

## NORTH CASCADES WOLVERINE STUDY – Project Update April 10, 2013

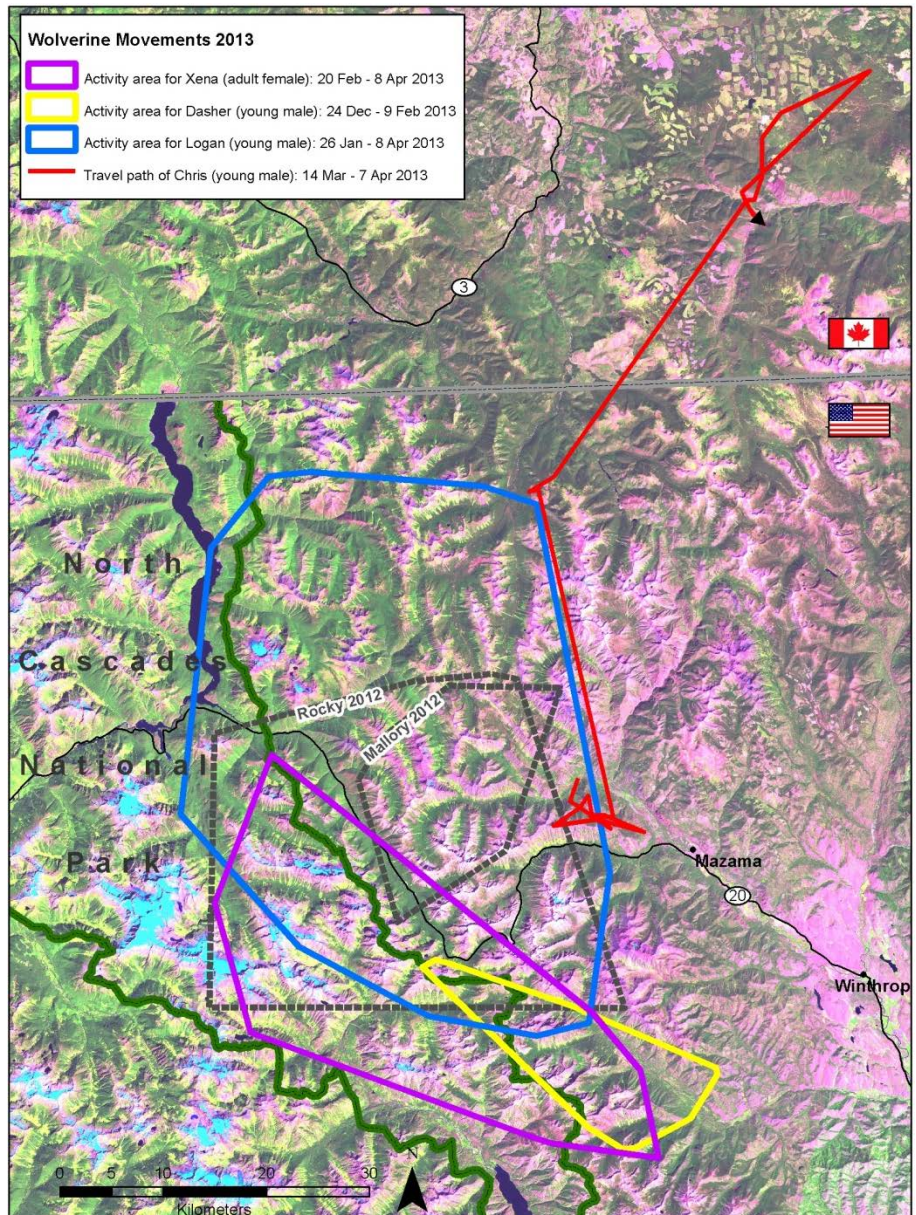
Greetings — Another trapping season in the northern Cascade Range in Washington has come to a close. This winter we began live-trapping wolverines in early December of 2012 and continued until mid-March 2013 when snowmelt at the lower elevations cut off access to our trapping sites. However, it was another successful season and we captured 3 new young males (Dasher, Logan, and Chris) and recaptured one of our resident adult females (Xena). We have now captured 13 individual wolverines (7 females and 6 males) since the beginning of our study in 2006. Every year our success depends on the hard work and dedication of the winter field crew to maintain and operate live traps and remote camera stations. This winter was no exception and we thank our 2-person crew, Adam Kehoe and Lindsay Welfelt, and the volunteers who assisted with the trapping and remote camera work.

