



Company owners
(right to left)
Frank Chandler, Sr.,
wife Lee, daughter,
Leeann, son, Frank
Chandler, Jr.

C&C used shovels to harvest blowdown from Oregon's December 2007 storm — over 390 MMBF were scattered over 3,100 acres.



Storm Cleanup

C & C Logging, LLC handles the blowdown safely and profitably

By Jeff Mullins

Even before the wind subsided following the December 2007 storm, Frank Chandler, owner of C & C logging of Kelso, Wash., had already deployed crews to reopen access roads.

His first priority was to safely regain access to resume on-going harvesting operations. Yet, he knew that post-storm harvesting of millions of board feet of tangled trees presented dangers, challenges, and unique opportunities.

Early Shift

C & C had already begun harvest/salvage operations before storm damage assessments revealed that a 15 mile-wide band in coastal Oregon's Clatsop and Tillamook counties had over 390 MMBF of downed timber scattered throughout 3,100 acres.

Consistent with a reputation for employing the most effective harvesting techniques through diversification and innovation, C & C immediately purchased a Link Belt 370LX shovel and equipped it with a Waratah FL85 (Hulldins SuperFell SF85) felling head.

Frank says, "Because we constantly

evaluate new equipment and technology, we knew this machine was exactly what we needed to handle the blowdown mess safely and efficiently. The machine is proving to be an exceptional asset. Now other contractors have also started using the FL85."

40 Years of Experience

C & C is one of the largest logging contractors in Washington State, fielding as many as 40 machines and employing more than 100 people to support as many as 12 logging sides at any given time.

The company began in 1967 in Vernonia, Ore. Frank, a timber faller, struck out on his own after a foreman told him, "You work too hard to work for someone else. You ought to work for yourself."

With this encouraging nudge, he and

A Link-Belt B370 shovel logger, with a Waratah FL85 felling head, cuts through a tight stand of hemlock and alder. The FL85 360-degree rotation allows operator Ed Hillard to fell standing stems, cut off fallen stems and neatly pile the full length trees.

his wife, Lee, struck out on their own, purchased an Allis Chalmers HD6 with a log arch, and hired an employee to run it.

When Frank's "cat-skinner" tore the finals out of his only machine a second time, Frank almost went under but learned a valuable lesson — employees must be as good as the machines they run. After repairing the HD6 again, he ran it himself and hired out the felling. Today, C & C carefully screens and provides extensive training for all its employees.



Steady Growth

C & C has steadily grown into a modern company that consistently produces 100 loads a day by seizing opportunities and diversifying to gain an edge among efficient high producers. Today, they use a variety of makes and models of track skidders, shovels, tong throwers, grapples, towers, dangle head processors, harvesters, forwarders, clamblers, and feller bunchers.

Lee keeps the books, daughter LeeAnne runs the office, Frank Jr. oversees day-to-day operations, and Frank Sr. continues to be involved at all levels of the operation as needed. These four are owners of the corporation.

Adding Machines for the Job

Purchasing a special machine to improve safety and efficiency for harvesting wind-thrown timber is typical of C & C's business practices and responses to opportunities. Historically, whenever a particular contract could be more efficiently/profitably fulfilled with a different machine, C & C added that machine to their assets.

"This practice allows bringing, to each job, the most efficient equipment possible, enabling us to be highly productive, competitive, and profitable," says Frank Sr. "We are able to get more jobs, keep our crews working, and do a better job for our customers."

Harvesting Blowdowns

"Harvesting timber from stands with blowdown presents particular challenges," adds Frank Sr. "Wind-downed trees are dangerous; safety is our foremost concern. Our goal is to get as much of the wood off the ground without having men on the ground."

In stands where most of the stems are upright and terrain allows, feller bunchers can be used. However, bunchers are

limited in head rotation, reach, and lifting ability. In tangled stands they are slow. Productivity gained by using a hot saw is reduced because wood ends up being bucked into shorter sections when the hotsaw grapples the wood to move and stack it.

Shorter pieces require more turns to get the fiber to the landing. Whenever possible, C & C prefers to yard full-length stems to the landing because it is more productive.

The answer for C & C was the Waratah FL85 felling head that offers all the functions of a shovel grapple and a dangle felling head in one package. Rated for severing up to 33.5-inch stems and lifting 3,410 pounds, the continuous rotation head is well-suited to felling large and small standing stems, as well as plucking fallen trees from the tangles of storm aftermaths. Coupled with the Link Belt 370LX, the grapple is capable of lifting heavy loads nearly 50 feet in any direction. Frank Sr. says it is the "cat's meow" for this type of operation.

Safe and Effective

After severing stems, whether standing, fallen, or just leaning, the FL85 stacks large bunches to be advanced to landings for processing. The long reach allows snatching of stems down embankments to retrieve what otherwise would require hand felling, and it also allows plucking stems from wet areas without disturbing the ground. Using the hot saw feller bunchers and the FL85, C & C greatly reduces the need to hand fell wood. In this way, safety is significantly improved and overall efficiency is appreciably enhanced.

Although time is almost always an issue when harvesting timber, removing downed wood is a race with the clock. The challenge is to get the timber to the mill before it deteriorates. The urgency to harvest more than 390 MMBF of downed timber, in a window of 14-16 months, means that C & C's ability to quickly process this wood safely and efficiently is even more significant.

When possible, C & C operates two sides at each location. This allows shifting of equipment between sides to compensate for breakdowns, slowdowns, or other anomalies. Such was the case at an 80-acre Weyerhaeuser blowdown unit near Napa, Ore. A contracted Madill feller buncher with a 360-degree rotation hot saw felled stems in one drainage area containing few toppled trees.

Across the ridge, within earshot, the FL85 cut an 80-100 foot wide swath through another patch with a large percentage of blowdown. Meanwhile, a Kobelco 300 shovel and 527H swing grapple Caterpillar advanced turns to a landing within reach of a Waratah HTH 624C, mounted on a Kobelco SK350, while a Komatsu PC200LL sorted logs and loaded trucks.

A short distance away, at another landing, two more shovels and a dangle head processor merchandized logs. Any machine could easily shuttle to the other location if needed for whatever reason.

Other Services

In addition to its own 11 Peterbilt trucks used for hauling, C & C relies on as many as 30 other contract truckers for transporting the 100 loads of fiber they produce daily. C & C's three low-boys shuttle their own equipment to sites and also provide contract hauls for other outfits.

A full-service maintenance shop, complete with an inventoried and well-organized stock of replacement parts, keeps their own machines on the job, and they also offer repair services for other local operators.

Tracking Productivity

Frank Chandler understands the value of his employees and seeks to reward those who perform well and are productive. He knows that carefully tracking equipment and job efficiency is important, but C & C also collects information about employee performance and productivity.

Annual employee bonuses actually reflect individual contribution to the company's bottom line whether it is during "normal operations" or harvesting timber the wind put on the ground.

For C & C, efficiently harvesting timber downed by last winter's storm was just another challenge that they were ready for. After years of experience, they were poised to do what was needed — safely and efficiently. **TW**

