

Idaho Forestry Best Management Practices

Forms and Tables: Soil best management practices

Soil Best Management Practices			
Soil Characteristic	Field Identification	Meaning of Soil Attribute	Best Management Practice
Mineral soil texture	Coarse feel; sandy.	Low water holding capacity; high load bearing.	- Any ground-based harvesting method is acceptable year round. - Manage forest floor disturbances and use slash mats on skid trails to reduce soil erosion.
	Even mix of coarse and fine soil particles.	Moderate water-holding capacity; more susceptible to compaction.	Use slash mats on skid trails and/or plan a late July-early September harvest to reduce soil compaction or rutting of wet soils.
	Smooth feel when wet; not grippy.	High water holding capacity; easily compacted when wet; high load-bearing capacity when dry.	- Avoid any harvest operations when soils are wet. - If unavoidable, manual felling is preferred, allowing soils to dry out before forwarding equipment is used. - Use of thick slash mats a must if mechanical harvesting before late July.
Topsoil organic matter	Soil color very dark brown to black.	Soil rich in plant essential nutrients; typically found in forests with a high component of grass understory.	

FROM: Barkley et al., 2015. *Idaho Forestry Best Management Practices Field Guide: Using BMPs to Protect Water Quality*. Bulletin 891, University of Idaho Extension, Moscow, ID.