

Email from Steve Garske, Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) Botanist, April 1 2012

Hello people,

Well Nancy and I took a walk around the [Delich property \(view photo location\)](#) yesterday guess it resembles the description in the EA, except parts of it have been hit pretty hard. There are large areas that have been essentially clearcut and are now dominated by patches of aspen shoots and blackberries and raspberries. Much of the land does still have some large, mostly widely-scattered hemlock that now tower above the rest of the "forest". There also are fairly large areas dominated by regenerating sugar maple and white ash, typically 6-12" dbh. Some areas are fairly intact with larger trees, but I didn't see anywhere that hadn't been at least lightly select-cut, removing the larger, more valuable hardwoods. Essentially all the upland areas had been cut within the last 30 years or so, but there was one small, somewhat intact old-growth cedar stand that we saw.

As I predicted in my comments much of the land is infested with introduced invertebrates, most notably European earthworms and slugs (*Arion* spp.). I had no trouble turning over logs and finding earthworms, including the very damaging endogeic species (nonpigmented species that stay deeper in the ground) such as *Aporrectodea rosea*. (BTW, separating e-worms to species may seem bizarre, but anyone can do it. See http://www.nrri.umn.edu/worms/downloads/identification/dichotomous_key.pdf to get started!) In the more heavily cut-over areas such as around site #1 below, the carpet of sedges typical of heavily earthworm-infested forest is already well-developed, and many of the usual forest wildflowers appear to be absent, though it is still early in the season. We did see scattered patches of Carolina spring beauty and trout lily. Trout lily is one of a small minority of native wildflowers that seems to be highly resistant to earthworms.

Seems like the Ottawa has historically tried to trade for relatively flat land that will be good for industrial forestry, and it certainly looks like that's what they're after here.

The attached map shows the location of each photo below. I took GPS coordinates at all the points except #5 below.

- 1) [5804.jpg](#): Much of the Delich property looks like this. The conifers on the right mark the northern boundary of the 40 acre FS parcel that's surrounded by Delich land.
- 2) [5807.jpg](#): There are some nice spots on this parcel, including this stream in a little floodplain valley.
- 3) [5812.jpg](#): Old logging road looking south from 3-way intersection.
- 4) [5826.jpg](#): Big old-growth cedar tree. This is the west edge of a small remnant grove of old-growth cedar and hemlock, though even here scattered hardwoods had been taken out from between the conifers.
- 5) [5828.jpg](#): West edge of cedar/hemlock grove, just east of #4 (location approximate). Another area that has been heavily logged.
- 6) [5830.jpg](#): Wolf track. Lots of fresh tracks and old scat along this road segment.
- 7) [5838.jpg](#): Looking east from logging road intersection. Regenerating trembling aspen clones and remnant conifers. Of the cut areas we saw this is probably in the best shape.

Hope this is useful and doesn't jam up anyone's mailbox too much.

SG