Chapter 6.0: Section level attribute assessments and Editing

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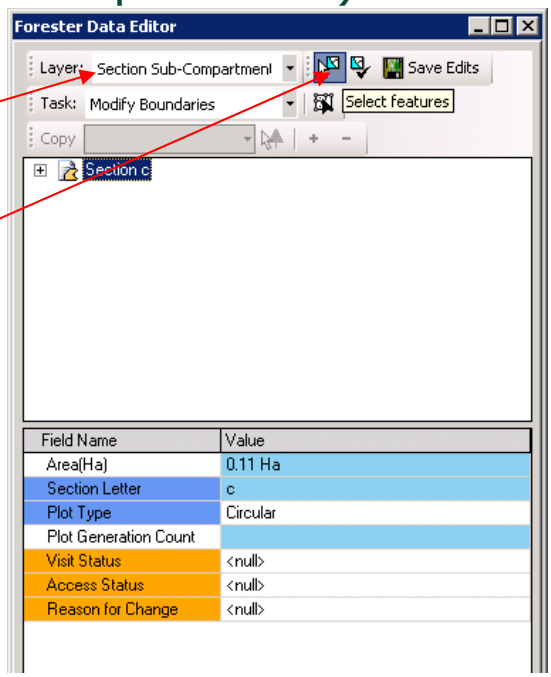
6.0 Section Value Editing in the Software

6.1 Selecting a Section (Section Sub-Compartment)

In the Forester Data Editor window use the Layer drop down box to choose Section Sub-Compartments.

Click on the Select Features button and then click in the Section in the map to be assessed. The Section will now be highlighted with blue hatching.

A list of data entry fields will appear in the lower half of the Forester Data Editor window.

