

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/20/2022 12:00:00 AM

First name: Ray

Last name: Hicks

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Old growth should be defined by size, age and disturbance history.

Age- Forests considered as old growth should contain consist of canopy trees that are  $\geq$  50% as old as the normal life expectancy of their respective species.

Size- old growth forests should contain trees that are larger in both height and diameter than average second growth stands on their respective sites. They should possess a basal area and canopy density that is typooof fully stocked stands of the respective species.

Disturbance History- Old growth stands should not have been subject to commercial timber Ploperations in the last several decades, to the extent that visible remnants of harvesting ( stumps, roads, etc.) are not obvious to untrained observers. Also, downed wood should have been left in place and not "cleaned up."

Ray Hicks, Emeritus Prof of Forest Ecology, West Virginia Univetsity