Mazina'igan Supplement

Published by the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission *Fall 2002*

Tribal sugarbush and birch bark gathering sites on national forest lands

During the past two years, staff from the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) interviewed tribal elders to collect traditional ecological knowledge on non-medicinal uses of wild plants, a project funded by the Administration for Native Americans (***Mazina'igan***, Spring 2001).

As part of this project, GLIFWC staff, with guidance from tribal elders, identified potential sugarbush and birch bark gathering sites on national forest lands.

GLIFWC staff hope that these identified sites will assist tribal members interested in gathering maple sap or birch bark. Gathering is not limited to these sites; tribal members may gather at other locations on national forest lands.

The site identification process entailed several steps. GLIFWC staff first asked tribal elders about desirable characteristics for sugarbushes and birch bark. Staff then selected preliminary sites using the information received from the elders, along with USDA Forest Service vegetation maps (Geographical Information System data).

Tribal elders were invited to visit and comment on the preliminary sites. With the elders' approval, the final site identification included 49 potential sugarbushes and 41 potential birch bark gathering sites.

These sites occur on the Chequamegon-Nicolet, Ottawa, and Hiawatha National Forests. The following maps provide their locations.

Tribal elders have repeatedly stated concerns about over harvesting. Harvesters visiting these sites should gather with respect, taking only what is needed.

Pete McGeshick, Jr., Sokaogon Mole Lake, visits a potential tribal sugarbush on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. (Photo by Steve White)

Gathering regulations

Tribal members should review the regulations adopted by their tribe before gathering on national forest lands. In most cases, tribal gathering permits are required.

In addition, a tribal sugarbush management plan must be developed before gathering maple sap on national forest lands. GLIFWC staff can help facilitate and simplify the development of these management plans.

For questions, please contact Karen Danielsen at GLIFWC offices, (715) 682-6619 ext. 125.

Maniwiigwaase—Gather birch bark

Ozaawagosh, a Lac du Flambeau tribal member, has been gathering wiigwaas (birch bark) since the time he could walk. From his father, he learned much about wiigwaas gathering and use.

He continues adding to this knowledge by searching for the ojibemowin (Ojibwe language) associated with wiigwaas.

He recognizes the importance of sharing his knowledge with tribal youth and other interested individuals. However, he quickly asserts that his knowledge represents only a piece of the whole.

Peeling bark off a birch tree. (Photo by Jim St. Arnold)

The principles that guide Ozaawagosh while gathering and using wiigwaas include his respect for the forest trees, his use of proper harvesting techniques, his dedication to using (not wasting) all the harvested wiigwaas, and the safety of himself and others while gathering.

Before gathering wiigwaas, he takes time for na naa gada wenda mowin (consideration). He asks himself:

- Why do I need to gather wiigwaas?
- For what will I use this gathered wiigwaas?
- What type of wiigwaas is best suited for my task?
- How much wiigwaas do I need?
- Where is the wiigwaas located?

Wiigwaas should not be gathered unless a need exists. Defining the intended use will determine the type and amount of wiigwaas to be gathered.

For example, a jiiman (canoe) usually needs large pieces of thick wiigwaas, while a makak (basket) often requires relatively thin and smooth wiigwaas. The weight of a nooshkaachinaagan (winnowing tray) must be just right—not too light or too heavy.

Ni nandawaabamaag wiigwaasi-mitigoog gaye wiigwaas (I search around for birch trees and birch bark). Ozaawagosh carefully examines a grove of wiigwaasi-mitagoog (birch trees) before selecting the trees from which he will harvest wiigwaas.

He walks around each tree noting its height and circumference, its vertical straightness, the presence of branches and leaves, the coverage of moss or lichens, evidence of damage (e.g., abrasions and fungus), and distance from neighboring trees. He also studies the wiigwaas for texture, color, and the extent of characteristic black marks (technically called lenticels, but often referred to as eyes or thunderbirds).

From this initial observation, he identifies potentially suitable trees. For these trees he makes a small cut to the wiigwaas to measure its thickness. If he finds the appropriate thickness, he removes a small test strip.

He bends the test strip horizontally and vertically to determine flexibility and tendency for layering (the separation of different layers). He also identifies

(See Maniwiigwaase, page 8)

Iskigamizigan—Sugar camp

When biboon (winter) begins its retreat, Joe Rose, a Bad River tribal elder, pays close attention to the weather. He waits for sunny days with snow melt and freezing nights. These conditions signal the movement of ziinzibaakwadwaaboo (maple sap) and the time to work the iskigamizigan (sugar camp).

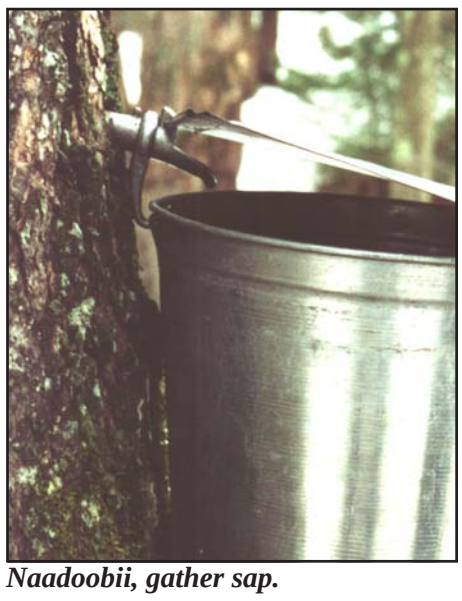
Joe's iskigamizigan, adjacent to the Bad River, has been in his family for many years. He learned from his father and grandfather the process of gathering and processing ziinzibaakwadwaaboo. Some of the equipment he uses today is more than 100 years old.

During onaabani-giizis (March), Joe makes his initial visit to his iskigamizigan. He walks the half mile from the road to the river bottom, pulling a toboggan carrying all his equipment.

Soon he reaches his camp in the rich hardwood forest filled with ininaatigoog (sugar maples), zhiishiigimiiwanzhiig (red maples), wigobatig (basswood trees), and giizhikag (cedar trees).

He surveys his camp for needed repairs. He checks his lean-to: the maple sapling poles that provide the frame work, the thick plastic tarp used as a protective cover, and the sturdy plywood flooring. Occasionally, he finds damage caused by heavy snows or hungry, gnawing porcupines.

For the next two or three days, he shovels snow to clear his camp, exposing the elm bark covering he had previously placed over the soil. This covering keeps the area from becoming too muddy.



Naadoobii, gather sap.

He examines the two different sized hearths used for boiling ziinzibaakwadwaaboo and makes any necessary repairs. Then, he spends the next week laboriously cutting wood. He needs at least one face cord, if not more, to provide the necessary fuel to boil the season's harvest of ziinzibaakwadwaaboo.

Finally, he chooses the trees from which to gather. He usually selects large ininaatigoog that measure much as two feet in diameter. Occasionally, he selects zhiishiigimiiwanzhiig, but the ziinzibaakwadwaaboo from these trees must be boiled longer because of its lower sugar content.

Before gathering ziinzibaakwadwaaboo, he conducts a pipe ceremony and gives an offering of tobacco to demonstrate his appreciation and respect. Any family or friends that might be helping him also participate in this ceremony.

To begin gathering, he inserts negwaakwaanan (taps or spiles) into the maple trees. His father used negwaakwaanan made out of apaakwaanaatig (sumac), then copper. Now, Joe uses commercially produced negwaakwaanan.

Below the negwaakwaanan, he nails into the trees one-gallon metal cans, which had been previously sterilized with a mixture of soapy water and bleach. Traditionally, tribal members used negwaakwaanan (birch bark buckets).

As long as the sun shines, the trees provide an abundance of ziinzibaakwadwaaboo and the gallon cans fill within one to several days. Joe uses his toboggan to gather up the full cans.

He carefully pours the ziinzibaakwadwaaboo into a large holding tank lined with clean plastic. When the holding tank contains more than 300 gallons, he gradually siphons the contents into a large pan placed on the largest hearth ready to be boiled.

He boils the ziinzibaakwadwaaboo at night. The first boiling takes approximately twelve hours which he starts at dusk. He awakens every two hours to keep the fire burning hot.

He uses a paddle with a screen to skim off mineral deposits that float to the top. After he completes the first boiling, he siphons the reduced and thickened ziinzibaakwadwaaboo into a smaller pan on the smaller hearth for a two hour "finishing" boil.

The initial 300 gallons of ziinzibaakwadwaaboo results in 7 to 8 gallons of zhiiwaagamizigan (syrup). He pours the zhiiwaagamizigan into one-gallon glass jugs that have been sterilized and warmed over the fire to evaporate any residual water and to prevent cracking.

