

Technical Release: 08-R-9



FOREST RESOURCES ASSOCIATION INC.

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“TREE PUSHER” PLATE HELPS SKIDDER BRING DOWN HAZARD TREES

Safety: felling

May, 2008

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www.forestresources.org/members/serpub/08-R-9.html

INTRODUCTION: R. Cooney Logging Inc. of St. Marys, Pennsylvania has added a metal "tree pusher" to its grapple skidder arch to help the skidder guide the fall of a lodged tree and other hazard trees.



Fig. 1: Dick Cooney's "tree pusher" appliance, for improving a skidder operator's control in bringing down danger trees, consists of curved metal plate and triangular gussets welded to the back end of the grapple arch.

GENERAL FEATURES: The curved metal plate is welded to the end of the skidder arch above the grapple rotator. It is strengthened with four triangular gussets.

OPERATION: If there is a hung tree, dead tree, or other hazardous tree situation on Cooney's manual felling operation, the back arch of the grapple skidder has proven to be the best way to knock the danger tree down. With the grapple arch lifted high, the skidder has more leverage for knocking the tree down than would a procedure using the front blade of the skidder, and the metal points on the tree pusher stick into the tree to guide it in the direction the skidder operator wants it to fall. This system improves the safety of bringing hazard trees to the ground.

SPECIFICATIONS AND COST: The curved metal plate is one inch thick, and the triangular gussets are half an inch thick. The tree pusher must be custom-fabricated to fit the skidder arch. The best

way to design and build one is to draw a cardboard template and then cut the steel accordingly. The entire project takes about three hours to complete. Cooney made his tree pusher with scrap metal; he estimates the supplies would cost about \$150 to purchase new.

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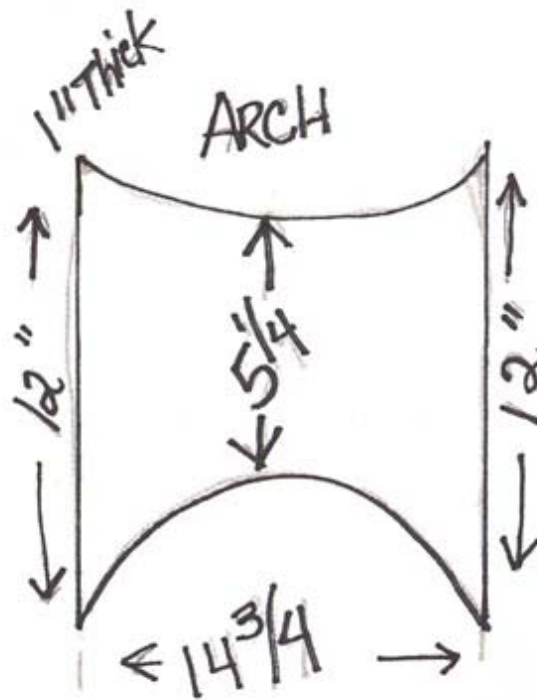


Fig. 2: This sketch shows the dimensions of one-inch metal plate for Cooney's "tree pusher." Actual dimensions will vary, depending on the particular skidder.

STAFF COMMENT: The "tree pusher" is one of many safety innovations Dick Cooney has developed. Mr. Cooney was a finalist for FRA's Appalachian Region Outstanding Logger Award in 2007.

Reviewed by:
Rick Meyer
Appalachian/Southeastern Region Manager

