

---

# QA Meeting / QA Swapping Take Home Messages

---

## Do we count Gall Rust as a Stopper?

- FG 5.0, Section 5.12.1N, Pg. 127, Cankers bullet: “Galls and Rust can be included in the Canker section when identifying Stoppers.”

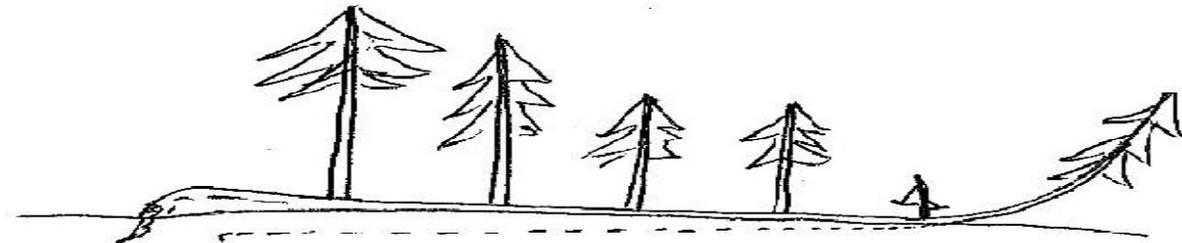
## Do we count Burls as Stoppers?

- FG 5.0, Section 5.12.1N, Pg. 127, Cankers bullet: “(Do not confuse burls with cankers. Burls are not classified as a stopper.)”
- Defects in Hardwood Timber, USDA Forest Service Handbook No. 678: Burls are defects (stopping a clear cutting) for tree grades one, two, and three. For grade four they would also be a stopper in terms of tree classing only if the burl covers 50% or more of the circumference at point of occurrence.
- A grade 4 tree may NOT have cracks / seams, rot, and cankers or burls > 50% the circumference of the bole at the point of occurrence.

## Where do we measure HORIZONTAL DISTANCE to on a leaning cedar to determine if it is in or out?

## Where is the base on white cedar... the first root encountered ...or where the tree entered the ground originally?

- FG 5.0, Section 5.5, Pg. 104: “A leaning tree is determined to be “in” or “out” of a plot radius by measuring the horizontal distance from plot center to the center of the tree at the base. The direction that the tree leans is of no consequence.”
- FG 5.0, Section 5.5, Pg. 104: “For a LIVE down and windthrown tree, measure the horizontal distance to the spot where the center of the tree would have been if the tree was still standing (i.e., measure the distance to the center of the stump, or ground cavity). This guideline applies to New plots as well as Remeasurement plots. See Figure 20.1N below. “
- FG 5.0, Section 5.9.2, Pg. 119: “If the general pith line of main tree bole is below the duff layer, ignore the main bole, and treat each tree-like branch as a separate tree; take DBH and length measurements from the ground, not necessarily from the top of the down bole (fig. 36). However, if the top of the main tree bole curves out of the ground towards a vertical angle, treat that portion of that top as an individual tree originating where the pith leaves the duff layer. “



A DBH was taken at wrong location due to swelling which caused DBH to move outside of tolerance. How do you score it?

- If the DBH is not within tolerance, a diameter error is recorded.

When there is a missed tree, why is there a difference in the number of “checks” for Stem Count?

- The Stem Count includes not only the trees recorded by both the QA and production crew, but also inclusions and exclusions. For example, if the production crew recorded 11 trees, only 10 of which were recorded by the QA crew (one being an inclusion), the Stem Count would be 11. If the QA crew also recorded an omission, the Stem Count would be 12.

How do you mark wrong a misidentified seedling SPP and an inaccurate seedling count?

Production Crew recorded 6 – 318’s and 1 – 316’s

QA Crew recorded 8 – 318’s

- Score in this fashion: Only take off for one extra line of data. It would be two entries with one wrong entry.

Can the QA crew choose to check all trees on the entire plot or should they only check 15 trees and finish the current subplot?

- The rules are pretty well defined. You do not have the option of checking beyond the subplot where the 15<sup>th</sup> tree is encountered. To do so would allow you to bias the inspection. The only reason to check additional subplots is as a result of some type of performance improvement effort.

Do we give leeway on seedlings if there is a difference in SNOW/WATER DEPTH between the crew and the QA crew measurements?

