

**THE USE OF STRATA ANALYSIS IN PREDICTING SUCCESSION  
IN A SECOND-GROWTH MOUNTAIN FOREST**

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### **Abstract**

To wholly grasp the ecology of a botanical environment, the origin, continuation, and replacement of the species through succession must first be understood. This project was based upon the findings of a survey in Julian Price Park in Watauga County, NC, on 24 July 2014. The primary purposes of this project were to examine the current state of forest species composition and to predict the future succession of this forest community by analyzing specific census data of tree species in four strata gathered from a 1200 m<sup>2</sup> sample. The findings indicate that the area's features are mainly characteristic of a typical second-growth forest of the southern Appalachian mountains, and that the forest is evidently progressing to become a climax community characterized by abundance of oak and maple individuals. The data and conclusions provide reinforcement of the standard ideas of second-growth mountain forest succession and outline possibilities for future research.