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SAFETY ALERT

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A worker breaking out for a road-line logging operation was almost hit by a tumbling root-ball. The above picture shows a typical root-ball extracted from the ground by an excavator clearing pilot tracks for a road-line logging crew.

The root-ball was extracted and placed in what was thought to be a safe location that would not allow the root-ball to roll down-slope. The near-miss incident coincided with a period of heavy rain.

Key contributing factors identified from the incident review were:

- Heavy rain dislodged the root-ball.
- The tracking excavator operator misjudged the stability of the slash and soil holding the root-ball in place.

Recommended preventative actions include:

- Thanking the breaker-out for reporting the incident – it has been an opportunity to review the hazard control systems by the three companies involved.
- Reminding all earthworks contractors that extracting material which could later move, such as boulders and root-balls, must be done taking into account:
 - Changing weather conditions.
 - The legal responsibility for all workers to avoid creating a hazard for any other people on site, either in the current operation or in future operations (for example hauler breaker-outs and fallers who could be on site in 1-2 years after the roading is completed).