HOW TO Iden t fy soil characteris t cs

Knowing the proper t es of your forest soil will help you predict how the soil will respond to forest opera t ons. You can then plan opera t ons so as to minimize soil disturbance.

A soil survey is a detailed report by the USDA Natural Resources Conserva t on Service (NRCS) that includes maps of soil boundaries, photos, descrip t ons and tables of soil proper t es and features. Idaho county soil surveys are available at local NRCS o f ces, or they can be explored virtually at USDA NRCS-Idaho Soil Sur L: forma t on to a local NRCS o f ce, where
2. You can conduct your own f eld survey.

Conduc t ng a f eld soil survey

1. Walk into your harvest unit and select three to f ve spots across the unit.
2. At each spot dig a small hole about 12 inches deep. This is the cri t cal zone that trees access for nutrients and moisture. It is also the most suscep t ble to disturbance during harves t ng.
3. Grab some soil from each hole and rub it between your f ngers.

Answer the following ques t ons:

What is the soil texture?

To test, add water to a small handful of soil and mix it, trying to form a small ball (about the size of an egg).

- If you are not able to form a ball, you have sandy soil.
- If you are able to form a ball, place it between your thumb and fore f nger, slowly squeeze the soil forward and let it droop ŏ ş ‡ Ɔ , M er, M orm a balO ' Ă, œo