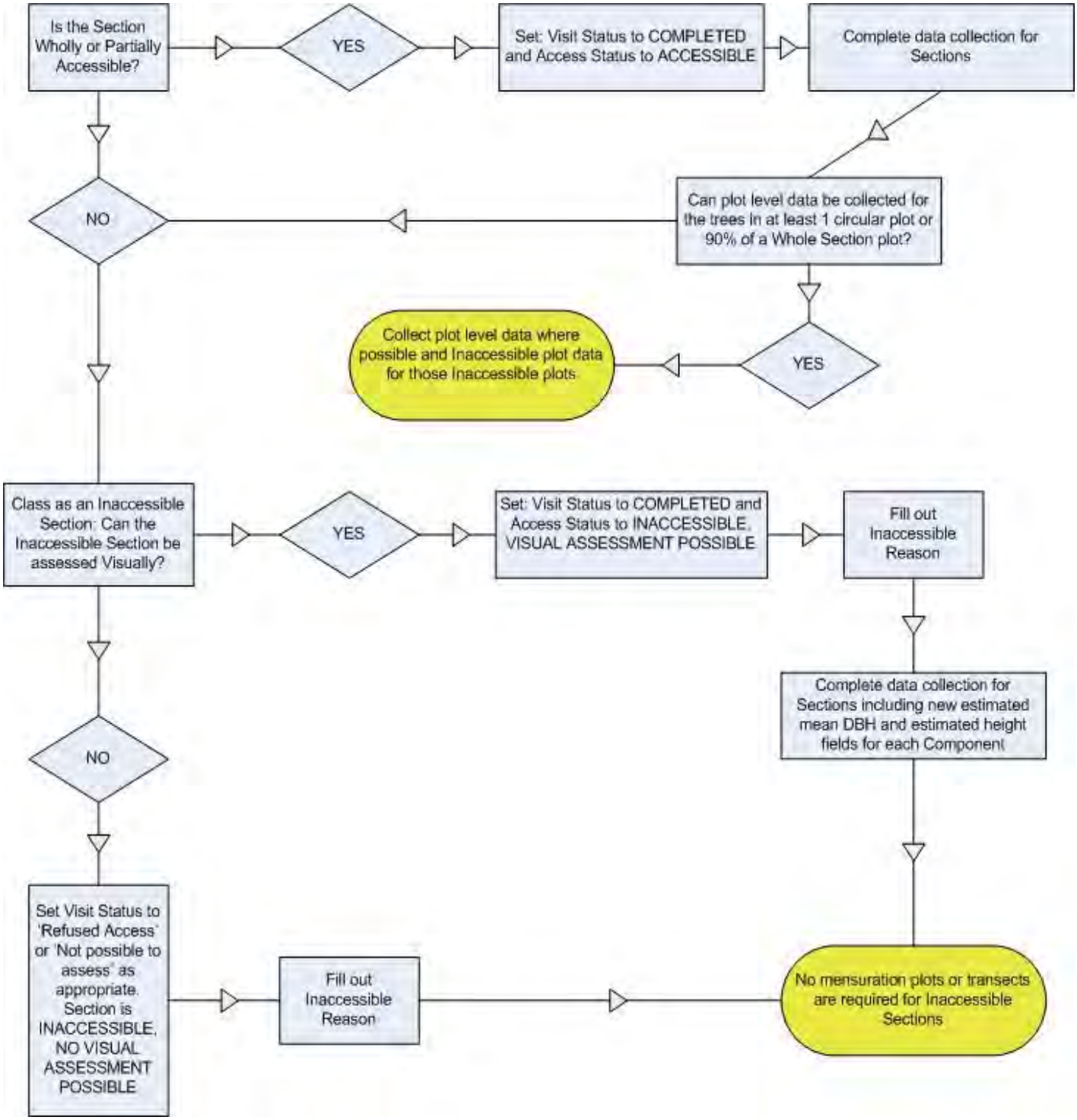


6.2 Data Entry

The number of data fields to complete will depend upon the accessibility of the Section.

6.2.1 Accessible/Inaccessible flow chart for Section level assessments:

Follow Flowchart 6-1 below to determine the accessibility level of the Section to be assessed. Repeat for all Sections.

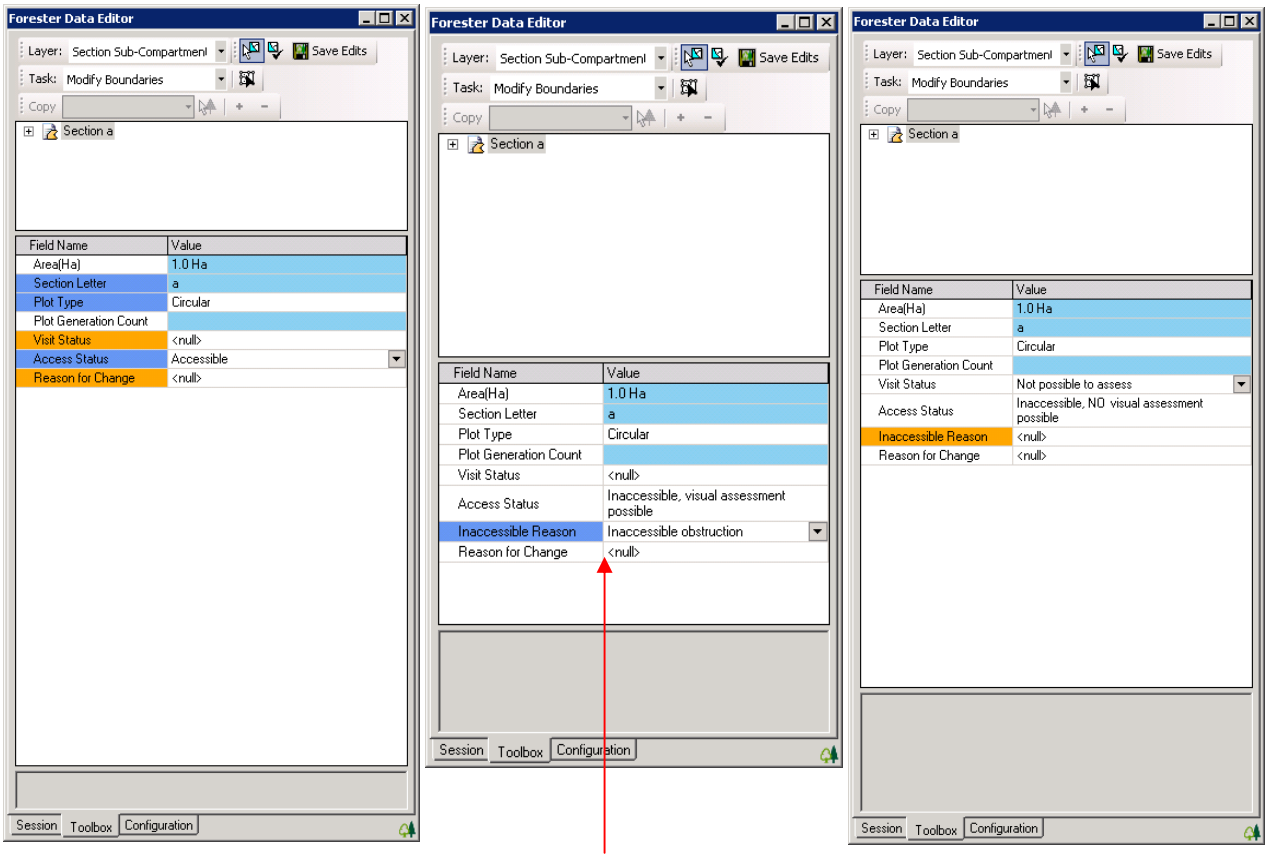


Flowchart 6 - 1: Section accessibility

Where 'Accessible' means that part or all of the section can be accessed physically including at least 1 circular plot or 75% of a Whole Section plot.