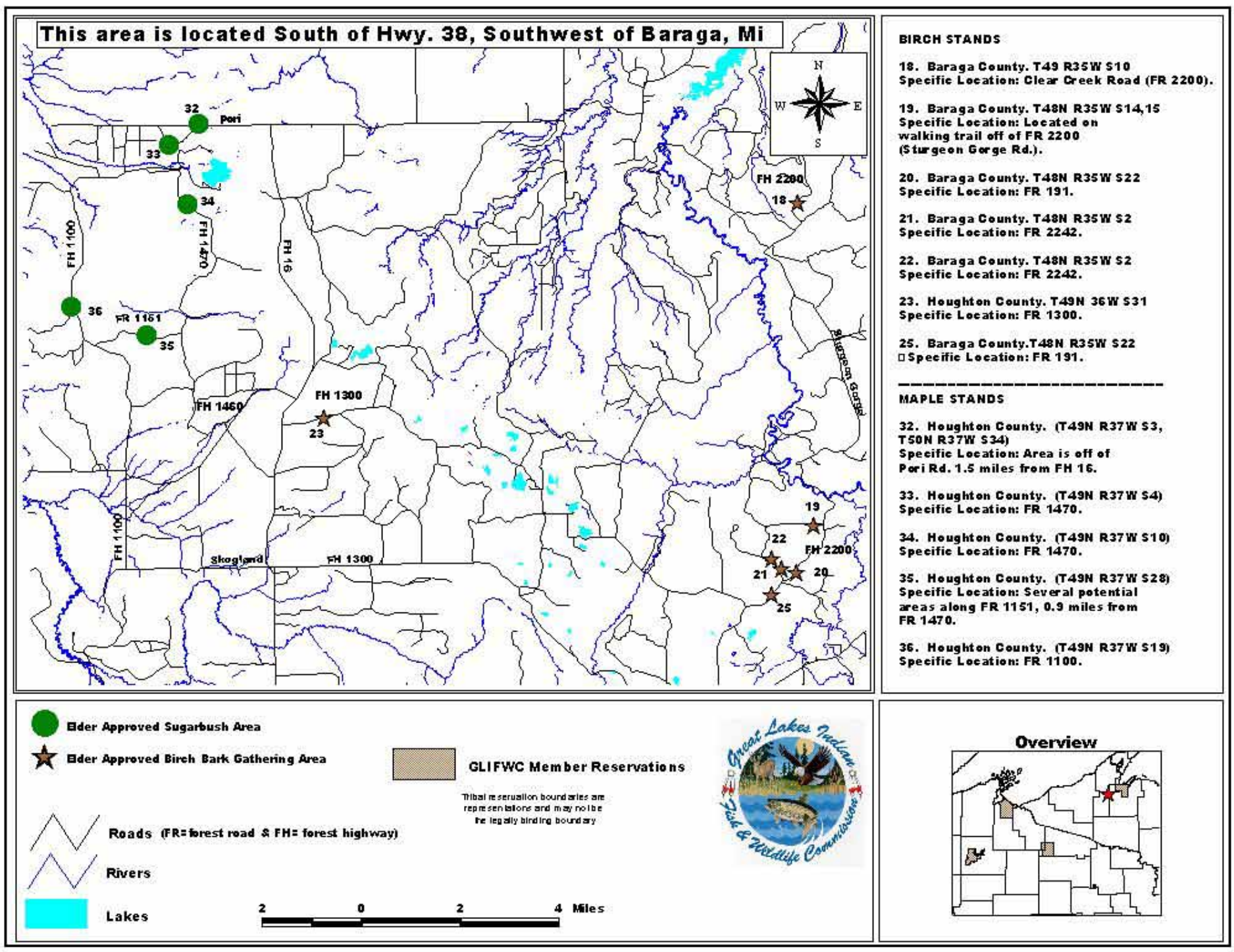
Years ago, his family would continue the boiling process turning the zhiiwaagamizigan into ziinzibaakwad (sugar). As the zhiiwaagamizigan was heated and thickened, a small amount of deer tallow was sometimes incorporated to keep the resulting ziinzibaakwad soft.

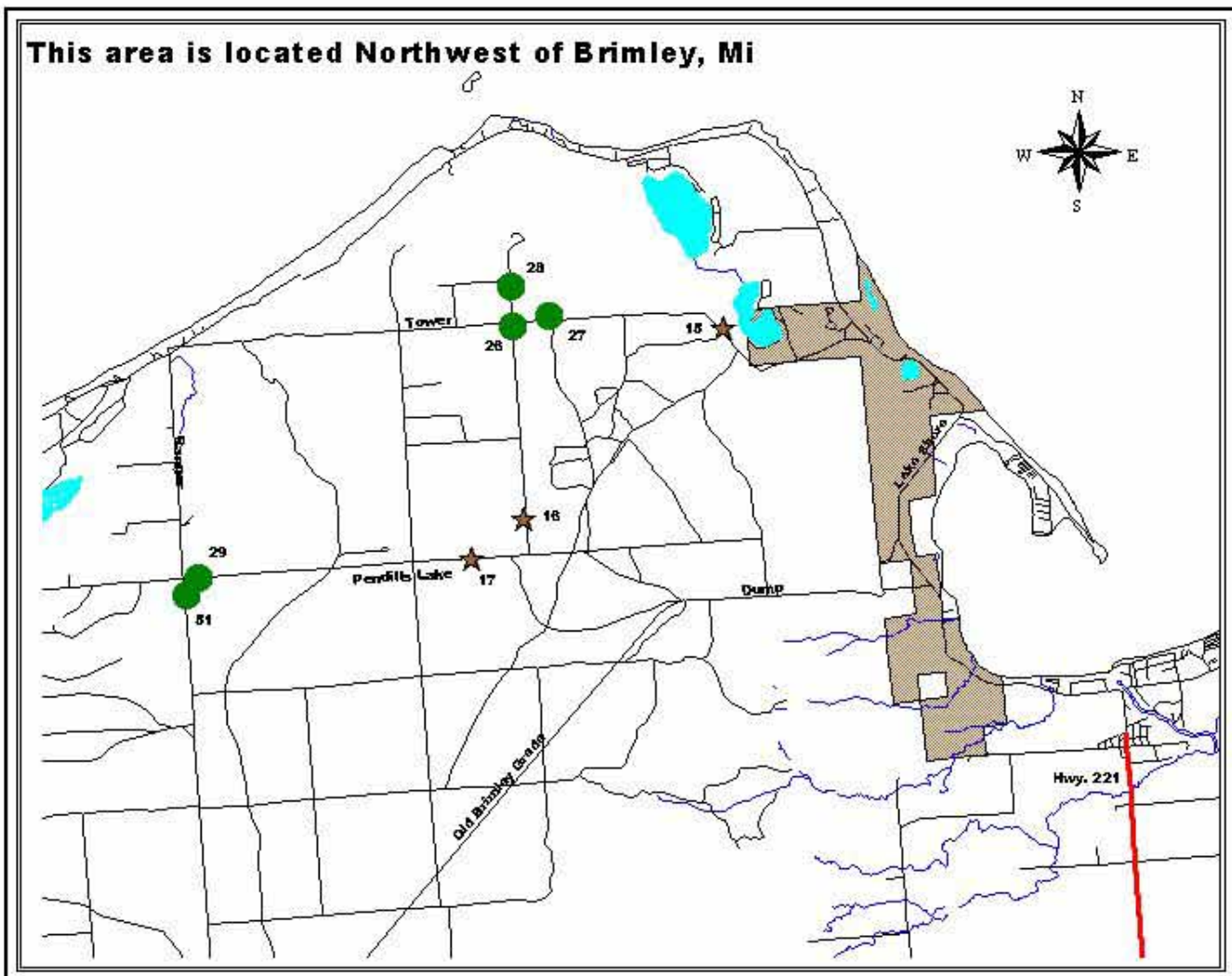
The thickened zhiiwaagamizigan was transferred to a granulating trough where it was stirred with a hardwood spoon or rubbed by hand. The finished ziinzibaakwad was poured into ziizibaakwado-makakoon (birch bark baskets for maple sugar).

Some tribal members still make ziinzibaakwad. Joe prefers making zhiiwaagamizigan, which he shares with family and friends.

After the harvest and processing of ziinzibaakwadwaaboo, Joe hosts a First Fruits Feast. For this ceremony, he offers a portion of the "first fruit" to the manidoo (spirits). A First Fruits Feast occurs for all harvests throughout the year.

Gathering and processing ziinzibaakwadwaaboo is very labor intensive, but Joe really enjoys working his iskigamizigan. It allows him serenity when he works alone and good companionship when family and friends offer to help.





