



## Forestry Ecosystem Exploration

### Bringing It All Together – Site Comparison

List of Plant Communities Used as Investigation Sites: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Looking at all of the information that you have gathered from your different sites, what connections can you make about the sites? The following are open-ended questions to explore the relationships and trends that you noticed among your different ecosystems. You may answer on your own or work together with your team.

1. Which of your sites were the most ecologically similar based on observed ecological factors?
  - a. Between your most similar sites, which ecological factors varied the least?
  - b. Which ecological factors varied the most?
2. Which of your sites were the most ecologically different based on observed ecological factors?
  - a. Between your most different sites, which ecological factors varied the most?
  - b. Which ecological factors varied the least?
3. What do you think are the top three ecological factors that helped you to easily differentiate one ecosystem from another? Why are these three factors important?
4. How did the similarities and differences among your different sites affect which species were found there?
5. What species were found at multiple sites?
  - a. Were there species found at every site?
  - b. Why do you think these species were so common?
6. Were there any species unique to only one site?
  - a. What factors do you think limited the range of this species?
  - b. What are its habitat requirements?

7. Define the terms generalist species and specialist species. Using your answers from Questions 5 and 6 above, answer the following:
  - a. Which species identified were generalists?
  - b. Which were specialists?
  - c. Which species were in-between?
8. What adaptations were common among species in the similar sites?
  - a. Why do you think organisms with these adaptations thrive in these ecosystems?
9. Which site had the greatest plant species diversity? Why do you think this is?
10. Which site had the least plant species diversity? Why do you think this is?
11. Which ecosystem was your favorite, and why?
12. What was something unexpected that you observed?
  - a. *Optional:* Independently research the unexpected observation and share with your classmates or teammates why you think you observed it during your investigation.