

## Tracking with Radio Telemetry



- Photo by Toby Neal

Have you ever seen an elk with a collar on its neck? Most likely the collar you saw is a radio tracking collar used to collect data on our elk population. These collars transfer data from one location to another using radio waves, this method of data allocation is often termed radio telemetry.

These radio tracking collars work very similar to the radio in your car. A radio station sends music out on a specific radio

wave. When you turn your car radio to that wave 101.5, 98.1 or whatever it maybe, you hear that music. Each radio collar has its own unique radio wave, on which it sends out a beep every second. A radio transmitter can then be used to hear the beep from the collar. As you get closer to the collar the beep gets louder, allowing you to locate the collar.

In Pennsylvania, we place radio collars on elk for a variety of reasons. The primary use of collars is to monitor our population levels. In addition, KECA has sponsored the placement of a GPS video collar on a cow for a couple years. As the name implies, this collar takes videos and will help us determine elk behaviors and diet throughout the seasons. Just this past September we placed a GPS video collar on a bull, hopefully this too will provide us with valuable information. By collecting this data we can better manage our elk population here in elk country.



- Courtney Colley, Conservation Education Coordinator

