Monitoring Moose and Other Culturally Important Wildlife on Penobscot Indian Nation Lands Using Remote Cameras

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Project Abstract

The Penobscot Indian Nation (PIN) manages over 129,000 acres of land in Maine. The proper management and conservation of wildlife are top priorities for Tribal members, so that these cultural resources are available for future generations. Moose are specifically important game species for the PIN. Recent declines in moose populations due to winter ticks has caused concern amongst the tribe.

The goal of this study is to monitor moose and other wildlife populations through remote cameras while engaging tribal youth members with wildlife conservation on PIN lands. Using AMMonitor and the standardized camera method, the study will obtain information on the annual impacts of winter ticks on moose and identify hotspots on PIN lands where infestations are severe.

Progress in 2022

As of December 31, 2022, a total of 70 cameras were deployed across all our study sites on Tribal lands. Remaining are 10 cameras to deploy all in one Tribal trust land, Alder Stream.

Plans for 2023

Early in 2023 we will finish getting out the remainder of the cameras. During the summer we plan to hire another technician to check each camera and collect SD cards for analysis. Analysis will be done by the PI as well as the project collaborators at the University of Vermont.

A camera site. There is a stake in the set up within the cameras view in order to measure snow depth. There is a turkey feather attached to the top to help attract wildlife to the camera.

Collaboration

We are collaborating with the USGS Vermont Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit to use their program, AMMonitor, to collect, manage, store, tag, and analyze wildlife data from cameras. As we begin to collect SD cards from our cameras, we will download them into AMMonitor to begin the analysis process.