A Bear's-Eye-View
Semi-Finalist

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Image location: The boreal forest of northeastern Alberta

Image Description

Bear "M401", a male black bear, attempts to court a female in the boreal forest of northeastern Alberta. You are looking at the bottom of M401's chin in the top of the image.

This still image was captured from a "bear's-eye-view" video recorded by a GPS-video collar around M401's neck. Wildlife tracking technology, such as these collars, not only provide unique snapshots into the lives of bears, but also record valuable data about their movement, behaviours, and diet.

Human habitat alteration has dramatically changed the predator-prey dynamics in northeastern Alberta. Threatened populations of caribou now face unsustainable levels of predation, but little is known about how often caribou are predated by black bears specifically. My research uses the "bear's-eye-view" videos to test whether movement data from standard GPS-collars can be used to predict the behaviours observed in the videos. My end goal is to use data on how bears move and behave while in caribou habitat to estimate the probability of black bear predation and its effect on caribou populations.