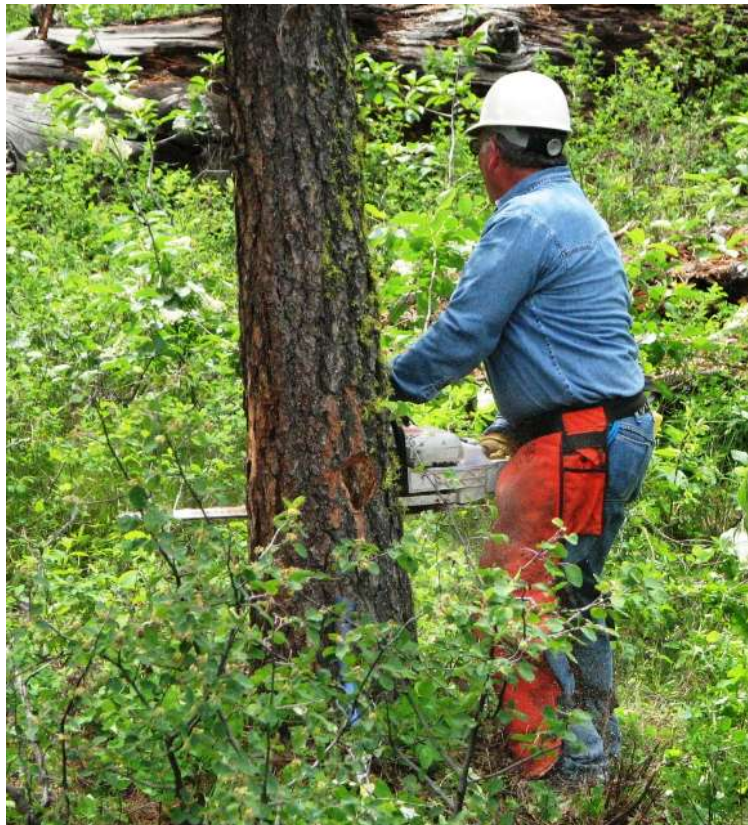
number of members that have completed the "B" certification so we can operate Chain Saws in the National Forest without having a NF employee present on our projects. Both certifications are challenging and a lot of fun to obtain. Charles Chick and Rob Adams recertified "B" this last weekend and Janine, Shelly, Shannon, Phil and Jon renewed their "A" cards. Nancy Smith participated in the field training, but needs to complete the eight hour class room session before she can get her "A" card. When I didn't have a saw in my hands I took a few pictures of Chick going through the process of evaluating and then felling a large dead tree.



Evaluating a tree and building a felling plan



Chick and Will discussing the felling plan



Lining up the tree for where Chick wants it to fall



After determining where the tree should fall, a face cut is made



Will, checks out the face cut before the back cut is made?



Timber – and the tree is on the ground.

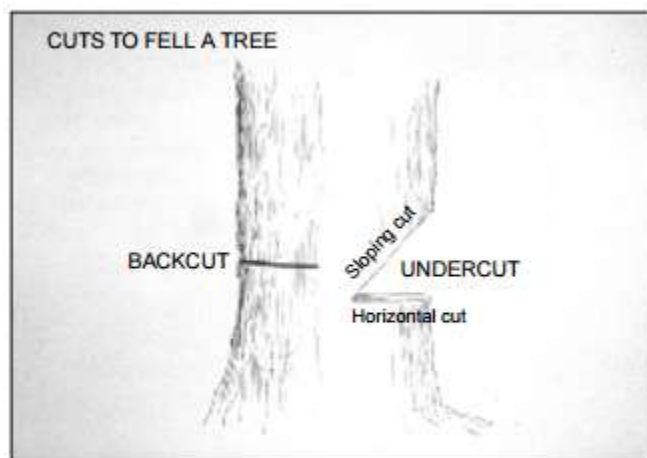


Figure 3-21—An undercut and a backcut are required to fell a tree. A horizontal cut and a sloping cut make up the undercut. The backcut is the third cut needed to fell a tree.



Will, evaluate the stump, looking at hinge wood and other factor that indicated a safe felling. After each cut the process is discussed and suggestions made on how improvements to the process could be made. There is NO SUCH THING as a perfect tree felling; everyone could be better and safer.