- Yes. If the snow levels are the same when the plot is checked (less than 1 foot of snow on Microplot), do not give any leeway. If the snow levels are less when the plot is checked, decipher (SNOW/WATER DEPTH, etc.) if there was less than 1 foot of snow on Microplot when the crew was there and if so, do not give any leeway. Regardless of the snow levels when the plot is checked, if determined (SNOW/WATER DEPTH, etc.) that there was greater than or equal to 1 foot of snow on Microplot when the crew was there, give some leeway (Seedling Data, NRS Note, “If snow amounts are excessive on the Microplot, the seedling tally is restricted to seedlings above the snow”).

Should you take off on notes if they fail to mention a close Condition call in the notes? QA crew was close to calling it another condition but decided to call it a transition.

- If there are obvious transitional areas within the plot area, potential boundaries, changes in boundaries/land use/etc., width/length measurements taken to determine qualifying conditions, or the use of various jumping/switch back/etc. rules, then Plot Notes should be included.
- If not, then the QA should remind the crew to put such info in “Plot Notes” and possibly the “Plot Diagram/Map” as well. Failure to do so could limit the QA person’s understanding of what the crew did on a plot, causing additional points to be taken off. It is best for the crew to include notes to the next crew or QA crew in order to assist in keeping the data consistent
- The only time a QA would mark off for notes missing would be in the case of the “other” codes such as WTYPE 9, where a note is required

What things have crews taken off for on plot maps?

Must include items listed below; it is either all accurate or marked wrong.

A Starting Point Map must be drawn for all plots. Sketch maps should provide enough information for a plot to be relocated without the use of the aerial photos or GPS coordinates. Details (bridges, rivers, trails, etc.) and mileage to an easily located intersection or reference point must be included. Inspectors

check the quality of a sketch map by attempting to locate a plot with the sketch map. A plot that cannot be located due to a poor sketch will be considered unsatisfactory. Neatness and clarity are desired. Artwork is not necessary and is not required. A good sketch map should take no more than five to ten minutes to complete.

It must include if items are present in the area:

- References to the nearest town or major secondary road
- Names and/or numbers (if available) for all roads shown on the sketch along with house or box numbers, when appropriate
- Key landmarks (natural and manmade) near SP or important intersections along route
- Use common symbols to represent features like fences, railroads, power lines etc.
- Include North arrow with a not to scale reference (N.T.S)
- Location of SP and PC identified
- Location for safe vehicle parking
- Record distances between road intersections from an originating intersection to SP. Distances are recorded in miles, tenth's of mile, chains, or feet.
- Gates – locked or unlocked
- Off road trails/paths used to drive or hike to SP or PC
- Do not draw a current map that is less detail oriented than the previous map(s).

#### When is a seam a seam?

- Seams / Cracks are treated the same.....both are an indication of unsound wood in terms of tree / log grading.
- FG 5.0, Appendix E, Pg. 309, Seams: “Seams are cracks or splits running with the grain for part of or full length of the log. They are generally caused by wind, lightning or frost and extend from the bark to the center of the log. They may be open or completely healed. They are very damaging and especially so when they run spirally around the log.”
- Defects in Hardwood Timber handbook, USDA Forest Service Handbook No. 678: “Seams are longitudinal radial separations of the fibers in a tree or log either open or overgrown with callus tissue.”
- New NRS NOTE for 6.0: Cracks/Seams that are 1 foot or less in length and only appear to be superficial or possibly a bole borer wound will not be considered unsound in terms of tree/log grading for a Grade 4 logs. Cracks/Seams that meet this characteristic will just be viewed as a defect. **A Clarification Document will be created**
- If the seam line is open, and/or there are signs of advanced decay (conks, etc.) along the seam line, ROTT should be coded. If the seam line is closed, and there are no signs of advanced decay along the seam line, ROTT should not be coded in combination with that seam. If advanced decay can be visually determined above or below the closed seam, then “sounding” can be used on the closed seam to determine if additional ROTT should be coded.

#### If a crew puts in a reference tree even though it wasn't required, do you score it?

- No, do not score it. It is not required so the crew should not get credit for collecting extra data.
- This is the same concept if the crew collected an extra Site Index Tree, when there was a previous SI Tree/s. If the previous SI Tree/s were valid and correct, there is no need for the crew to collect a new one. The crew should not get credit for collecting an extra SI tree.

