

Forest dept. to set up landscape monitoring centre in Munnar

Centre will study movements of wild animals as well as availability of food and water in forest areas in the Munnar landscape. With the help of the centre's study report, the department will implement short and long-term measures to address human-animal conflict

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of wild animals as well as the availability of food and water in forest areas in the Munnar landscape. The team will map major food and water sources, including those for wild elephants inside the forests,” says High Range Circle Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Arun R.S.

He says SMS alerts about wild elephants venturing into human habitations in Munnar are already being issued from a temporary centre under the Munnar Wildlife Division. “The centre’s development is being planned, and it will serve Munnar wildlife and territorial divisions,” he says.

“With the help of the centre’s study report, the department will implement short and long-term measures to address human-animal conflict. Through the centre, we will be aware of the paths and the time wild elephants and other animals move to various areas,

including habitations. Being aware of these movements will help us take mitigation activities,” says Mr. Arun.

Munnar Wildlife Warden S.V. Vinod says the division has already mapped water and food sources under it. “Now, wild animal movements in Munnar are being tracked through a primary response team under the division. The team provides timely details of wild animal presence, and the department cross-checks the information and issues SMS alerts,” he says.

Mr. Vinod says an LMC in Munnar will provide accurate data about the forest and wildlife. “When we receive one or two-year data, we can understand the condition of the forest and movement of wildlife in the landscape,” he says.

According to officials, through the data, eco-restoration programmes can be taken up inside the forest to ensure water availability for wild animals.

Meanwhile, at an all-party meeting on Tuesday, Water Resources Minister Roshy Augustine announced that the government would identify hotspots inside the forests and ensure food and water availability for animals.

