

Hooktender Struck by Rolling Rock

In March of 2019 in Oregon, a hooktender was badly injured when he was struck by a rolling rock that was dislodged from a windthrow's root wad by a moving turn.

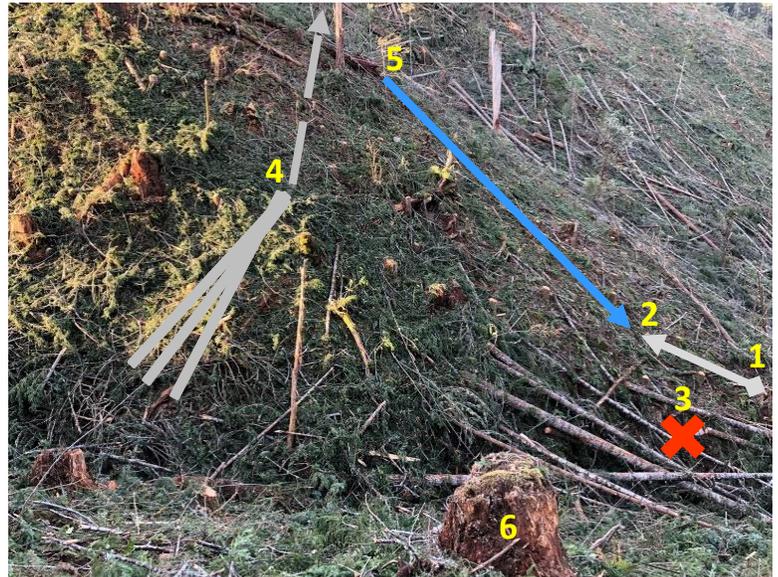
The site was located on a 70% slope with steep side slopes. The choker setter set a three-log turn, and then went uphill to the opposite side of the draw with the rigging slinger. The hooktender remained on the other side of the draw, downhill of the skyline.

The hooktender gave the all clear, and they went ahead on the turn. As the turn started to move uphill, the hooktender started walking across the hillside toward the skyline to set the next turn. The turn went up and over an old windthrow, causing it to roll and dislodge three large rocks from its root wad.

The choker setter saw the rocks start to roll and yelled to the hooktender. The hooktender was able to avoid the first two, but the largest rock struck him, throwing him 25 feet downhill.

He suffered four breaks in his leg, two fractured ribs, and a ruptured lung.

The risk of rolling rocks was recognized in a safety meeting, but the hooktender did not follow the plan to stay in the clear until the turn reached the landing.



1. Position of hooktender when the turn started to move. After the turn went ahead, he started to walk across the slope.
2. Location of hooktender when he was struck by the rolling rock.
3. Position of the hooktender after the impact threw him 25 feet downhill.
4. Direction the turn was moving.
5. Location where rocks dislodged from the windthrow's root wad and started rolling downhill.
6. Position of the choker setter and rigging slinger.

Recommendations

- Recognize the risk of unstable objects rolling downhill. Develop and follow a plan to keep the rigging crew in the clear and safe from the hazard.
- Lead workers should set a positive example for the crew by following and promoting safe practices.

Requirements

- **WAC 296-54-577(4):** Employees must be in the clear of logs, root wads, chunks, hazardous trees, rolling material and rigging before the go-ahead signal is given and must stay in the clear until all rigging movement has stopped.

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