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Comments: I prefer the 21" rule for these reasons: If you ask 2 people if this tree exhibits old growth characteristics you will likely get 2 different answers. This is a subjective decision. Also, once a tree has been cut and removed you can measure the stump diameter to determine if that tree had a DBH exceeding 21". This ensures accountability. Once a tree has been cut and removed you will not be able to determine if an individual felt that tree exhibited old growth characteristics. Any accountability is removed. The 21" rule has worked as a guardian for 25 years.