### WOLVERINE ACTIVITY

Two of the 3 new males we captured this winter (Dasher and Logan) have been using areas that overlap those of 2 adult females (Xena and Mallory) and 1 adult male (Rocky; see map on right with the current activity area for Xena and the 2012 activity areas for Rocky and Mallory). Dasher, unfortunately, slipped his collar in February and we were not able to recapture him before we had to close traps in mid-March; thus we have limited data on his movements. The 3<sup>rd</sup> new male (Chris) was captured about 9 km southeast of Hart's Pass on 14 March 2013, and then 10 days later he began a long-distance movement north into British Columbia (see map for his path of travel).

Both Xena and Mallory gave birth to kits last year (see our 2012 annual report for details on the reproductive dens we found). Furthermore, Rocky's movements last year completely encompassed areas that were being used by Xena and Mallory, indicating that he was likely the father of their kits. Thus, we speculate that 1 or more of the 3 young males we captured this year are the offspring of Xena+Rocky or Mallory+Rocky. Genetic analyses of the tissue samples we collected during the

capture and processing of these 3 new males will help us determine the potential parent-offspring relationships among our study animals.



We first captured Xena in 2007 when she was a young nulliparous female, then again in 2012 when she was reproductive and had 1 kit. This year represents her 3<sup>rd</sup> recapture and she is at least 7 years old and in good health. Xena is not reproductive this year, however, that is not unusual as adult females generally do not reproduce every year.

Although Xena was our only recapture this year, we did capture remote video footage of Rocky at the Twisp River trap site in early February. Rocky, who we think is 9 years old now, appeared to be in good health. The video footage also revealed that Dasher was at the trap site with Rocky; further evidence that Rocky is likely the father of this young male. Mallory was also captured on remote video footage in February at the Rattlesnake trap site, but we were unable to recapture her before the end of our trapping season. We are still operating several run-pole camera stations in her area in hopes of determining her reproductive status this year.

The satellite telemetry collars on Xena, Logan, and Chris should operate for about 8 months enabling us to monitor these individuals through the summer and into early fall. We will continue to provide periodic updates on the movements of these wolverines as the year progresses.

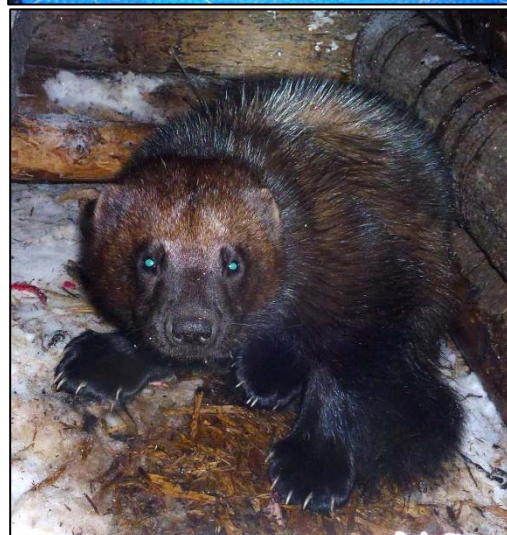
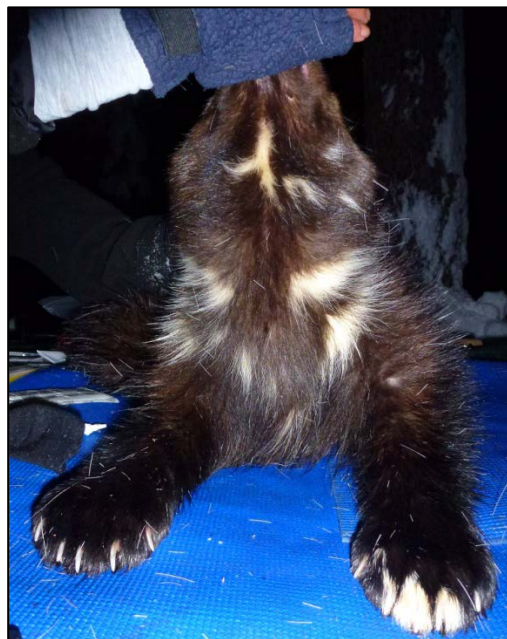
**LEAD PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Keith Aubry (USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station).

**CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:** John Rohrer (USDA Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest); Cathy Raley (USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station); Scott Fitkin (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife); Rich Weir (British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Victoria, BC).

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Contact Keith Aubry to learn more about our study ([kaubry@fs.fed.us](mailto:kaubry@fs.fed.us)). Contact Cathy Raley ([craley@fs.fed.us](mailto:craley@fs.fed.us)) to be added or removed from our project-update mailing list.

Our project updates and 2012 Annual Report are posted on The Wolverine Foundation's website:

<http://wolverinefoundation.org/resources/research-reports/>



Three young male wolverines captured during the 2012-2013 winter trapping season: Dasher (top), Logan (middle), and Chris (bottom).