6.2.2 Data to be entered depending upon accessibility

Fill out the orange mandatory fields. Depending upon the Access Status selected at the Section level the data entry fields and what you are expected to assess will reduce or increase with higher and lower levels of access. This will cascade down to the lower subservient levels in the survey structure, such as components and sub components, so that assessments required for accessible sections are dropped for inaccessible sections.



Where possible as much data should be gathered in situations where access is restricted. As we cannot anticipate the exact circumstances of the limitation of access, we only stipulate that you take the minimum measures, as denoted by their mandatory status. However you are supplied with non-mandatory assessments and fields, (the white fields), and they should be assessed and filled out by surveyors where possible.

6.2.3 Section data entry fields

Table 6 - 1: Section data entry

Data Field	Options	Comments
Area	*N/A*	*Allocated by the software. Relates to the area of the section.*
Section Letter	*N/A*	*Allocated by the software, letter a to the largest section, b to the next largest and so on.*
Plot Type	• Circular • Whole Section Sub-Compartment • Not applicable	Assign Plot Type see **Chapter 12.1.** 'Not applicable' to be used in non-treed, non-NFI, and Inaccessible Sections.
Plot Generation Count	*Generated by the software*	*This counts the number of times you have generated plots in this section. This is so QA staff can check if a surveyor is doing this to make their work easier at the expense of survey bias.*
Visit Status	• Unvisited • In progress • Completed • Refused Access • Not possible to assess	• 'In progress' can be used if the surveyor needs to leave the site before completing data entry (e.g. it gets dark before completion). • Section surveyed and recorded within software. • Should only be used if the entire Section is Refused Access AND is Inaccessible NO visual assessment possible. • 'Not possible to assess' should ONLY be used if the Access Status is 'Inaccessible, NO visual assessments possible'. See **Flowchart 6 - 1: Section accessibility.** *When the Sample square is completed each Section must have one of the following Visit Status':* • *Completed* • *Refused Access*

		• *Not possible to assess* *Unvisited and In Progress must not be recorded when the square is sent back to the FC.*
Access Status	▪ Accessible	▪ Select this if any part of the section is accessible and at least 1 circular plot is accessible or 75% of a whole section plot is accessible. See **Flowchart 6 - 1: Section accessibility. All subservient data (species components etc.) to be assessed.**
	▪ Inaccessible, visual assessment possible	• If 'Inaccessible but visual assessments possible' is chosen then an abbreviated survey is to be conducted, including visually estimating Top Height and Mean DBH for each Component in the stand. To estimate Top height, estimate the mean height of the component. Plots are not expected.
	▪ Inaccessible, NO visual assessment possible	• If visual assessment is not possible you are not expected to survey and the software does not allow Component or sub-component level data and plots to be entered.
Inaccessible reason (this Field only appears if one of the two Inaccessible options above are chosen)	▪ Inaccessible thicket	Thicket definition: 'Stands of trees where the bases of the live crowns of the trees are below 1m height and the live crowns interlock so tightly that access is impossible'.
	▪ Inaccessible health and safety	Where there is a high risk of personal injury, for example, harvesting operations, hung trees, hazardous waste etc.
	▪ Inaccessible slope	Ground too steep to walk on
	▪ Inaccessible obstruction	High voltage fences, high fences, mineshaft, railway etc.
	▪ Inaccessible	Dense windblow where it is impossible to pass

	windblow	through or hung windblow that may fall.
	▪ Inaccessible other	Any situation where the surveyor cannot reasonably access the area to survey. An example being where vegetation (e.g. dense gorse) stops access use 'Inaccessible other'.
Reason for Change	• No change 2nd cycle	• Re measure squares only - no change since 1st cycle in section boundaries or section values
	• Real change 2nd cycle	• Re measure squares only - real change since 1st cycle in section boundary or its section level values (plot type, social etc.). **Not for component level changes.**
	• Error change 2nd cycle	• Re measure squares only – previous surveyor error at section level; boundary, value
	• Spatial error 2nd cycle	• Re measure squares only – Error in first cycle assessment due to inaccuracies in previous OS data or aerial photography
	• 1st Assessment 2nd cycle	• **Always use this option if this is the 1st time a sample square is being assessed.**
	• QA check • QA change	Not for surveyor use

6.3 Herbivory

In the previous survey we only assessed the physical evidence of herbivory, such as browsing, fraying and stripping. We still expect you to identify and record these factors, but in addition we expect you to record the presence of key herbivores. For example you may be in a wood full of squirrels and see many during the day, but you may see no sign of damage, as it is high within the canopy. In this example we would expect you to record squirrels as observed, but you would record no damage observed in the tree health fields.

