

# Algonquin Park: Environmental Assessment Policy Implementation in a Multi-Use Park

Meaghan Luis<sup>1</sup>, Dr. John Fitzgibbon<sup>2</sup>, Dr. John Fitzsimons<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Master of Science Rural Planning and Development Candidate, University of Guelph

<sup>2</sup>Department of Environmental Design and Rural Development, Ontario Agricultural College, University of Guelph

<sup>3</sup>Department of Environmental Design and Rural Development, Ontario Agricultural College, University of Guelph

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of GUELPH



## Introduction

- **Algonquin Park is host to many uses:**
  - Specific areas for forestry and logging
  - Popular Tourism destination (canoe routes)
  - Areas of the park are reserves for endangered species
- All of these **uses are managed through an integrated policy system**
- The **primary goal** of park policy is to **protect** and minimize **environmental degradation**
- The **MNR Class Environmental Assessment** creates a planning and approval process for all activities within the park.
- There is a **separate Class EA for forestry and logging** within the park

## Research Questions

- Is the policy effective in balancing environmental protection and managing the various uses of the park?
- Are the EA and policies of the park and of forestry integrated into policy that work well together?
- Do the various EA policies allow for strong responses to the long-term impacts of climate change and invasive species?

## Research Objectives

- Identify gaps in the EA policy
- Create recommendations for policy integration and responses to long-term impacts of climate change.

## Contact

Meaghan Luis  
(289) 242 7540  
luism@uoguelph.ca

## Methods

- Policy and Document Analysis
- Key Informant Interviews
- Policy Scenario Building
- **Participants.** Various professionals from Forestry, Parks Canada, Algonquin Park, MNR and Ontario Nature
- **Recruitment.** Through partner Organizations.



## Discussion

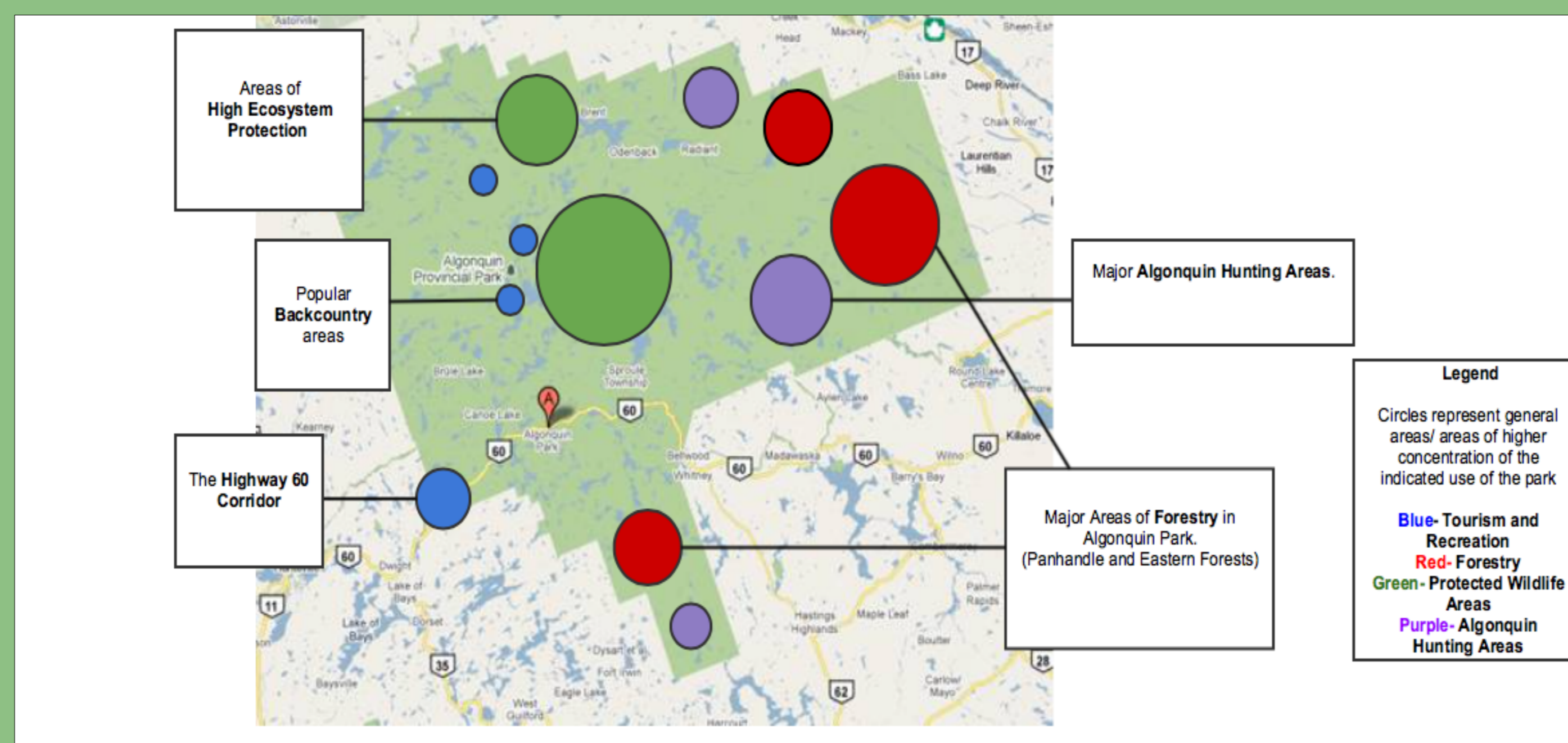
- The Class EA remains the most important document for everyday, implementable environmental protection
- Has practical and long-term implications
- Successful in addressing everyday situations, but not cumulative effects or issues requiring long-term planning
- Policy gaps in long-term vision addressing climate change and invasive species

## Recommendations and Implications

- Longer-term vision to begin to identify an improved response to the effects of climate change and invasive species in the EA system
- More focus on cumulative environmental impacts and a greater focus on long-term planning
- Greater flexibility in response times within the EA depending on staffing and season

## Contributions of this Research

- **Academic.** Limited research working to understand the EA process and its areas for improvement through policy scenario building
- **Policy.** May influence policy in creating greater awareness of gaps in EA policy and process
- **Community.** Research intended for use in the Algonquin Park library



## Results (Preliminary)

### Current Issues in implementing the existing EA Process

#### Current Implementation

- Lack of staff and seasonal pressure preclude both preliminary studies and major project activities
- Need for greater awareness of the EA process by maintenance staff
- Need for faster response in EA related decisions

#### Long-term Vision

- EA's for Forestry and Parks use different criteria
- Process is **primarily reactive** rather than **proactive**
- **Lack of long-term vision** of the EA process as result of **gaps and omissions** in the contributing policy framework.

## References

Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Areas (2015) Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Environmental Assessment Requirements for Forest Management on Crown Lands in Ontario (MNR- 75) (2013) Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

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