BIRCH STANDS

15. Chippewa County. T47N R3W S23
Specific Location: Tower Rd.

16. Chippewa County. T47N R3W S27,28

17. Chippewa County. T47N R3W S28,33
Specific Location: Area is along Pendills Lake Rd.

MAPLE STANDS

26. Chippewa County. (T47N R3W S22)
Specific Location: At the junction of two forest roads. Scattered large trees along Tower Rd.

27. Chippewa County. (T47N R3W S15,22)
Specific Location: 0.3 miles east of forest road junction.

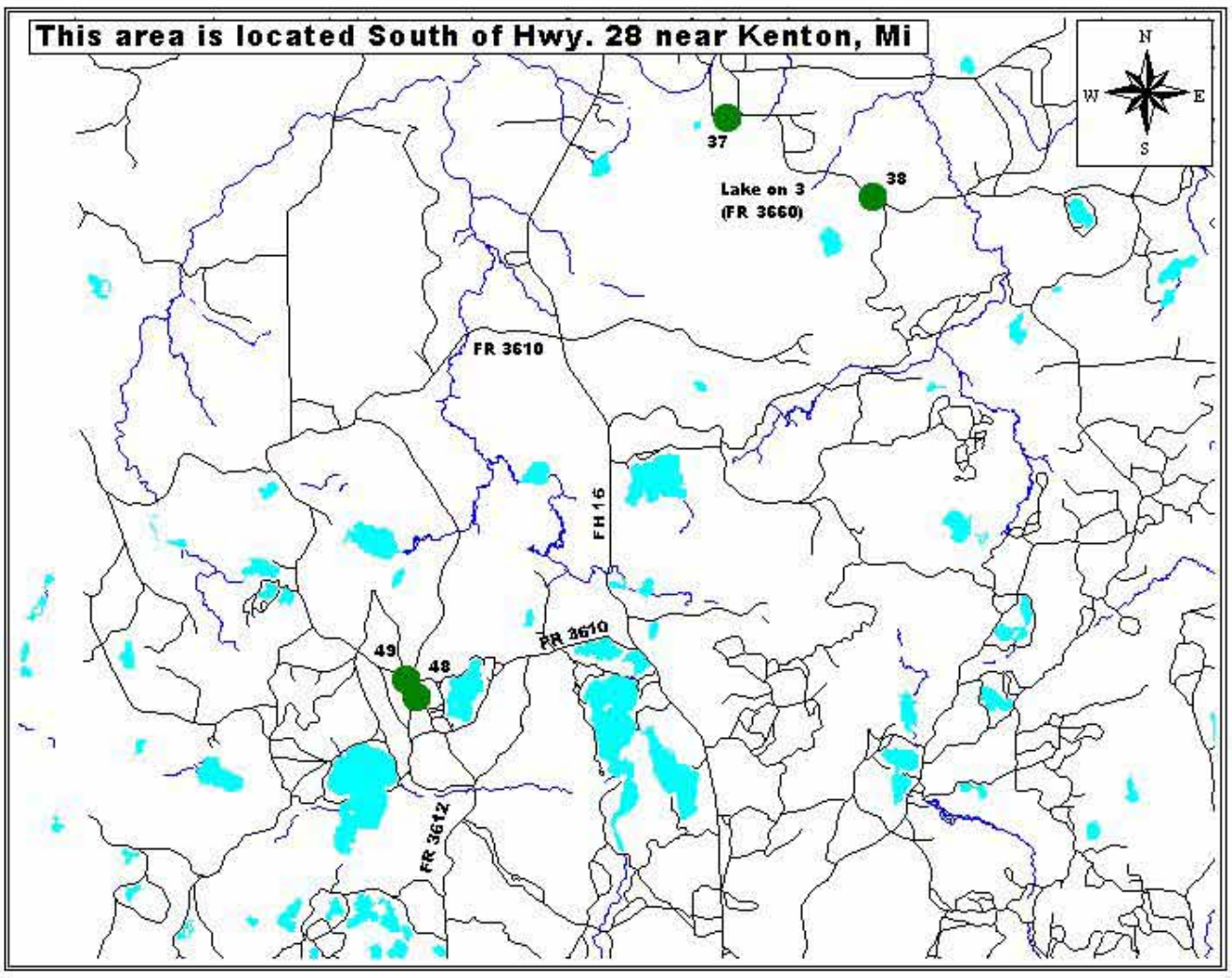
28. Chippewa County. (T47N R3W S15,16)
Specific Location: 0.4 - 0.5 miles north down forest road.

29. Chippewa County. (T47N R3W S31)
Specific Location: 0.1 - 0.2 miles from Ranger Rd. on Pendills Lake Rd.

51. Chippewa County. (T47N R3W S31)
Specific Location: Area is located approximately 0.1 - 0.2 miles down Ranger road from the intersection of Pendills Lake Rd.

Elder Approved Sugarbush Area
Elder Approved Birch Bark Gathering Area
Highways
Roads
Rivers
Lakes
Bay Mills Reservation
Tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundary
1 0 1 2 3 Miles

Overview



MAPLE STANDS

37. Houghton County. (T47N R36W S31,30)
Specific Location: Area is located on FR 3660 approximately 1.8 miles from FH 16.

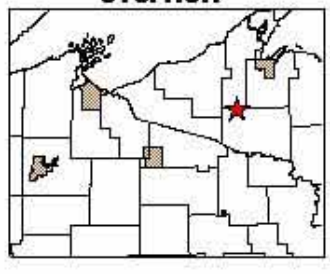
38. Houghton County. (T47N R36W S32)
Specific Location: Area is located on FR 3660 approximately 3.0 miles from FH 16.

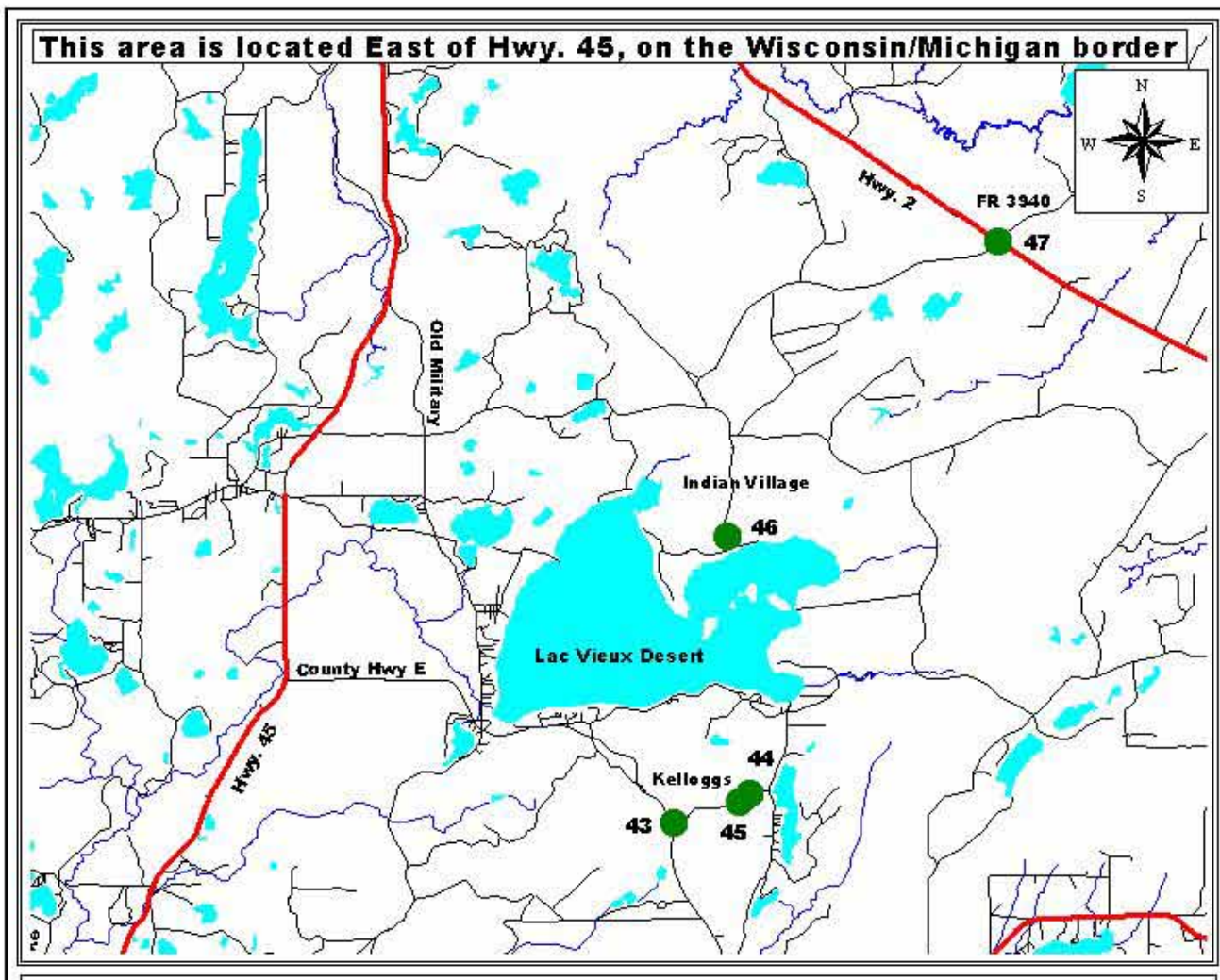
48. Iron County. (T46N R37W S27)
Specific Location: The area is located approximately 2.6 miles down FR 3610 from FH 16 on the left side of the road. The area has an old forest road running through the middle of the property.

