

LOGGING TERMS

BEAVER BAIT Trash logs and debris. A log drive term.

BLOCK CUT A small or partial clearcut, in which some trees are left standing.

BLOW DOWN A tree felled by the wind or some other natural causes.

BOOM BOAT small, powerful, almost circular and highly maneuverable boat used to herd logs, usually in a mill pond.

BRUSH APE A logger, usually a guy who sets chokers. You'd better be smiling when you call a logger this name, or be a very good friend.

BUCKER The logger who cuts the felled logs to size to get the most scale.

BUCKSKIN A log which has lost its bark.

BULLBLOCK An oversized, massive block hung from the spar tree and carrying the mainline. In redwood logging, some of these monsters weighed over a ton.

BULL COOK A cook's assistant, who does all of the dirty work.

BULL OF THE WOODS The person in charge of the woods operation. In the old days, the toughest man on the crew: nowadays still a pretty tough logger.

BUTT CUT The first and largest diameter cut, directly above the stump.

BUTT RIGGING The heavy metal knobs and rings suspended from the mainline to which chokers are attached.

CALKS The logger's classic, high-topped, steel-spiked boot, which gives him steady footing on a fallen log. Not usually worn socially.

CANT A log which has had a slab taken off each of four sides. Also known as a "Japanese Square" if intended for export.

CHASER A person who unhooks the chokers from the logs at the landing.

CHOKER A small piece of cable with a knob and fitting bell, used to attach logs to the butt rigging of cable systems or to skidders. Chokerman say a choker is an instrument of torture invented by people who hate loggers.

CHOKERMAN Also "Choker Setter". A person who attaches chokers to logs. Usually the first (and toughest) job a logger gets.

CRUMMY A logger's bus. Also an adjective meaning "no good" or "undesirable".

CULL Applied to a log. It means rotten, rejected. Applied to a person, it means pretty much the same thing. A logger's strong insult.

DONKEY PUNCHER The operator of the heavy diesel that powers loaders and yarders. The name is a relic from the days of steam.

DIRT HIDER A road grader.

DOG HAIR A thick growth of small, suppressed trees.

FALLER The person who cuts down the tree.

FLUNKY A cook's assistant who waits on tables.

GRAPPLE A heavy set of metal tongs with teeth on the inside edge, which can be opened and shut at will by the operator.

GRAPPLE SHOW A method of logging in which a grapple, rather than chokers, is used to haul in logs.

GROUSE LADDER A tree with many limbs, especially on the lower part. Also called a "Wolf Tree" in Alaska.

GUT ROBBER A camp cook, especially one of dubious ability.

HAULBACK A cable used to carry the butt rigging back to the work site.

HAYWIRE The essential bailing wire used for a thousand impromptu repairs on a logging show. Also an adjective meaning "patched up" or "no good". Also describes a light cable used to pull a heavier cable.

HIGH CLIMBER A person who tops a spar tree and hangs the butt rigging.

HIGH GRADING Taking only the best logs, or the best cut of a tree, and leaving the rest to rot. Formerly common, it is now a major offense.

Boss of the rigging crew. Inevitably, the name is shortened to "hooker" which gives rise to hundreds of jokes.

LANDING The place to which logs are dragged for loading.

LOADER Also sometimes called a "shovel". The machine at the landing that loads the log onto the truck.

LOGGING SHOW A logging operation.

LONG BOOM Essentially a derrick equipped with a mechanical grapple used in loading.

LUMBERJACK Old-time eastern and midwestern term for a logger. In the Northwest and Alaska, the term is, and proudly “logger”.

MAINLINE The heavy cable wound up onto the drums of the yarder, which drags the logs to the landing.

MECHANICAL SIDE A side on a logging show where most of the operations are mechanized.

MISERY WHIP The old-time falling saw, up to twelve feet in length, and a brutal taskmaster. Also called a “Swedish fiddle”.

MONKEY BLANKET A griddle cake.

OLD GROWTH An old, usually majestic but often decadent stand of trees over 150 years old that has not been logged although second-growth trees in that condition would be considered “old growth”.

PEAVEY A steel-spiked pole with a hinged tong, which provided the leverage necessary to move large logs.

PUMMY The local Smith-Central Oregon word for pumice, usually “pummy dust”. An all-pervasive volcanic powder that is practically impossible to remove.

PUSH A foreman. Also, on the log drive, the operation itself.

REARING CREW A group of river-trained people, mostly loggers, who follow the drive and clean up the banks of hung-up logs.

RIGGING CREW The group of loggers who handle, set up and maintain cable systems.

ROAD CHANGE Moving to an area adjacent to an area that has been cleaned of logs. Done by changing the tailhold.

SALE A definite amount of lumber put up for sale by bid. Also the site on which the timber is standing.

SCALE The amount of board footage in a log.

SCALER The person who determines the amount of footage in a log.

SHAKE BOARD Also “shake bolt”. A piece of cedar split from a tree or stump, two feet long and approximately two inches thick, which is re-split or cut into shakes.

SHAY A steam locomotive adapted to logging and noted for agility and indestructibility.

SHOOTING Blasting, as in “shooting rock”. Also called, locally “shotting” in Alaska.

SIDE A logging operation, but more specifically the place where it is going on. Thus, a logging show could have one or more sides.

SIDE-HILL SALMON A deer, usually reduced to venison and procured illegally.

SKIDDER A machine, either rubber-tired or tracked, used to drag logs to the landing.

SLASH Debris left after a logging operation.

SLASH FIRE A fire deliberately set to clean up logging debris.

SNOOSE Logger’s term for snuff.

SPAR TREE A tall, centrally-located tree, which when topped, properly guyed and rigged with blocks is used as a derrick to yard logs to the landing.

SPRINGBOARD: A lightly flexible, iron-shod, strong board, that’s inserted into a notch chopped into a tree and used as a precarious platform from which the tree is felled. A relic of hand-power days, it now has only a few practitioners.

SPOTTER: A person equipped with a walkie-talkie, who directs the yarder operator on a grapple show.

TAIL HOLD A sturdy stump or tree which is used to support a block through which a cable runs back to the yarder.

TALKIE-TOOTER A belt-carried radio device which enables a chokerman to blow the yarder whistle in code and also talk to the operator.

TIMBER CRUISER A forester or logger who estimates the amount of timber in a sale, usually by walking over it.

TIN SPAR A telescoping, movable steel tower, which replaces the old-time spar tree.

WHISTLE PUNK The person who actuated the whistle on an old-time steam yarder by pulling on a long wire.

WIDOW MAKER A loose limb, hanging precariously, just waiting for some unlucky logger to pass under it to fall.

YARDER The machine that powers the mainline. The big machine on a landing.

YELLOW BELLY A ponderosa pine, especially a really large one.