



Selecting the Right Tool: The Process to Re-open Continues on the Chips Fire



Suppression repair efforts to open roads, remove fire weakened trees, and related activities are underway on the Chips Fire.

Of interest, firefighters dropped two trees across the North Fork of the Feather River below the Belden Forebay so that they could battle the fire in the early stages. These trees were interfering with water flow for hydroelectric operations. Per the request of Plumas National Forest and Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), the trees would need to be removed. The question was how.

One unique piece of equipment is the *Yoder*. It is a combination of a timber Yarder and a Loader/Grapppler. The Yoder is effective at moving large, heavy timber along steep slopes via cable and pulley system.

PG&E assisted in slowing river flow by closing gates at Belden Forebay. This reduced river flow from its typical 165 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 115 cfs for safer access. A local from Westwood provided the Yoder. Once it was unloaded from the trailer, it took a mere 10 minutes for the cable to be set and the tree to be drug out of the river. This allowed the Yoder crew members access to the tree to secure it with the yarding cable. The trees were slowly pulled by the Yoder from the river and left on the bank for crews to stabilize it.

The entire repair operation was overseen by staff that ensured that natural resources concerns and safety concerns were considered.

