



Peer Review Plan

(Reference [Information Quality Act](#))

FS-1400-0003 (V.1.2) 5/16

☒ Influential Scientific Information

☐ Highly Influential Scientific Assessment

Agency

USDA Forest Service

Agency Contact (name/ email/ phone)

Christopher Woodall, christopher.w.woodall@usda.gov

Title of Review

Classifying Mature Federal Forests in the United States: The Forest Inventory Growth Stage System

Purpose of Review

To ensure scientific rigor of data analysis and results on classifying mature federal forests in the U.S.

Type of Review

☐ Panel Review

☐ Individual Review

Internal review selected by authors;
Formal, anonymous peer review from the journal, once submitted

☒ Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review

07/31/2023

Start

04/01/2023

End

07/31/2023

☐ 3 or fewer

Number of Reviewers

☒ 4 to 10

☐ More than 10

Primary Discipline/Types of Expertise Needed for Review

Applied Forest Ecology

Reviewer Names and Affiliations

-Brian Palik, Senior Ecologist, USFS, R&D, Northern Research Station

-Anthony D'Amato, Professor and Director, Univ. VT, Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, Forestry Program

-Anonymous reviewers to be determined by the journal

Expected Publication Outlet (Science or Similar Peer Reviewed Journal)

Forest Ecology and Management, where the manuscript will receive additional anonymous peer review from scientific experts selected by the journal editorial board

Reviewers Selected by:

☒ Agency

☐ Designated Outside Organization

Organization's Name: _____

Opportunities for Public Comment? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:

How: _____

When: _____

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Commentary

☐ Yes☒ No**Summary of Peer Reviewers' Comments**

Brian Palik: 1) I think this is a great use of FIA (Forest Inventory & Analysis) data that is addressing an important national need. 2) it took me a few reads of the introduction to really get what you were doing....assessing old-growth structural metrics and then backing off from these to define mature. It was very clear in the conclusion section, which reads well, so more like that. 3) Your whole approach depends on the values selected for the thresholds, so inclusion of the sensitivity analyses is great, still the end result are numbers for mature that seem high to me, and seem high compared to the other study you cite, but you don't really try to justify yours. Perhaps some attention to this would be useful. 4) I take issue in a few places with over reliance on the Oliver and Larson type model and with an attempt to categorizes a continuous process of stand development. There probably is no good way around this, except acknowledgement.

Anthony D'Amato: I appreciate thoughtfulness with the FIA data and am glad you're on the task of sorting this out. I have some concerns around certain details, including the mature forest onset ages for some forest types, as I think that's prioritizing MAI over other facets of structural development that might lead to older ages. Regardless, I get why you did what you did and had to develop some objective and replicable criteria. One thing I think is worth bringing up in a few spots is how this approach might actually be useful to prioritizing those places where ecological and adaptive silviculture might be able to accelerate old-growth conditions, as well as reduce vulnerability of carbon stocks. You allude to this a few times, but more directly tackling it could be helpful.

Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel

☐ Yes☒ No**Other Comments**