

'EXPERTS' NEEDED FOR WILDLIFE CAMERA COLLAR EVALUATION STUDY

We are looking for folks to view video footage obtained from state-of-the-art camera collars that were placed on caribou, elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, and moose. Cameras were set to record foraging behavior in an effort to evaluate how well fine-scale foraging data (bite rates, diet composition, etc.) can be collected from cameras placed on wild ungulates.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND: There is increasing interest in using video collar technology to evaluate foraging ecology in large ungulates. The ability to measure diet composition, dietary quality, and nutrient intake rates of wild ungulates has considerable value for research and management applications. However, no rigorous testing has been conducted to evaluate the accuracy and reliability of the collars for collecting these data.

One of the most important aspects to test is the experience of the person viewing the video footage. Thus, we are evaluating 3 levels of viewer expertise: 1) undergraduate volunteers, 2) plant taxonomy specialists, and 3) foraging ecology experts. *This*

announcement is for plant taxonomy specialists and we are looking for 5-6 folks that know plants in either the habitat types of 1) eastern OR and WA, or 2) northeastern British Columbia and Southwestern Alaska (Kenai area).

DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES: Over the course of 9 months (~March 1 through December 1, 2018) we will ask folks to independently view videos from 2 ungulate species (deer/elk OR moose/caribou) and to record as much information about what they see the animal eating as possible. We will provide training for viewing the videos, the video playback program that will need to be downloaded onto a computer, and a list of plant species that are found in the ecoregions where the data were collected. Each person will be viewing ~20 hours of video total with each video ranging in length from a few minutes to 25 minutes (on average 15-20 minutes). We anticipate it will take approximately 40 to 80 hours evaluating videos over this period. How long it will take each person is very hard to judge. Each person will provide one datasheet per video with the number of bites viewed on each video along with the plant species the bites were taken on (to the highest order possible) as well as some written feedback about their experience viewing the videos.

WHAT IS GAINED: 1) We are offering either a small (TBD) monetary compensation OR co-authorship on the resulting publications (anticipated submission date of late 2019). 2) These videos provide valuable insights into the behavior and foraging ecology of large herbivores that most folks would never get to see. 3) This study is a large collaboration of researchers from Oregon, Washington, Montana, and Alaska – all of whom have active field projects in both the US and Canada. Viewers would have an edge in applying for seasonal field jobs offered by these investigators. 4) Camera collars are state-of-the-art technology that have the potential to offer biologists insight into all manner of animal ecology. Being part of this type of project offers a way to make a difference in the evolution of this technology and its role in wildlife research. 5) If viewing for compensation rather than co-authorship, you will be fully acknowledged in any publication arising from this work.

