



ALGONQUIN ECO WATCH GROUP

FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

Protection of Genetic Integrity

The Algonquin Black Bear Study has established that over half the dominant radio-collared male bears that leave Algonquin Park after the breeding season in search of food, fail to return to the Park prior to the opening of the fall hunting season and are shot by hunters. The loss of so many dominant males will negatively affect the social structure of this insular black bear population, and could eventually lead to degradation of the gene pool.



The annual harvesting of moose by native and non-native groups now occurs across more than 40% of Algonquin Park. The government decision to rescind the cessation of the non-native hunt in Clyde, Bruton and Eyre Townships by the year 2010 not only renders any attempt to alter the native hunt discriminatory, but opens the door for negotiating further increases in huntable areas within the Park. The hunting of moose will not only affect predator-prey relationships in a “Natural Environment” park, but will ultimately lead to



alteration of herd genetics and a social structure more closely resembling that in hunted “Wildlife Management Units” across the rest of Ontario.

Summer and winter fishing by non-native and native groups respectively, may lead to over-exploitation of fish populations, some of which may be genetically unique, especially in coldwater, headwater lakes.

These spawning brook trout are extremely vulnerable to fishing pressure, particularly through the ice.