49. Iron County. (T46N R37W S27)
Specific Location: The area is ocated approximately 2.9 miles down FR 3610 from FH 16 on the left side of the road. The area has an old forest road running hrough the middle of the property with the entrance being located here.

Elder Approved Sugarbush Area
Elder Approved Birch Bark Gathering Area
Roads (FR= forest road & FH= forest highway)
Rivers
Lakes
GLIFWC Member Reservations
Tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundary
1 0 1 2 3 Miles

Overview





MAPLE STANDS

43. Vilas County. (T42N R11E S22)
Specific Location: Area is approximately ½ way down a snowmobile trail which is accessed on the north side of Kellogg Rd. from Cnty. E.

44. Vilas County. (T42N R11E S23)
Specific Location: Area is located on FT 2825 around the bend in the trail to the right upslope. The FT is located on Kellogg Rd. (FR 2564) and is gated.

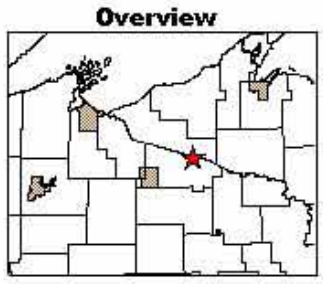
45. Vilas County. (T42N R11E S23)
Specific Location: Area is located on Kellogg Rd. (FR 2564) approximately 0.6 miles from Sugar Maple Rd. The area is identified by a large grassy open parking space. The site is less than 30 yards from the parking area at the base of rolling topography.

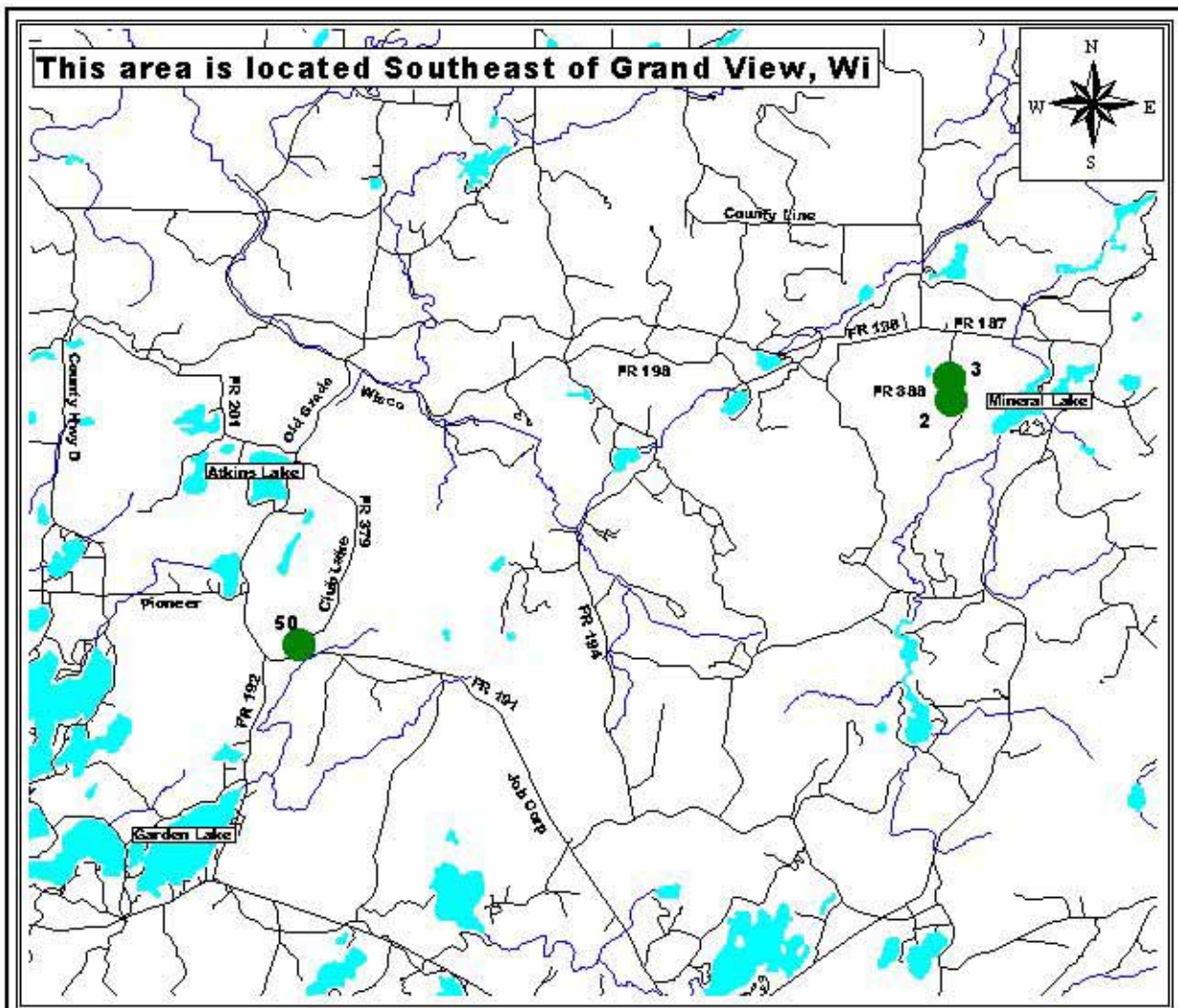
46. Gogebic County. (T43N R38W S5)
Specific Location: The area is located on the west side of Indian Village Rd. close to where the road turns to the left near the old Indian village.

47. Gogebic County. (T44N R38W S14)
Specific Location: Located on FR 3940 north of Hwy. 2, less than 0.1 miles from the highway. Area includes both sides of the road.

Elder Approved Sugarbush Area
Elder Approved Birch Bark Gathering Area
Highways
Roads (FR=forest road & FH= forest highway)
Rivers
Lakes
GLIFWC Member Reservations
Tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundary
1 0 1 2 3 Miles