#### Is the goal for QAing contractors and QAing feds the same?

- The goals may be slightly different in terms of purpose and frequency, but the technical standards are the same.

### How far should you go to look at things through the cruisers eyes?

- A good general guideline is to make sure you can conclusively demonstrate that an error has occurred.
- If a QA Score falls below the pass/fail standard, the respective supervisor needs to complete a follow-up review of the information and will be responsible for informing the crew of the outcome of the QA check. As a QA member, stick to the tolerances when completing the Cold Check. If needed, ask your supervisor, or Morrison, questions while scoring the plot. Remember, it is OK to discuss the check plot with the crew, after the plot has been checked, if certain issues need to be addressed prior to you scoring the plot.

### What items are reviewed under Plot Integrity? FG 5.0, Section 0, Pg. 13, Plot Integrity

- Information that will be used to find the plot next Cycle
- Trees marked properly
- No trash left behind
- No damage to plots such as hacking vines
- Monumentation on plot

### Is Starting Point info scored?

- Do not score SP info on Remeasurment plots
- Only score SP info on newly established plots

### When is it incorrect to code Damage of 250 over 251?

- Only mark 250 incorrect if the canker is obviously Eutypella.

### What is the process to evaluate Crown Class if the field crew varies by one Crown Class from the QA crew?

- First, eliminate 3 of the 5 possible codes for Crown Class that absolute do not fit the tree.
- Once Crown Class is reduced to 2 classes, determine which of the two fits the tree the 'best'.
- If the tree is borderline and can possibly fit into both classes, give the crew the benefit of the doubt.
- If the tree can only fit into one class, score an error for Crown Class.

### Can two trees next to each other be coded with a Dominate Crown Class?

- Yes, two trees together can be coded as Dominate.
- When more than two trees are present together and their crowns touch on more than two faces, consider calling them Co-dominate.

### Can two trees next to each other be coded with an Open Grown Crown Class?

- No, two trees together cannot be coded as Open Grown if they have been touching most of their life.
- If two trees did not influence each other for most of their lives, then they could both be coded as Dominate Crown Class.

### Does the size of a conk matter when evaluating for ROTT Stoppers?

- No, any sign of a fruiting body, regardless of size, is considered a Stopper.

What is the Tree Class of a tree that is snapped off at 9' when the top is <50% detached?

- If the bole, at the point of the break, is > 50% sound and the tree just snapped due to wind, assign a Tree Class of 3
- If the bole, at the point of the break, is affected by a conk, >50% canker, or > 50% rott; then assign a Tree Class of 4

When are Bole Borers recorded as a Damage, how many Borers are required to qualify as a Damage, and do Borers count as Unsound Wood?

- Code Bole Borers for any occurrence regardless of severity.
- No Cull is recorded for Bole Borers.

When are the previous crews Boundary measurements adjusted?

- If there is no change on the ground, DO NOT make an adjustment if previous measurements are within 10° of current measurements.
- If there is actual change on the ground, adjust the previous boundary to reflect the change even if the measurements are within 10°.
- If a change is required on any Boundary data, the rest of the Boundary data can be adjusted to fit the new boundary configuration.
- If the current crew changes the azimuths without an actual change, mark the Boundary incorrect.

What action is taken if the current crew placed a new pin and QA crew locates both old and new pins in different locations?

- QA will pull the NEW pin to maintain Plot Integrity.
- QA will make a note on the original plotsheet to ensure the next crew is aware of the possible discrepancies.

If the crew didn't locate the original pin, is a borderline tree considered Missed or Extra if QA crew locates the original pin?

- Yes, the tree would be considered Missed or Extra if the QA finds the original pin.
- If the current crew does not locate the original pin, the crew should record a Note explaining the situation that prevented them from locating the pin.
- The crew should spend time to dig in the snow to locate original pins.

How best can the QA crew evaluate Percent Canopy Cover on QA plots?

- Crew members should begin documenting the running total for Percent Canopy Cover on the plotsheets. This will allow QA crews to review the progress of the crew and help determine if they have similar percentages for their measurements. **A Clarification Document will be created**