



INDUSTRY SAFETY ALERT

Feller Buncher, Hoe Chucker Tip Over on Steep Slopes

Date: October, November 2024

Locations: Scotch Creek, BC and Sugar Lake, BC

In the span of a month, a feller buncher and a hoe chucker tipped onto their side – both while negotiating steep slopes.

Feller Buncher Incident: While tethered and “walking” up a steep slope (55%) back onto the road above, one of the buncher’s tracks inadvertently drove over a high stump and the machine tipped onto its side.

Hoe Chucker Incident: While chucking timber on a steep slope (55-60%), one of the machine’s tracks slipped on shallow rock concealed by the topsoil.

This caused the other track to catch on a stump, turning the machine before it tipped over onto

its side. The machine was walking down the slope on the same path it had travelled without incident going up the hill.



In both incidents, the machine operators were fortunately not injured and the machines essentially undamaged.



BC Forest Safety

Unit 8C - 2220 Bowen Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9S 1H9
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Learnings / Suggestions:

- Steep slope plans are to be completed for each block and should be site-specific for the block that the equipment is working in.
- Build and use trails if required on steep slopes.
- If available, a tether/winch should be used while working on steep slopes.
- Situational awareness: Focus on not only what's in front, but all current surroundings.
- Complacency? The operators had done this work before and may have developed a false sense of security and confidence.
- Fatigue? These incidents occurred later in the week after working long days out of camp.
- During mobile equipment inspections ensure there are no loose objects in the operator's cab (i.e. - toolbox, hand tools, lunchbox, thermos, etc.). Carefully look at seat belts, guarding, cab protection and escape hatches.
- Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) and drills should include equipment rollover incidents which can be very challenging in remote and less accessible locations.

BCFSC Resources:

Steep Slope Resource Package - <https://www.bcforestsafe.org/resource/harvesting-resource-packages/>

November Alert of the Month - <https://www.bcforestsafe.org/safety-alert/november-alert-of-the-month-steep-slope-logging-assessments/>

To submit a safety alert click [here](#)



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