Overview





MAPLE STANDS

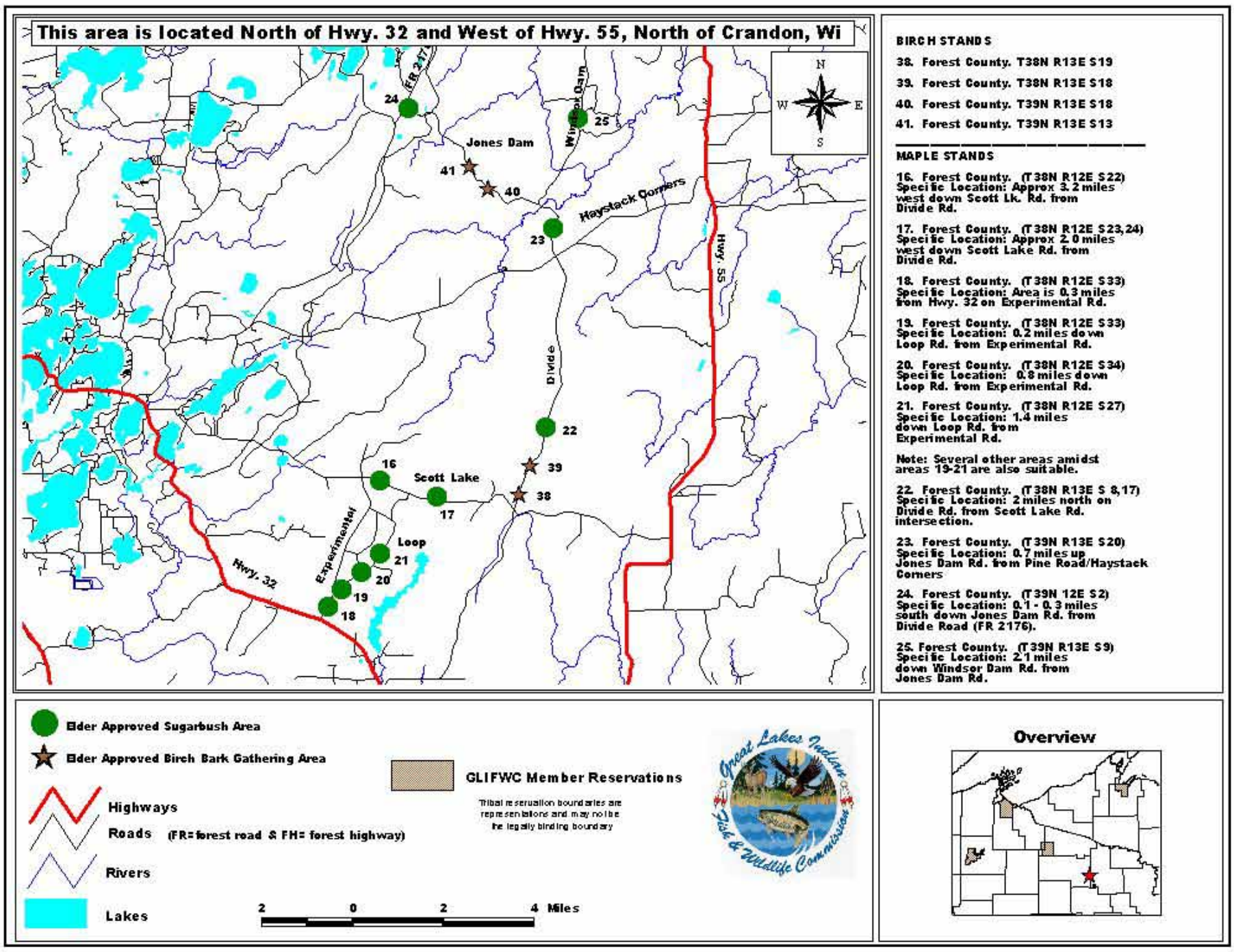
2. Ashland County. (T44N R4W S15)
Specific Location: Area surveyed was approximately 1 mile down FR 388 (which is off of Mineral Lake road, across from "Camp No-Deer" log cabin). Access goes from two track road to ATV access only after 0.75 mile from Mineral Lake

3. Ashland County. (T44N R3W S10)
Specific Location: Area surveyed on FR 388 on west side of road about 0.6 miles from Mineral Lake road. This area was located next to a short trail that ended at an old cabin.

50. Bayfield County. (T44N R5W S32)
Specific Location: Area is located approximately 0.1 - 0.2 miles north on FR 379 from FR191. The area on the east side of the road is relatively flat, with pit and mound opography.

Elder Approved Sugarbush Area
Elder Approved Birch Bark Gathering Area
Roads (FR=forest road & FH= forest highway)
Rivers
Lakes
GLIFWC Member Reservations
Tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundary
1 0 1 2 3 Miles

Overview



BIRCH STANDS

38. Forest County. T38N R13E S19

39. Forest County. T38N R13E S18

40. Forest County. T39N R13E S18

41. Forest County. T39N R13E S13

MAPLE STANDS

16. Forest County. (T38N R12E S22) Specific Location: Approx 3.2 miles west down Scott Lk. Rd. from Divide Rd.

17. Forest County. (T38N R12E S23,24) Specific Location: Approx 2.0 miles west down Scott Lake Rd. from Divide Rd.

18. Forest County. (T38N R12E S33) Specific Location: Area is 0.3 miles from Hwy. 32 on Experimental Rd.

19. Forest County. (T38N R12E S33) Specific Location: 0.2 miles down Loop Rd. from Experimental Rd.

20. Forest County. (T38N R12E S34) Specific Location: 0.8 miles down Loop Rd. from Experimental Rd.

21. Forest County. (T38N R12E S27) Specific Location: 1.4 miles down Loop Rd. from Experimental Rd.

Note: Several other areas amidst areas 19-21 are also suitable.

22. Forest County. (T38N R13E S 8,17) Specific Location: 2 miles north on Divide Rd. from Scott Lake Rd. intersection.

23. Forest County. (T39N R13E S20) Specific Location: 0.7 miles up Jones Dam Rd. from Pine Road/Haystack Corners

24. Forest County. (T39N 12E S2) Specific Location: 0.1 - 0.3 miles south down Jones Dam Rd. from Divide Road (FR 2176).

25. Forest County. (T39N R13E S9) Specific Location: 2.1 miles down Windsor Dam Rd. from Jones Dam Rd.

BIRCH STANDS

5. Sawyer County. T40 R5W S2 Specific Location: Birch area along FR 172 toward Black Lake Campground.

6. Ashland/Sawyer Co. T41N R4W S30 Specific Location: Located on FR 173.

44. Sawyer County. T42N R5W S33

MAPLE STANDS

11. Sawyer County. (T40N R4W S5) Specific Location: Area is 1.6 miles from Cty. GG on FR 172.

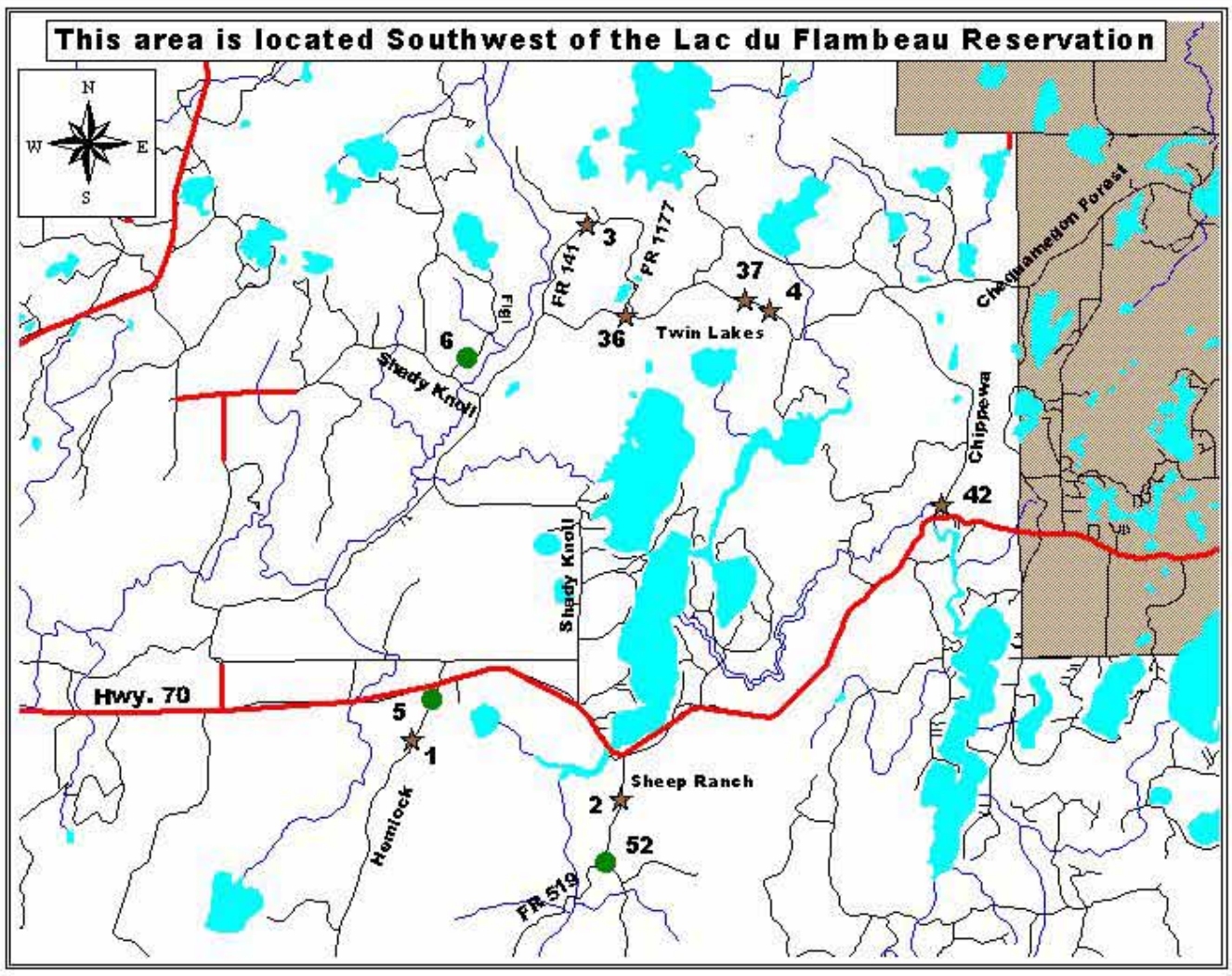
12. Sawyer County. (T40N R4W S5) Specific Location: Area is 2.4 miles from Cty. GG on FR 172.

