

# Rapid Lesson Sharing

**Event Type:** Tree Strikes Vehicle

**Date:** August 9, 2018

**Location:** Ferguson Fire, California



## ***Tree Strikes Vehicle During Felling Operation***

In the early afternoon of August 9, an incident Safety Officer on the Ferguson Fire was traveling westbound on Highway 41 when he came upon a Type 6 Engine blocking the road.

Getting out of his vehicle and walking over to the engine, the Safety Officer learned that the road was closed while a crew felled a hazard tree. A few minutes later, he heard the tree fall and heard traffic on the radio stating that the tree had hit a vehicle.

Talking to the contract faller on scene before the incident, a fellow Contract FAL1 offered his opinion to the faller to quarter the tree upslope. This 40-inch DBH cedar was cat-faced on the uphill side. The lean of the tree was side hill

with a heavy canopy pulling upslope.

The faller agreed with the other Contract FAL1 and proceeded to cut the tree—which ultimately hit the parked vehicle.

Another qualified FAL1 was called to the scene to review the incident and the work done by the contract faller. Upon inspection of the stump of the 40-inch DBH cat-faced cedar, this FAL1 noted that the face cut was approximately 20 degrees uphill than the desired estimated lay. The cat-face consumed more than 50 percent of the cedar, leaving a very technical felling operation.

The uphill side of the back cut did not leave enough holding wood, causing a failure of the hinge. The FAL1 did not observe any use of wedging or wedging imprints on the stump. All cuts looked level, the sawing imprints on the stump and the wood chips that were left all conclude that muscle fatigue and experience did not seem to be a factor.



## LESSONS

- ✓ The effect that cumulative fatigue (both mental and physical) can have during long, arduous assignments.
- ✓ Assure vehicles are parked in an area well clear of all felling activity.

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***“The faller was on day 12 of the incident completing arduous work which could have been an influence on the decisions and ultimately the outcome.”***

**FAL1**

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**This RLS was submitted by:**

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