We do not expect you to spend time 'hunting out' small clues or traces as to the presence of herbivores, but do expect you to record where there are 'obvious' and clear signs of the presence of herbivores. This would include the physical sighting of animals, 'un-missable' amounts of burrows, scats, dens, fur, wool, hair, drays or tracks / prints. We would also expect you to be able to discern obvious browse lines and heights within vegetation and to be able to equate this to the relevant herbivore. You will also be expected to interpret the height and type of browsing, stripping or fraying on trees to a reasonable estimate of the type of animal that did the damage.

As herbivores move about a site we assess and record this at the section level.

Factors to assess:

Herbivore

- None
- Deer
- Squirrels
- Sheep
- Cows
- Horses
- Rabbits
- Hares
- Pigs/wild boar
- Not surveyed
- Not applicable

Evidence

None
Sighting
Sign of herbivory
Scats
Tracks
Ground disturbance
Burrows
Not surveyed
Not applicable

6.4 Social Indicators

Open the Social Indicators section data. For the Section fill in the following Data Fields:

Table 6 - 1: Social Indicators categories

Data Field	Options	Comments
Social indicator Type	• Recreation • Amenity Management • Abuse • Fire • None • Education, enterprise and research • Not surveyed	Surveyors must not Delete the red Social Indicators record, if there are no indicators use 'None'.

6.4.1 Recreation

Table 6 - 2: Recreation – Social Indicator subtype

• Informal Path (made through cumulative use)	• Where people walk informally but there is no formal rights to this, signs, POW etc., excludes historical transport routes such as old drove roads, Roman roads etc.
• Formal Path	• A planned and created pathway including Public Rights of Way and waymarked paths and historical transport routes such as old drove roads, Roman roads etc.

• Outdoor Education Activity	• E.g. Forest Schools sites
• Off-road motorcycle tracks	• Formal and informal
• Informal gathering / camping	• E.g. wild camping
• Equestrian Use	• Any equine use except grazing
• Mountain bike use	• Formal and informal
• Dog Walking	• Formal and informal
• Able/encouraged to roam from paths	• Paths with vegetation cleared, brashing of adjacent trees, off path facilities, sighs encouraging access off the path and into the wood
• Value	Enter value for the above: • None • Present • More than One

6.4.2 Amenity Management

Table 6 - 3: Amenity Management – Social Indicator subtypes

• Vegetation management • Furniture • Signage	• E.g. swiping, mowing, pruning… • E.g. picnic table, benches… • E.g. interpretation/narrator boards, finger posts…

6.4.3 Abuse

Table 6 - 4: Abuse – Social Indicator subtypes

• Litter • Fly tipping • Dog fouling	• E.g. recreational litter such as bottles, crisp packets • Deliberate tipping of industrial/household and garden waste •

• Vandalism	• Deliberate damage excluding fire (recorded below)
• Farm waste	• In general high nitrogen content waste such as slurry, effluent, bedding / dung mixes from intensive farming methods
• Forestry Contractor Waste	• Covers all forestry workers. Oil drums, containers, planting bags, herbicide bottles, general litter resultant from forestry operations
• Values	Enter values: • None • Some • A lot

6.4.4 Fire

Table 6 - 5: Fire Data Fields

• Fire	• Exclude controlled campfires and naturally occurring fires • Enter % area affected (1-100%)

6.4.6 Education, enterprise and research

Private Enterprise	Any form of non forestry business; Go Ape, Mountain biking etc
Research	Any form of Research Activity
Education	Any form of educational activity, Scout Camps, Woodland School initiatives etc

6.4.6.1 Adding, Deleting and Cloning records

- Add by right clicking on the Social Indicators folder to 'Add' a new Social Indicators record.

- Clone by right clicking on a Social Indicators record. Cloning is useful where a new record is similar to an existing record and can save entry time **BUT** it is vital that the new record is edited correctly.
- Delete by right clicking on a Social Indicators record.

Note:

Any formal or well established informal paths, public rights of way, off road motorcycle tracks, bridleways, cycle ways, paths with way markers, linear features associated with outdoor education activity or access routes used for recreational activity need to be 'mapped out' within the square. See chapter on linear features and the theme 'Recreation'.

6.5 Variations for Re-Measure Squares

There are no real differences at the Section level for Re-measure squares.

The main factor to be aware of is the 'Reason for Change' field – see table 6-1.

For a Re-measure square you must choose from the other options; no change, real change, error etc., as described in the previous table.

In allocating these values it is important to remember that this field is to determine the type of change in the section boundaries and section values only. It is not to reflect the nature of changes in the subservient levels of components, sub components and plots. So for example there may have been no real change in the section boundaries and its values such as plot type and access status and here you should record 'no change'. But there may have been change in the height of the stories and this should be recorded as 'real change' at the component level.

Differentiating change at different levels within the data model; square, section, component group, subcomponent plot, allows us to discern between minor change (all the trees will have grown) and major change (the section has doubled in size) in the analysis and reporting of the NFI.