

## Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Site Conservation Project (July to September 2018)

### (1) Project to Restore Rich Diversity of Shiretoko's Forests

From July to September, work was carried out cultivating saplings in the seedling field that was cleared last year. Both university practicum students and Daikin volunteers helped out in duties such as watering and pulling up weeds. (Photos 1-1 to 1-2)

This is the 21st year of forest rejuvenation work in Shiretoko. During this period, about 20 deer fences of varying sizes have been erected in the 100-m<sup>2</sup> Movement Trust Area. Because some of these fences are over 10 years old and deteriorating, workers have been gradually replacing rotting wooden fence posts. (Photos 1-3 to 1-4)

In the 100-m<sup>2</sup> Movement Trust Area, work has been conducted smoothing out the service roads with dirt and preparing the tree-planting areas. (Photos 1-5 to 1-6)



Photo 1-1: Removing weeds in a seedling field (July 4, 2018)



Photo 1-2: Watering seedlings (July 26, 2018)



Photo 1-3: Repairing an aging deer fence (August 26, 2018)



Photo 1-4: Removing a tree that fell on the fence (September 30, 2018)



Photo 1-5: Smoothing out a service road (July 2, 2018)



Photo 1-6: Cutting grass in an area where an autumn tree-planting festival has been planned (September 14, 2018)

From September 20 (Thursday) to 23 (Sunday), the 14th Daikin Industries, Ltd. volunteer trip was held. The trip was scheduled for just after the large earthquake that affected power across all of Hokkaido, and because of this the trip was almost cancelled. Fortunately, it went ahead as planned, and 10 Daikin employees were able to visit the town of Rausu in the Rusa district and help erect deer fences. (Photos 1-7 to 1-10)



Photo 1-7: Erecting a deer fence (September 21, 2018)



Photo 1-8: A completed deer fence (September 22, 2018)



Photo 1-9: Visiting a former work site (September 22, 2018)



Photo 1-10: Enjoying dinner after a day of work (September 22, 2018)

## (2) Project to Protect and Pass on Shiretoko's Value as a World Heritage Site

### 1.Supporting activities to pass on Shiretoko's forests to the next generation

To spread the word about Shiretoko's nature and the 100-m<sup>2</sup> Movement, hands-on learning was held in the Trust Area for students from local schools and others. This past summer, 58 grade four students from Shari Elementary School visited the area to try on-site working and learn about the history of human settlement in the region. (Photo 2-1) During the summer, staff of the Shiretoko National Park Nature Center gave talks to the many visitors to the area about forest rejuvenation efforts in Shiretoko. (Photo 2-2)

This past summer, the Shiretoko Forest Rejuvenation Trail opened, allowing visitors to walk through the 100-m<sup>2</sup> Movement Trust Area. Part of this course is the Pioneer Hut Course, which had 799 visitors as of the end of September 2018. This course starts at the Shiretoko National Park Nature Center and passes some of the early settlers huts. (Photos 2-3 to 2-4)



Photo 2-1: Grade four students of Shari Elementary School see an original hut of early settlers to the area (July 10, 2018)



Photo 2-2: A talk by staff at the Shiretoko National Park Nature Center (August 10, 2018)



Photo 2-3: The Shiretoko mountains as seen from the Pioneer Hut Course hiking trail (September 6, 2018)



Photo 2-4: Maintaining one of the settlers huts along the trail (August 20, 2019)

## 2 Supporting activities so that humans and bears can coexist

Starting in July, maintenance work was carried out as needed on the electric fences under operation. For example, voltage checks were conducted about once a week, and where short circuits were discovered the cause was determined and voltage was restored as soon as possible. In addition, grass was cut in places where it was so long that it caused the fence to short circuit.

There were eight cases of bear sightings in the second quarter on the ocean side (inside) of the electric fences. In seven of these cases, it was surmised that the bears entered through places where fences could not be erected due to restoration work on mountain slopes, and through parts of the fence where voltage was low due to defects. As for the other sighting, a part of the fence had fallen down, and it is believed that a bear knocked it down and entered the area.

In a trial effort to keep out bears, efforts have been underway to create a buffer zone by removing vegetation between the bears' habitat and areas where humans live and work. In this quarter, vegetation was removed in a total of three locations: two locations in Misaki Town and one in Kaigan Town. (Photo 2-6) These are locations where there have been frequent bear sightings and bear markings discovered. Immediately after the vegetation was removed, there were no bear sightings. However, the vegetation has since grown back and there have subsequently been bear sightings. Therefore, we will look into how to solve this problem by changing the frequency and timing of the vegetation-cutting work.



Photo 2-5: Cutting vegetation around an electric fence



Photo 2-6: After vegetation cutting at a location where multiple bear markings have been found