13. Ashland/Sawyer Co. (T41N R4W S18) Specific Location: Have to cross under ELF line to get to area. Located on FR 746 off of FR 173.

14. Ashland County. (T41N R5W S13) Specific Location: Numerous areas all along FR 173, a fire pit area, north of FR 746 area gets good (mile 2-3).

58. Sawyer County. (T41N R6W S17) Specific Location: Area is located approximately 1.1 - 1.2 miles down FR 302, from FR 320.

59. Sawyer County. (T41N R6W S9) Specific Location: Area is located approximately 2.4 miles down FR 320, from Hwy. 77.



BIRCH STANDS

1. Price County. T39N R3E S9
Specific Location: Birch stand on Hemlock Rd. starting approximately 0.2 miles south of Hwy. 70.

2. Price County. T39N R3E S14
Specific Location: Birch stand 0.5 miles down Sheep Ranch Rd.

3. Price County. T30N R3E S11
Specific Location: Birch stand on Miles Lake Rd. (FR 141

4. Price County. T40 R4E S18
Specific Location: Birch stand on Twin Lakes Rd, 0.4 from Amik.

36. Price County. T40N R3E S14

37. Price County. T40N R3E S12

42. Vilas County.T40N R4E S28
Specific Location: Area is located approximately 0.2 miles up Chippewa Rd. from Hwy. 70 and extends the length of the road in scattered pockets.

MAPLE STANDS

5. Price County. (T39N R3E S4)
Specific Location: Area surveyed is 0.1 miles south on Hemlock Rd. off of Hwy 70 west of Pike Lake.

6. Price County. (T40N R3E S16)
Specific Location: Area is 0.2 miles down Figi Rd., which is off of Shady Knoll Rd.

52. Price County. (T39N R3E S14)
Specific Location: Area is located at the intersection of FR 132 (Sheep Ranch Rd.) and FR 519.

Elder Approved Sugarbush Area

Elder Approved Birch Bark Gathering Area

Highways

Roads (FR= forest road & FH= forest highway)

Rivers

Lakes

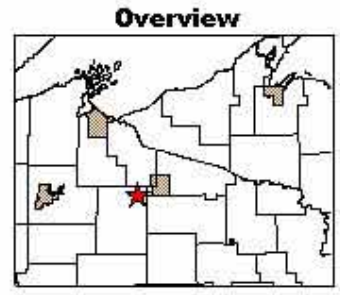
GLIFWC Member Reservations

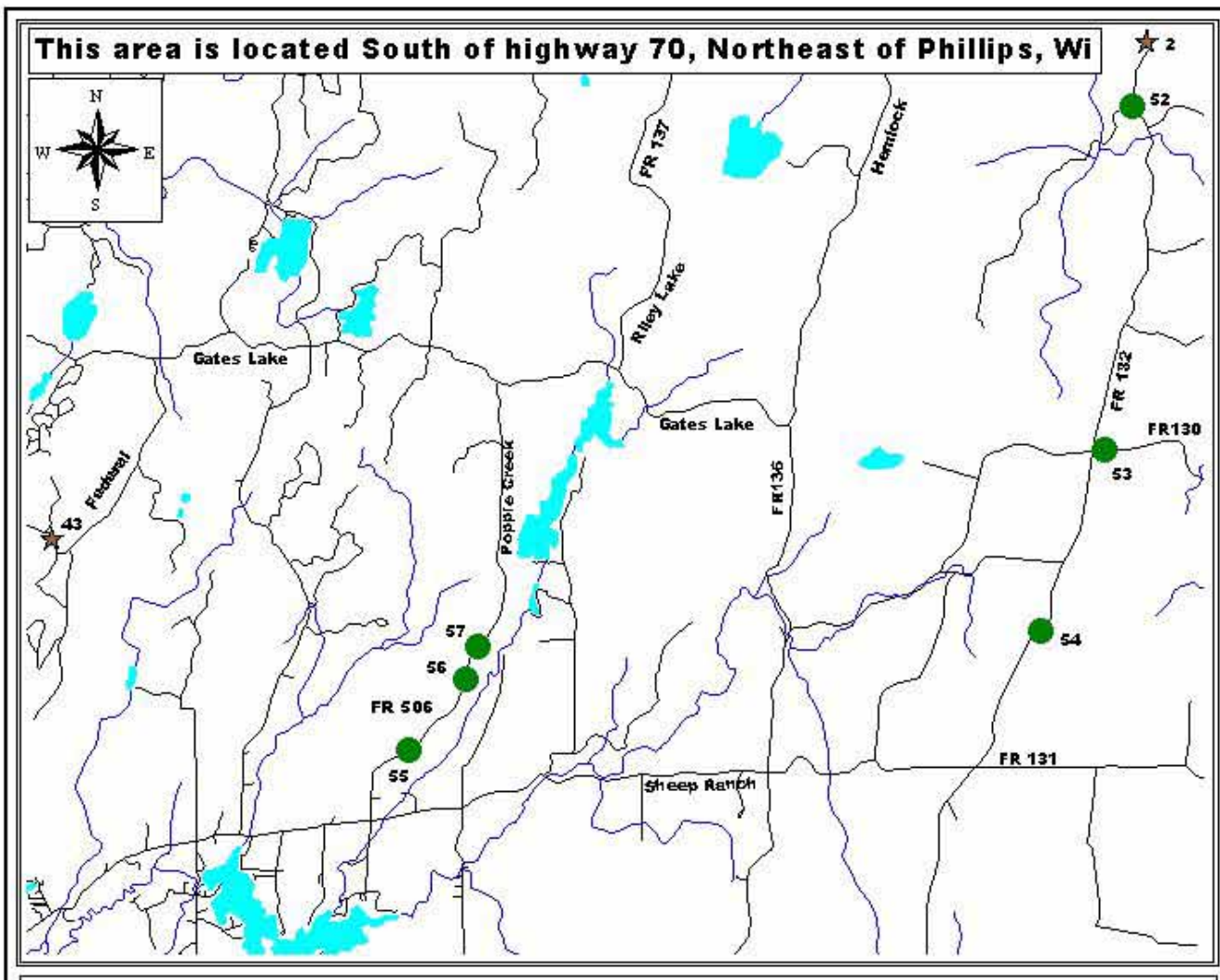
Tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundary

1 0 1 2 3 Miles

Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission

Overview





BIRCH STANDS

2. Price County. T39N R3E S14
Specific Location: Birch stand 0.5 miles down Sheep Ranch Rd. from Hwy 70.

43. Price County. T38N R1E S11
Specific Location: This area is located down Federal Rd. (FR 508) roughly 2.0 miles from Gates Lake Rd. (FR 136).

MAPLE STANDS

53. Price County. (T38N R3E S3)
Specific Location: Area is located about 0.1 miles down FR 130 from FR 132. Additional areas from FR130 south on FR 132.

54. Price County. (T38N R3E S15)
Specific Location: Area is located about 1.6 miles north of FR131 on FR132.

55. Price County. (T38N R2E S21)
Specific Location: Area is located about 1.0 mile from Cty. Hwy. H on Popple Creek Rd. (FR506).

56. Price County. (T38N R2E S15)
Specific Location: Area is located about 2.0 miles from Cty. Hwy. H on Popple Creek Rd. (FR506).

57. Price County. (T38N R2E S15)
Specific Location: Area is located about 3.0 miles from Gates Lake Rd. (FR136) on Popple Creek Road (FR506).

