

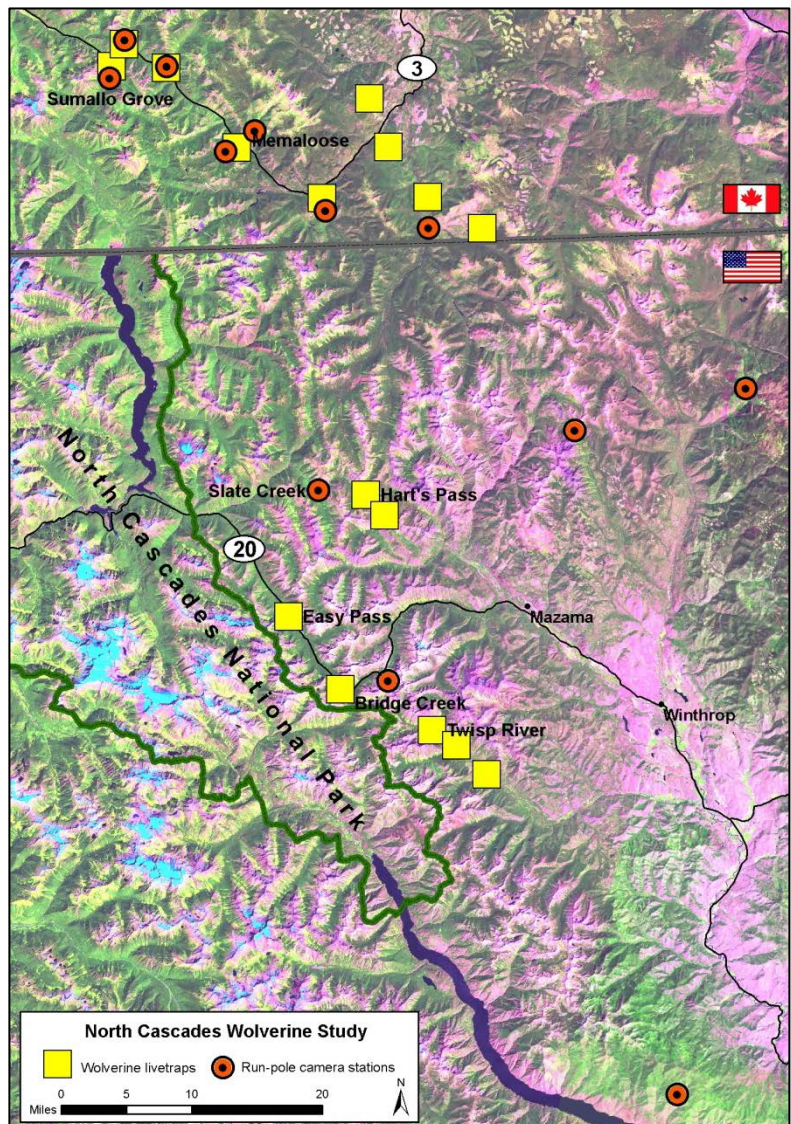
## NORTH CASCADES WOLVERINE STUDY – Project Update March 9, 2012

Greetings—Our wolverine live-trapping season is in full swing and we are having a very successful year. As in past years, John Rohrer is running a winter trapping crew based out of Winthrop, Washington. Eric Lofroth, who ran a winter trapping crew out of Cultus Lake, British Columbia from 2009-2011, has moved on to a new position within the BC Ministry of Environment. Although Eric will continue to have some involvement in the project, we are very fortunate that Rich Weir accepted Eric's previous position with the Ministry and is our new collaborator running trapping operations in British Columbia.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS YEAR

In Washington, we are operating 7 livetraps, including 2 along the Cascade crest off of Highway 20: Easy Pass and Bridge Creek (located between Rainy and Washington passes). Although John and his crew installed the Easy Pass trap last winter (2010-11), they were only able to operate it for a few days due to access issues. This winter (2011-12), we are using satellite trap transmitters at these 2 sites and at 2 additional sites near Hart's Pass. The satellite trap transmitters enable us to operate more livetraps in remote locations; locations that are difficult to monitor using traditional VHF trap transmitters. We are also continuing to operate run-pole camera stations and, at several stations, we are experimenting with hair snagging devices for collecting genetic samples.

