



SUBJECT		
Free Growing Acceptability Guidelines		
File: 18940-00		

CHAPTER	MANUAL	SECTION
Operations		

INTENT:

To supplement existing *Timber Harvesting and Silviculture Practices Regulation* and *Establishment to Free Growing Guidebook* standards that must be met by a healthy, well spaced tree of a preferred or acceptable species at free growing.

This replaces SOP #24 dated January 28, 1998. and is an interim district policy subject to revision if clarification is received from a Branch or Regional level and will be reviewed within 3 years.

PURPOSE:

To provide free growing acceptability criteria for stem deformation including crooks and sweeps on immature stems.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all persons carrying out stocking and free growing surveys and to all Ministry staff involved in supervising, checking or monitoring stocking and free growing surveys in the Rocky Mountain Forest District.

REQUIREMENTS:

When assessing a tree that has a stem deformation, the tree is **ACCEPTABLE** if from the point of germination to a height of **30 cm**, the pith is horizontally displaced less than **30 cm**. This criterion addresses sites that are prone to snow and soil creep. Good stem form and vigor are assumed above the 30 cm height.

At any vertical distance greater than **30 cm**, if the pith is horizontally displaced less than **15 cm** from the point of defect (as per Figure 1) and the defect occurred more than 5 years from the current leader, the tree is **ACCEPTABLE**. This pith displacement is intended primarily for crooks. Trees are expected to display good growth and vigor over the previous three years.

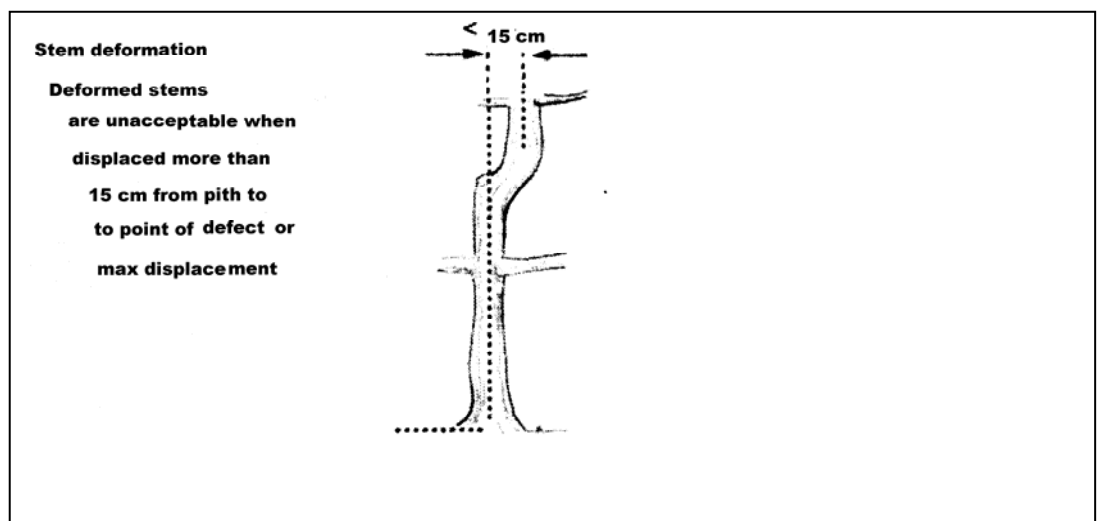
‘Allowed’ displacement (<15 cm) is not to extend beyond expected normal average stem growth. In the Rocky Mountain Forest District this is based on an expected average stem of 30 cm dbh at rotation.

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Good growth and vigor is defined as normal stem growth or development. The bark must not be creased, broken or otherwise damaged.

Figure 1.



EXEMPTIONS:

May be considered in the form of an amendment to a prescription subject to District Manager approval.

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