

SAN FRANCISCO REACHES OUT FOR TIGERS AND RHINOS

A coalition of influential groups from the Chinese community in the San Francisco Bay area have produced a poster (see photo) to stop illegal trade of rhino and tiger products. This effort is part of a larger pilot outreach project of the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine and World Wildlife Fund to educate and work with the local Asian community on tiger and rhino conservation and trade. This pilot project has been partially funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Save the Tiger Fund. The bilingual poster bears the message "Leave Our Children A Living Planet—Stop Illegal Trading in Tiger Products and Rhino Horns!" The posters were distributed to herbal stores and public areas throughout San

Francisco. Letters accompanying the poster contained information



only 7 populations are considered viable (able to survive over the long term). The situation is marginally better in Quebec with a total of 15 viable populations identified.

The results of the COSEWIC study illustrate the precarious state of wild ginseng in Canada. For example, Nault and White found that 25 percent of the Ontario wild ginseng sites identified 10 years earlier by White had disappeared, and 50 percent were smaller. While the distribution of wild ginseng has been severely limited by loss of suitable habitat—and possibly by related natural factors such as periodic climate changes, acidification of

soils (M. Smith pers. comm. 1998), and browsing by wildlife—populations have also been significantly affected by overharvesting, especially in Ontario (Nault and White in prep.).

American ginseng is listed under Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), and as such is subject to CITES' recommended trade controls. Canada does not permit export of wild ginseng; however, neither Quebec nor Ontario regulate its harvest or domestic sale. As reported by Nault and White, Quebec will soon designate American ginseng as

on tiger and rhino conservation and on the new federal law, the Rhino and Tiger Product Labeling Act (see box, page 3).

A press conference to publicize the poster was held for the Chinese language print media and television in November. In attendance were representatives of the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, the Chinese Association for World Wildlife Conservation, the Chinese Herb Business Association of Northern California, the California Certified Acupuncturists Association, the United California Practitioners of Chinese Medicine, the California Acupuncture Committee, and the American Chinese Zhi-Qing Association.

"espèce menacée," the most threatened category under the province's Endangered Species Act. COSEWIC, which influences provincial and federal decisions to protect species, has listed ginseng as threatened since 1988 but will soon consider whether the plant warrants the more serious designation of endangered. Excepting the control on exports, there is no legal protection nationally for wild ginseng.

In light of current wholesale values for wild ginseng root, it is not surprising that overharvest is a significant factor in its decline. While figures vary, wild American ginseng root harvested