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Open File Report OF98-8

**A New Source
of Carveable
Soapstone in the
Vicinity of
Thompson, Manitoba**

(Part of NTS 630/9)

by P. Theyer
Geological Services



**Manitoba
Energy and Mines
David Newman
Minister**



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Winnipeg, 1998

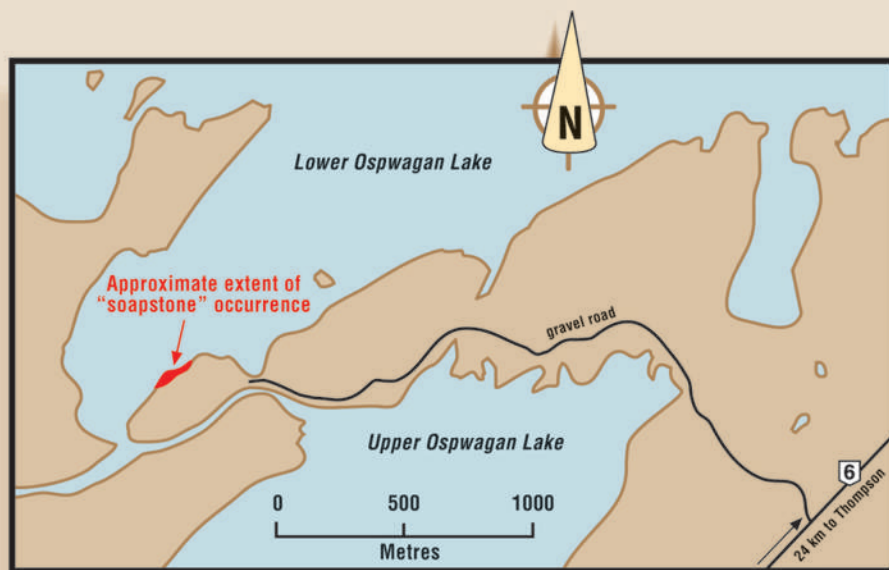


Figure 1
Location of the soapstone occurrence

Abstract

An occurrence of greenish grey “soapstone” has been identified approximately 25 km south of the City of Thompson. The paucity of fractures, absence of sulphides and its accessibility by road make this discovery a potentially valuable source of carveable stone.

Location

The rock occurrence is exposed on the southern shore of Lower Oswagan Lake (NTS 63O/9). It is accessible via a 3 km long, west-trending gravel road that branches off Provincial Highway 6 approximately 25 km south of Thompson (Fig. 1). A central point of the soapstone outcrop exposed on the shore is located at a latitude of $55^{\circ} 33'$ and longitude of $98^{\circ} 04'$ or UTM coordinates 6156800mN, 558500mE. The rock has been washed clean along the shoreline over a distance of ~40 to 50 m. The outcrop is exposed inland for ~4 to 5 m where it is then covered by ~1 to 2 m of glacial clay (Fig. 2a, b). The total extent of the occurrence is unknown, but it is thought to extend at least a distance of 200 m along the shoreline and 50 m inland (Fig.1) and could very likely underlie the entire peninsula.



a

Figure 2a, b
Soapstone exposed at the shore of
Lower Oswagan Lake; note the exposures of
carvable soapstone revealing large horizontal and
vertical unfractured expanses

b



Usage, Properties

Two local stone carving artists, Mssrs. Walter “ Big Red ” Leslie and Louie Powderhorn, tested the suitability of this rock as a raw material for carving. They commented that the rock is highly carveable, takes a beautiful polish and is relatively easy to work with, although its hardness may require the use of power tools. Figure 3 illustrates a finished piece.

Petrography

A preliminary petrographic investigation using reflected light on a polished sample showed the rock consists of a mesh of fresh amphibole minerals, talc and likely chlorite.

Property Status

The source area for this rock is underlain by Inco Limited mineral claim M4580 and possibly part of claim M4584.

Access to the quarry mineral rights has been withdrawn by the Manitoba government however, those interested in developing this deposit should contact:

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*Figure 3
Polar bear carved by Messrs. Leslie and
Powderhorn out of a sample of the soapstone
(object is approximately 9 cm long)*