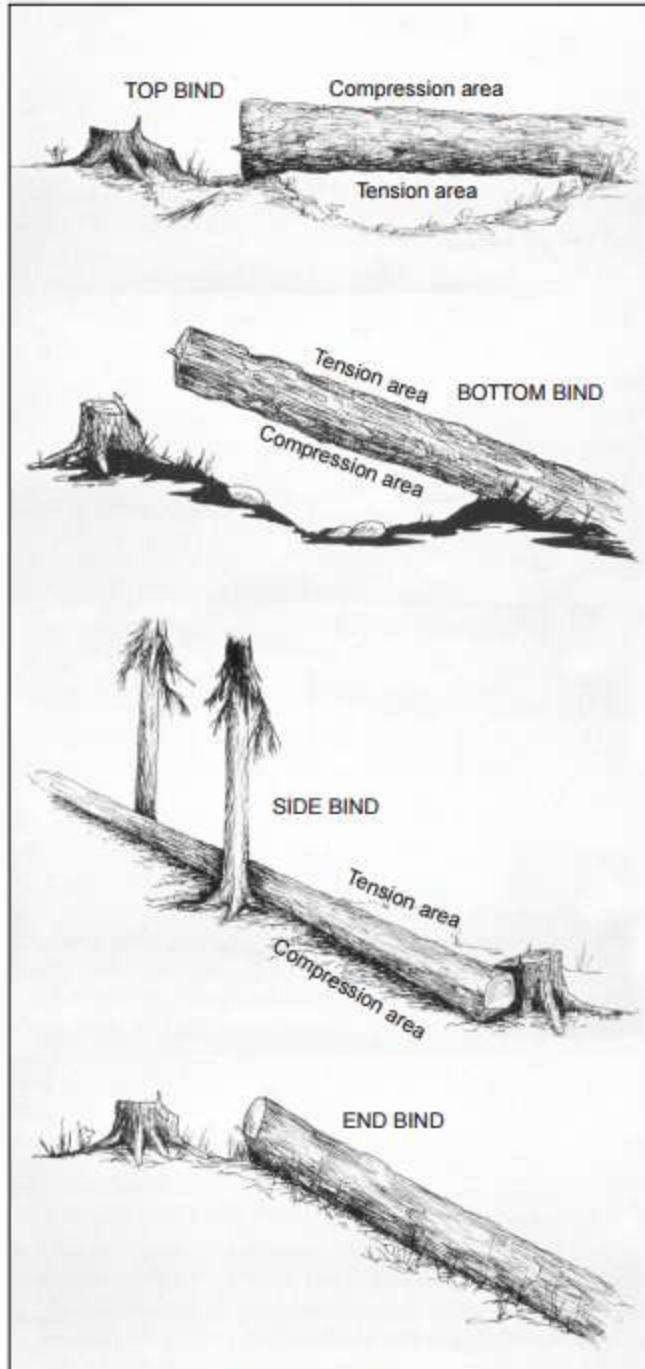


Figure 3-2—There are four types of binds. A log can have a combination of two or more binds.

Basic Felling

Situational Awareness

Analyze the felling job by considering:

- Species (live or dead).
- Size and length.
- Soundness or defects.
- Twin tops.
- Widow makers and or hangups.
- Frozen wood.
- Rusty (discolored) knots.
- Punky (swollen and sunken) knots.
- Frozen wood.
- Footing.
- Damage by lightning or fire.
- Spike top.
- Heavy snow loading.
- Bark soundness.
- Direction of lean.
- Degree of lean (slight or great).
- Head lean or side lean.
- Nesting or feeding holes.
- Splits and frost cracks.
- Deformities, such as those caused by mistletoe.
- Heavy branches or uneven weight distribution.

Analyze the base of the tree for:

- Thud (hollow) sound when struck.
- Conks and mushrooms.
- Rot and cankers.
- Shelf fungi or "bracket".
- Wounds or scars.
- Split trunk.
- Insect activity.
- Feeding holes.
- Bark soundness.
- Resin flow on bark.
- Unstable root system or root protrusions.

Examine surrounding terrain for:

- Steepness.
- Irregularities in the ground.
- Draws and ridges.
- Rocks.
- Stumps.
- Loose logs.
- Ground debris that can fly or kick up at the sawyer.

Examine immediate work area for:

- People, roads, or vehicles.
- Powerlines.
- Hang ups and widow makers.
- Other trees that may be affected.
- Fire-weakened trees.
- Hazards such as trees, rocks, brush, low-hanging limbs.
- Reserve trees.
- Structures.
- Openings to fall trees.
- Snags.
- Other trees that may have to be felled first.