Elder Approved Sugarbush Area

Elder Approved Birch Bark Gathering Area

Roads (FR= forest road & FH= forest highway)

Rivers

Lakes

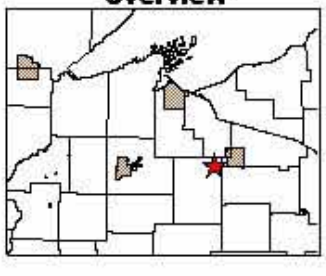
GLIFWC Member Reservations

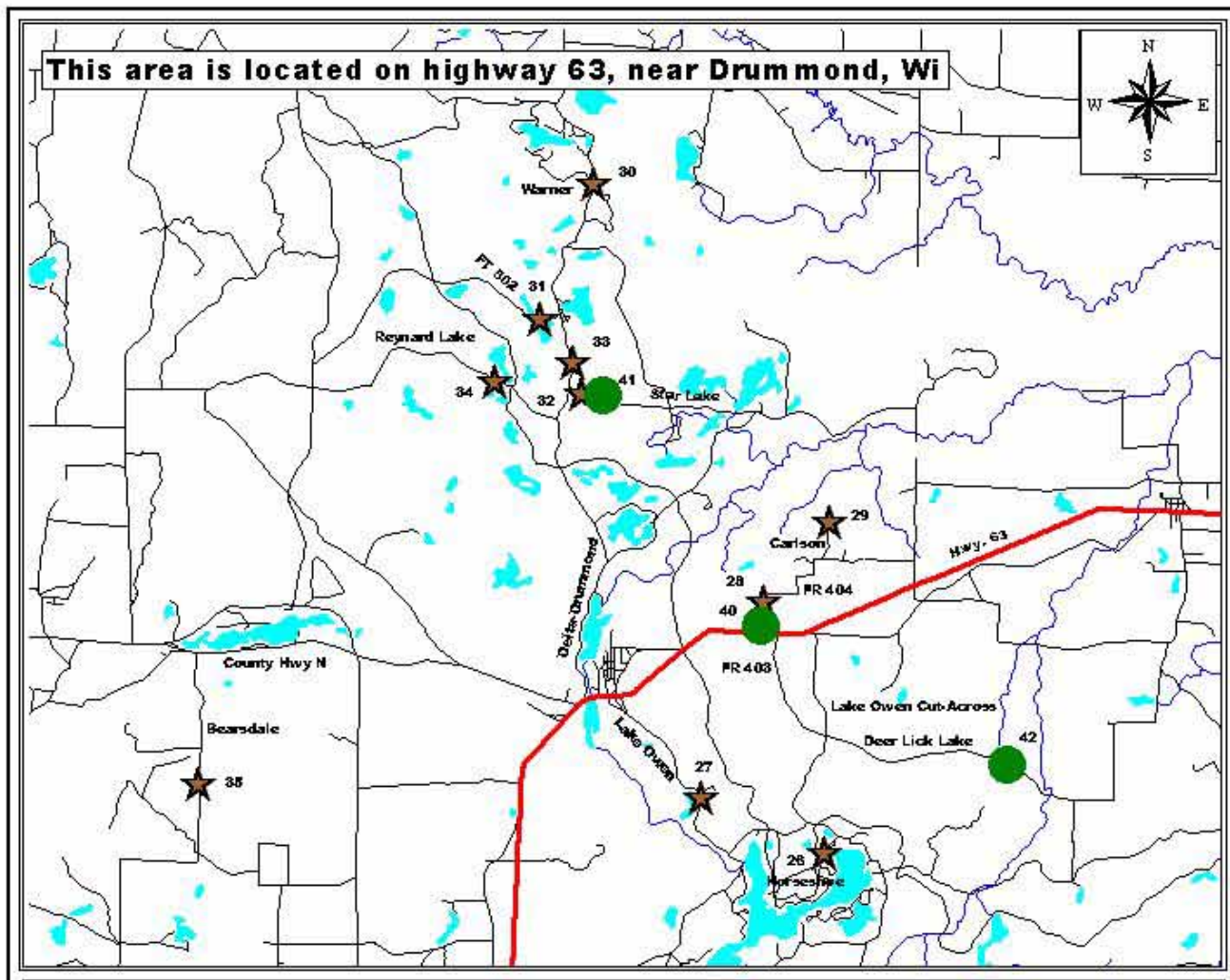
Tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundary

0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 Miles

Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission

Overview





BIRCH STANDS

26. Bayfield County. T44N R7W S11
Specific Location: A stand 0.2 miles down East Horseshoe Rd. from Lake Owen Rd. (FR 213).

27. Bayfield County. T44N R7W S10
Specific Location: Birch is located on hillside adjacent to Lake Owen Rd.

28. Bayfield County. T45N R7W S23, 24, 25, 26, 27
Specific Location: All along FR 404 there are scattered birch.

29. Bayfield County. T45N R7W S23
Specific Location: Area is near the edge of an old field at the end of FR 404A (Carlson Rd.), approximately 0.5-0.6 miles from FR 404.

30. Bayfield County. T46N R7W S32
Specific Location: Area is located on Warner Rd. at the junction with Delta-Drummond Rd.

31. Bayfield County. T45N R7W S8, 9, 16, 17
Specific Location: Area is located on FT 502 near access to Clay Lake.

32. Bayfield County. T45N R7W S17
Specific Location: Area is located all along Star Lake Rd.

33. Bayfield County. T45N R7W S8
Specific Location: Area is located all along Delta-Drummond Rd.

34. Bayfield County. T45 R7W S7, 12
Specific Location: Area is located on Reynard Lake Rd. after Reynard Lake.

35. Bayfield County. T44 R8W S9
Specific Location: Area is located approximately 1.7 miles from Cty. N on Bearsdale.

MAPLE STANDS

40. Bayfield County. (T45N R7W S27)
Specific Location: Maple area located 0.1 miles down FR 404, which is off of Hwy. 63. Area includes both sides of road.

41. Bayfield County (T45N R7W S16,17)
Specific Location: Area is located 0.4 - 0.5 miles from the Delta-Drummond Rd. on Star Lake Rd.

42. Bayfield County. (T44N R6W S5)
Specific Location: Area is located between 2.5 and 2.6 miles from Cut Across Rd. on Deer Lick Lake Rd.

Elder Approved Sugarbush Area

Elder Approved Birch Bark Gathering Area

Highways

Roads (FR= forest road & FH= forest highway)

Rivers

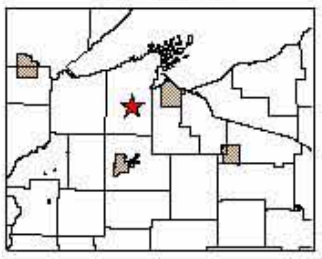
Lakes

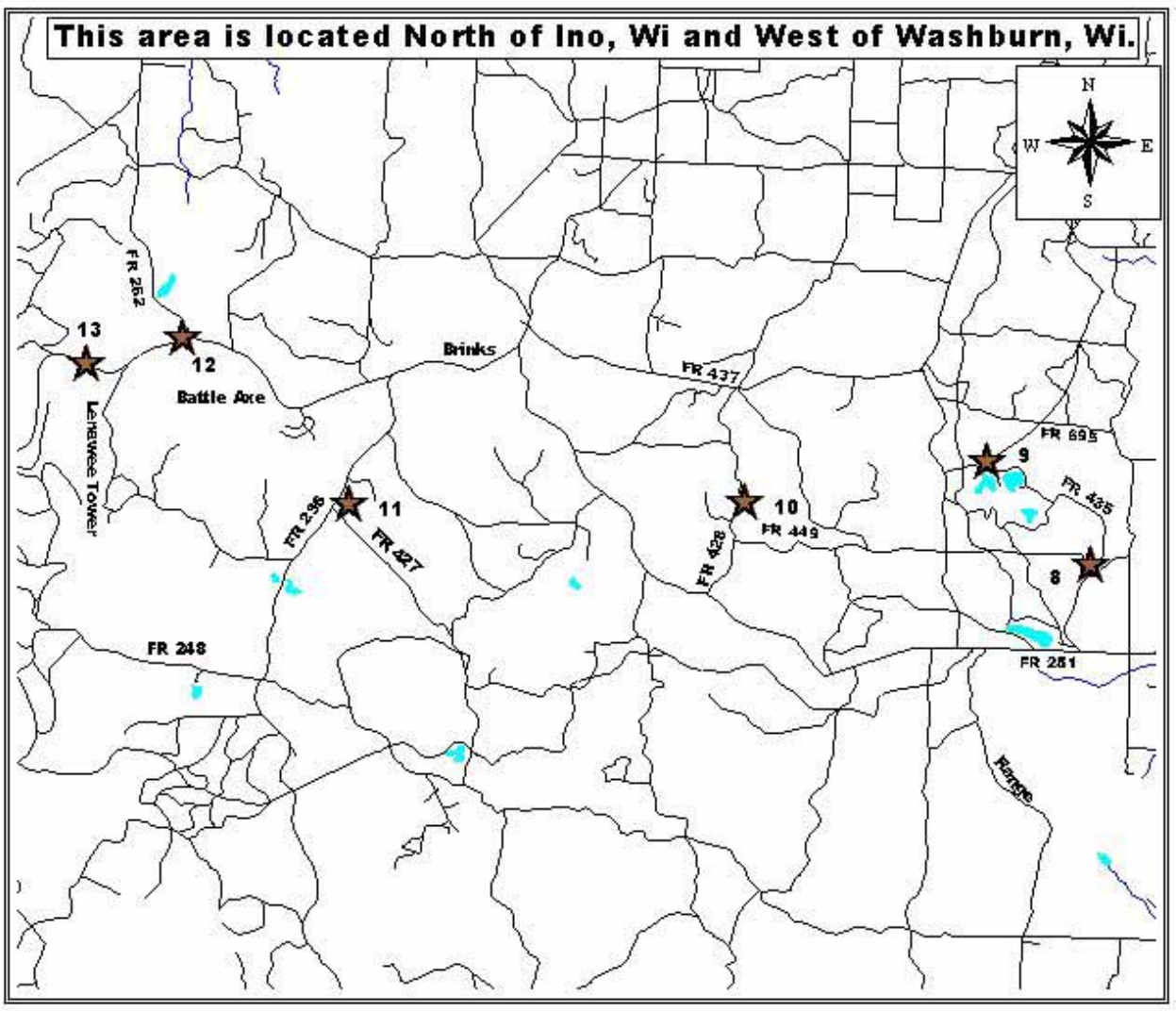
GLIFWC Member Reservations

Tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundary

0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 Miles

Overview





BIRCH STANDS

8. Bayfield County. T48 R5W S6
Specific Location: Area is located approximately 1 mile north of Wanebo Rd. (FR 251) on FR 435.

