The Gawgige-Jiwong (Forever Flowing Water) Pristine Watershed, Lower Spanish Forest, Ontario

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In the summer of 1993, Ancient Forest Exploration & Research (AFER) conducted a fine-filter field survey to determine if the Gawgige-Jiwong Watershed located in Solski, Tofflemire and Oullette Townships in Ontario's Lower Spanish Forest is pristine (unlogged) (see watershed map). It is the largest known complete watershed dominated by old-growth red and eastern white pine forest (35% of the forest cover - Table 1) at 3,500 ha (see photographs of its headwaters - Fig. 1). In 1993, less than 5% of the watershed had been logged in a small portion near the Spanish River - the remainder was pristine.

Since E.B. Eddy purchased a mill the Sault Ste. Marie area that is tooled for cutting white and red pine lumber, they have been sending these species from the Lower Spanish Pine Landscape to the mill. Because E.B. Eddy continues to cut endangered old-growth pine, AFER and OPIRG sent letters to their managers in an effort to stop this logging (see attached letters). At the very minimum, this logging should cease until the Provincial Lands for Life Public Consultation concludes and recommendations for land protection are submitted to the Minister of Natural Resources by the Citizen's Committee (Round Table). Logging these forests precludes any consideration of their natural heritage value as part of this current Lands for Life process.

George Weston Ltd., the parent corporation of E.B. Eddy, claims to be concerned with protecting the environment (see attached environmental policy statements), however, they press on with their logging of Ontario's endangered old-growth red and eastern white pine forests. As is so often the case with natural resource extraction industries, policy commitments to protect the environment are simply hollow words that create a mirage of concern and action.

The Lower Spanish Pine Landscape is the world's largest concentration of pristine, endangered red and eastern white pine forest and as such, should be designated as a provincial park. Until George Weston Ltd. and E.B. Eddy support such initiatives, they will continue to occupy a position of ethical immorality within modern society. They would do well to look beyond our weak conservation laws and heed the prophetic words of Aldo Leopold (1949, pg. 224):

> ***A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.***

Table 1. List of Forest Stands in the Gawgige-Jiwong Watershed with 50% Dominance or More of One Species

stand#	Species Composition	stand#	Species Composition
113	Bw(60), Pj(20), Sb(10), Pr(10)	163	Pj(70), Or(30)
279	Bw(50)	12	Pj(70), Sb(20), Bw(10)
115	Bw(50), Ms(20), Sb(20), Po(10)	93	Pj(70), Sb(20), Bw(10)
128	Bw(50), Ms(20), Sb(20), Po(10)	177	Pj(60), Bw(20), Sb(10), Pw(10)
88	Bw(50), Pw(30), Sw(10), Po(10)	278	Pj(50)
127	Bw(50), Sb(30), Pw(20)	167	Pj(50)
114	Bw(50), Sw(20), Po(20), By(10)	116	Pr(80), Pw(20)
72	Sw(60), Sb(20), Bw(20)	100	Pr(70), Pw(20), Bw(10)
70	Sw(50), Pw(20), Po(20), Pr(10)	106	Pr(60), Pw(30), sb(10)
112	Sb(100)	264	Pr(60), Sw(20), Po(20)
90	Sb(100)	111	Pr(60), Pj(20), Pw(10), Bw(10)
82	Sb(100)	117	Pr(50), Bw(20), Ms(10), Sb(10), Pw(10)
267	Sb(100)	97	Pr(50), Pj(20), Pw(20), Bw(10)
15	Sb(100)	126	Pr(50), Bw(20), Pw(20), Sb(10)
80	Sb(100)	78	Pr(50), Pw(30), Po(10), Bw(10)
107	Sb(100)	103	Pw(60), Bw(20), Pj(10), Pr(10)
74	Sb(100)	101	pw(50), Pr(30), Bw(20)
83	Sb(90), Bw(10)	11	Pw(50)
89	Sb(80), Pw(10), Bw(10)	99	Pw(50), Pj(20), Ms(20), Bw(10)
73	Sb(70), La(30)	62	Pw(50), Pr(20), Po(20), Sw(10)
104	Sb(70), Bw(20), Pj(10)	268	Pw(50), Bw(20), Pr(20), Sb(10)
281	Sb(70), Pw(20), Bw(10)	14	Pw(50), Ms(20), Pr(20), Sb(10)
94	Sb(60)	187	Pw(50), Bw(20), Po(20), Ms(10)
13	Sb(60), Bw(40)	75	Pw(50), Pr(20), Sw(20), Sb(10)
91	Sb(60), Pw(20), Ce(20)	175	Pw(50), Pr(20), Po(20), Sw(10)
79	Sb(50), Pw(20), Sw(20), Bw(10)	61	Pw(50), Pr(20), Ms(20), Sw(10)
277	Pj(100)	92	Pw(50), Pr(20), Sb(20), Ms(10)
166	Pj(100)	178	Pw(50), Sb(30), Bw(20)
60	Pj(90), Sb(10)	157	Pw(50), Bw(30), Pr(10), Ms(10)
162	Pj(80), Sb(20)	180	Po(70), Pw(10), Pj(10), Sw(10)
269	Pj(80), Pw(10), Ms(10)	179	Po(60), Pw(20), Sw(20)
169	Pj(80), Bw(20)	265	Po(50), Pw(20), Bw(20), Ms(10)

Figure 1. Photographs of the Headwaters of the Gawgige-Jiwong Watershed

Reference

Leopold, A. 1949. A Sand County Almanac. Oxford University Press, New York. 226 pp.