



Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
Public Input Coordinator
Species at Risk Branch
300 Water Street
5th Floor, North Tower
Peterborough, ON
K9J 8M5

November 4, 2021

ERO # 019-4278

RE: Minister's Order for temporary suspension of protection upon the listing of Black Ash under the Endangered Species Act

The Michipicoten First Nation (MFN) is an Anishinabek Nation and a signatory of the 1850 Robinson Superior Treaty. Michipicoten reserve lands include 3,514.70 hectares on Gros Cap #49; 5.50 hectares at Gros Cap Indian Village #49A; 87.4 hectares at IR#62 Missanabie on Dog Lake and 89 hectares at IR#61 Chapleau on the Nebskwashi River. The total reserve lands for Michipicoten is 3,696.6 hectares. In addition, our traditional territory throughout the region is vast.

Our most populated community is located on the Gros Cap #49 reserve on the north shore of Lake Superior approximately 20kms outside of Wawa Ontario. Our core traditional territory extends along the east and west coasts of Lake Superior and inland beyond the watersheds of the White, Kabinakagami, Oba and the Missinaibi Lakes, the Kebsquasheshing (aka Chapleau River the main tributary of Kapuskasing Lake), Mattagami, Aubindong, Montreal Rivers and all points in between.

As a Nation, we are committed to guiding community renewal by incorporating our traditional Indigenous perspective with the common western perspective. Central to this commitment is the need to protect our natural resources and fulfill the roles and responsibilities given to us by Creator.

Our Ancestral teachings tell us that as the two-leggeds are the youngest sibling of Creation. Our relatives, the tree people, the rock people, the four leggeds (animals), the winged ones, the waters, all of creation agreed to look after us throughout the generations. Creator gave our Ancestors original instructions on our responsibilities as care takers of the land and resources. When I say our two-leggeds I mean all of our relatives not just Indigenous two-leggeds. It's vital that every nationality considers how the decisions we make today will affect the next seven generations of the human family.

Michipicoten leadership gratefully acknowledges our essential roles and responsibilities in accordance with our original instructions from Creator. We continue to follow our traditional customs and practices passed through intergenerational teachings. What we know to be true is that we must balance traditional knowledge with western science. We need you to work with us to create the balance required for future generations to survive and thrive.

We are very concerned about how past decisions from a western worldview is drastically affecting our ecosystems. In this case, climate change is bringing the threat of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). This insect is moving north with warming temperatures.

Black Ash is a culturally important species to MFN. For generations, Black Ash has been used in basket weaving, making snowshoe frames, knife handles, spoons, and even cross braces for birch bark canoes. Today, it continues to be used by our citizens as an important medicine.

In our role as responsible land stewards and care takers, MFN expects the MECP to meaningfully consult and involve First Nations in the recovery plan and the development of management strategies for Black Ash. We have an inherent interest in knowing how Ontario is developing strategies and initiatives for the protection of our relatives in Creation.

We expect the opportunity to provide feedback, meaningful mitigation measures and we want greater involvement in research, monitoring and/or stewardship activities of Black Ash in Northern Ontario on our reserve lands and in our traditional territory. The active involvement of our people in the monitoring, stewardship, and recovery strategies of species at risk, and in particular Black Ash, would benefit our community as well as the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and all Ontarians.

MFN is currently building our capacity to be involved in such processes at varying levels and we could use MECP's help in building our capacity. We are very interested in participating in activities, including but not limited to, providing local knowledge, assisting in data collection, monitoring, seed collection efforts, and other stewardship initiatives.

MFN is currently working towards conducting a feasibility study for the development of a greenhouse/tree nursery. If this project goes forward, there may be an opportunity for Michipicoten to be involved in local propagation of Black Ash as well.

It is prudent for the MECP to use the opportunity of the listing and development of a recovery strategy for such a culturally significant species to meaningfully collaborate with our Nation. We look forward to better understanding potential funding sources to build upon the work we are doing with Species at Risk.

For future reference, please contact Helen Turner, MFN's Forestry Technician. Helen can be reached by email: h.turner@michipicoten.com or cell phone at 705-914-0415. We look forward to hearing from the MECP and working closely with you on this file going forward.

Miigwetch, thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Tangie', with a large flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Gimaa Kwe/Chief Patricia Tangie

cc: MFN Lands & Environmental Stewardship Department

