## Project Update: August 2021

A pilot survey was conducted at Kawang Forest Reserve on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The pilot survey was conducted along the shortest existing trail (4 km), where my team and I were able to track approximately 2 km, from the base camp until an open space (**See Picture 1**), which resembled a natural salt-lick. During my first pilot survey, I was able to discover few things that were detrimental to my research, which were:



Picture 1. This map shows the natural trail that has been tracked during my first pilot survey at Kawang Forest Reserve, during 24th April 2021. The given trail is about 2 km long, extending from the base camp to the wallow (see Picture 3), which resembles a natural wet lick. This topography map is created by me using ArcMap ver. 10.4, and then the base map is in fact a digital elevation model that is downloaded from https://asf.alaska.edu/.

- Along the 2 km tracking distance, I found out that the existing trail was poorly managed. There were clear ribbon markings attached to the trees along the trail, only for the initial 1 km tracking distance from the base camp. Along with the local undulating terrain and dense forest cover, it was quite difficult for me to survey the study site.
- 2. Along the given trail, I found footprints of various wildlife species. Since the signs were old, thus they were weathered after getting exposed to the rain for a long time, to the extent that I wasn't able to determine the exact species from these signs and traces. Still, this discovery served as a solid proof for the presence of terrestrial mammals roaming within this forest reserve.
- 3. At the ending point of my first pilot survey, I came across an open space with a muddy wallow situated near to the edge (See Picture 3). The ground surface

was heavily covered by dry leaves, dead twigs and branches, hence any signs or traces were concealed. However, footprints of wildlife were detected at the surrounding muddy ground surface of the wallow. Likewise, the wallow wasn't disturbed or damaged by the wildlife individuals, thus indicating that the local wildlife individuals might be visiting the wallow for drinking water or consuming mud (**See Picture 2**). Somehow, this wallow resembles a natural wet-lick, hence further assessment was planned to be conducted in verifying the identity of the given site scientifically in the coming future.



**Picture 2.** This picture shows a muddy wallow that is situated at the open space (see Picture 3), in which various wildlife footprints can be found at the surrounding muddy ground. Since there hasn't been any sign or trace of wildlife rolling or lying in the given site, thus it is possible that wildlife individuals visit this area for drinking water or ingesting mud. Therefore, there is a possibility that this muddy area is in fact a natural wet lick at Kawang Forest Reserve, although further assessment is required to verify the given matter scientifically. This picture is taken using my own phone on 24th April 2021.



**Picture 3.** This picture displays an open space that is discovered by chance during my first pilot survey at Kawang Forest Reserve. The given area resembles a natural wet lick, with a wallow located near to the edge of this open space. Since the ground surface is heavily covered, hence the traces and signs of wildlife are hard to be detected at the given location. This picture is taken with my own phone, during 24<sup>th</sup> April 2021.