9. Bayfield County. T49 R6W S36
Specific Location: Area is located about 3.1 miles from Wanebo Rd. (FR 251) on FR 435.

10. Bayfield County. T49N R6W S33, 34
Specific Location: Area is located about 0.4 miles from intersection of FR 449 on FR 428.

11. Bayfield County. T49N R7W S35
Specific Location: Horseshoe Lake Rd. (FR 427) and Ino Rd. (FR 236) intersection.

12. Bayfield County. T49N R7W S22, 21
Specific Location: Area is about 2.3 miles from Ino Rd. on Battle Axe Rd.

13. Bayfield County. T49N R7W S28
Specific Location: Area is located about 0.3 miles west of Lenawee Tower Rd. Many trees on FR 246.

Elder Approved Sugarbush Area

Elder Approved Birch Bark Gathering Area

Roads (FR= forest road & FH= forest highway)

Rivers

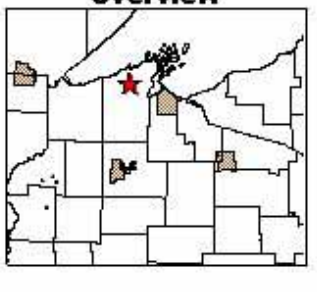
Lakes

GLIFWC Member Reservations

Tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundary

1 0 1 2 Miles

Overview



Ojibwemowin

Birch bark gathering & use

ode'imini-giizis (*na*)—June
mitigwaakiing (*na*)—forest
wiigwaasi-mitig (*na*)—birch tree; **wiigwaasi-mitigoog** (*pl*)
wiigwaasi-anibiish (*ni*)—birch leaf; **wiigwaasi-anibiishan** (*pl*); *also* **wiigwaasi-anibiishibag** (*ni*); **wiigwaasi-anibiishibagoon** (*pl*)
wiigwaas (*ni*)—birch bark; **wiigwaasan** (*pl*)
wanagek (*na*)—bark of a tree; **wanagekwag** (*pl*)
wiigob (*na*)—basswood tree; **wiigobiig** (*pl*); *also* **wiigobaatig** (*na)*; **wiigobaatigoog** (*pl*); *also* **wiigobimizh** (*na*); **wiigobimizhiig** (*pl*)
wiigob (*ni*)—basswood inner bark; **wiigobiin** (*pl*)
wiigwaasike (*vai*)—he removes bark from a birch tree
maniwiigwaase (*vai*)—he gathers birch bark
mangi shkiinzhigwe (*vai*)—he has big eyes
agaasa shkiinzhigwe (*vai*)—he has small eyes
bibagaa (*vii*)—it is thin; *also* **bibagaamagad**
gipagaa (*vii*)—it is thick; *also* **gipagaamagad**
onizhishin-wiigwaas (*vii*)—it is good bark
maanendaagwad (*vii*)—it is considered bad bark
ozaam baatemagad-wiigwaas (*ni*)—very dry birch bark
gidiskise (*vii*)—it comes apart; *also* **gidiskisemagad**
wiigwaasi-jiimaan (*ni*)—birch bark canoe; **wiigwaasi-jiimaanan** (*pl*)
biskitenaagan (*ni*)—sap basket; **bisketenaaganan** (*pl*)
wiigwaasi-makak (*ni*)—birch bark basket; **wiigwaasi-makakoon** (*pl*)
wiigwaasi-naagan (*ni*)—birch bark dish; **wiigwaasi-naaganan** (*pl*)
wiigwaasi-gamig (*ni*)—birch bark lodge; **wiigwaasi-gamigoon** (*pl*)
wiigwaasi-bakwaan (*na*)—birch bark roof; **wiigwaasi-bakwaanag** (*pl*)
mookomaan (*ni*)—knife; **mookomaanan** (*pl*)
migoos (*ni*)—awl; **migoosan** (*pl*)
waagikomaan (*ni*)—crooked knife; **waagikomaanan** (*pl*)
ziinaakwa'igan (*ni*)—clothespin; **ziinaakwa'iganan** (*pl*)
akakwajiish-zow (*nid*)—woodchuck tail
aabajitoon (*vti*)—someone uses something
ozhitoon (*vti*)—someone make something
giishkizhw (*vta*)—someone cuts someone
nandawaabandan (*vti*)—someone searches for something
bimiwidoon (*vti*)—someone carries something
gaaskaaska'an (*vti*)—scrapes something using something
bagone'an (*vti*)—make a hole in something using something
biskiiginan (*vti*)—fold something using something
biskibidoon (*vti*)—fold something using hands
giboogwaadan (*vti*)—sew something shut

na = animate noun
ni = inanimate noun
nid = dependent inanimate noun
pl = plural form of noun
vai = animate intransitive verb
vii = inanimate intransitive verb
vta = transitive animate verb
vti = transitive inanimate verb

Miigwech to Ozaawagosh for providing Ojibemowin and English translation

Elders teach youth proper harvesting techniques. (Photo by Jim St. Arnold)

Myra Pitts and Ted Polar, Sokaogon Mole Lake, harvesting birch bark. (Photo by Steve White)

Maniwiigwaase

(continued from page 1)
potential weaknesses where breaks may occur, particularly at the eyes. Sometimes he must visit a number of groves before finding trees that suit his needs.

Before harvesting, he offers tobacco and good words. He emphasizes that, "trees are considered living relatives of the Anishinaabeg, and the bark is considered a gift. Anishinaabeg do the appropriate ceremonies we have been taught when harvesting any of the gifts afforded our nation."

To begin harvesting, he carefully makes an incision to the living part of the bark (the cork cambium layer). Cutting into this layer provides an opening for disease to invade. Cutting too deeply can result in the death of the tree.

After making a longitudinal cut down the tree trunk, he gently pulls off the bark. In late June and early July, wiigwaas comes off easily. During other times of the year, wiigwaas releases with difficulty and should only be attempted by experienced harvesters.

Setting the harvested wiigwaas in the sun for a very short time increases its flexibility and allows Ozaawagosh to roll it up. He stores wiigwaas in a cool place out of the sun. Extended exposure to direct sunlight changes the color of the wiigwaas, which may be undesirable.

His brother, Wayne Valliere, also gathers and uses wiigwaas. They share similar concerns regarding wiigwaas gathering. Occasionally, they find trees that have been cut too deeply and appear to be dead or dying. These trees have been severely damaged by harvesters that have not learned the proper techniques.

At other times, they find a tree suitable for constructing a jiimaan, but having wiigwaas already removed to make a smaller object, such as a makak. This truly disappoints the brothers because there seem to be fewer and fewer trees from which a jiimaan can be made. Once wiigwaas is removed from such a tree for a smaller object, not enough wiigwaas remains for a jiimaan.

Sometimes they find wiigwaas removed from a small tree that could have provided more wiigwaas if the harvester had waited until the tree grew larger. They worry that some wiigwaas harvesters may not be thinking about the future.

From these concerns, the brothers have strong hopes. They hope that all harvesters have a sincere respect for wiigwaasi-mitigoog. They hope that all harvesters take time to ask elders and more experienced harvesters for guidance. They hope that all harvesters gather only what is needed and use all that is gathered.

Supplement credits:

Text:
Karen Danielsen, Forest Ecologist

***Maps*:**
Steve White, Research Associate

Layout:
Lynn Plucinski, ***Mazina'igan*** Staff

Mazina'igan *(Paper) is a quarterly publication of the Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC), which represents eleven Ojibwa tribes in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.*

Subscriptions to the paper are free. To be added to the subscription list, or receive additional copies of this supplement write: ***Mazina'igan****, P.O. Box 9, Odanah, Wisconsin 54861 or e-mail pio@glifwc.org.*