In British Columbia, we are operating 9 livetraps and 7 run-pole camera stations. Livetraps and camera stations are located primarily in Skagit Valley Provincial Park and Manning Provincial Park, and are in areas both north and south of Highway 3.



## SUCSESSES TO-DATE

### Run-pole Camera Stations

Our first success this winter was in early December when Cliff Nietvelt (biologist with the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations) obtained multiple photographs of a new wolverine at the Sumallo Grove run-pole camera station off of Highway 3 in British Columbia (top right). The throat and chest blazes clearly indicate that this is not one of our previously captured study animals.



In Washington, we detected Rocky (a male that we first captured and collared in 2006) at the Slate Creek run-pole camera station in early February (center right). We were able to make a positive identification based on his throat and chest blazes and the fact that he was still wearing the satellite collar that we fitted him with last winter.



### Wolverine Captures

Thus far, we have captured 5 individual wolverines: 2 new wolverines and 3 previously captured study animals. This is the most wolverines we have captured in any given year, and brings our total number of individuals captured since the beginning of the study in 2006 to 10.

Mallory (an adult female first captured in 2011) was captured on 6 February at the Easy Pass trap in Washington. At the same time, a new wolverine was captured at the Bridge Creek trap (bottom right). We believe this wolverine was a male, but the immobilization drugs we administered were not effective on him. Thus, we collected some hair for genetic analysis and then released him without a satellite collar. We hope to recapture this individual soon, at which time we will use a different combination of immobilization drugs.





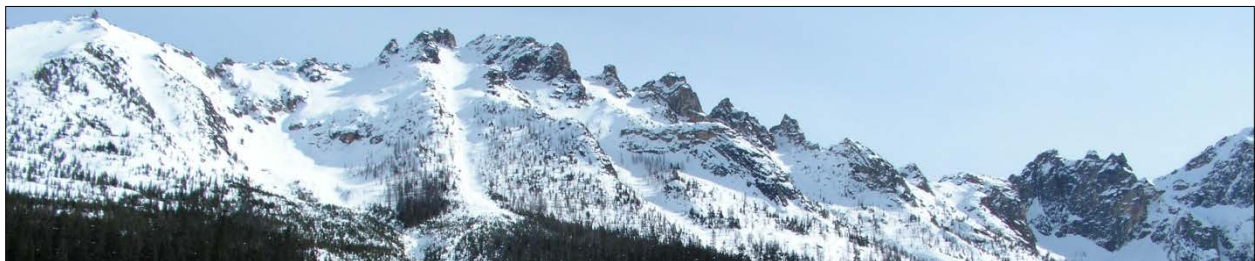
On February 18, we captured Xena (an adult female first captured in 2007) at the Twisp River trap in Washington (right). Although we detected Xena at a run-pole camera station in 2010, this is the first time we have recaptured her since 2007. Two days later on February 20, we captured Rocky at the Easy Pass trap. Rocky has now been captured during 5 different years (2006, 2008, 2010, 2011, and 2012) and is at least 8 years old.

Our most recent success was a new young female (Kendyl) captured on Leap Day, February 29, at the Memaloose trap in British Columbia.

All of the wolverines we have captured this year appear to be in excellent health: females were 9.5-9.9 kg (21-22 lb) and Rocky was 14.7 kg (32 lb). We outfitted 4 of the wolverines (all but the 1 captured at Bridge Creek) with satellite collars that will allow us to track their movements for the next 8 months.



We will continue to send out periodic updates as our trapping season continues (hopefully through March and into early April), and as we acquire satellite location data on the 4 collared wolverines.



Please contact Keith Aubry if you would like to learn more about our study ([kaubry@fs.fed.us](mailto:kaubry@fs.fed.us); 360-753-7685). Please contact Cathy Raley ([craley@fs.fed.us](mailto:craley@fs.fed.us); 360-753-7686) if would like to be added to or removed from our mailing list.

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