

**WOLVERINE DEMOGRAPHY AND ECOLOGY IN SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA -- PROJECT OUTLINE
AND PROGRESS REPORT**

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Quantitative data on wolverine (Gulo gulo) population densities, trends, and sustainable harvests are lacking in Alaska. A reliance on harvest data and conflicting qualitative information have limited our ability to properly manage wolverines. To improve this situation, we began a study in 1991 of wolverine demographic characteristics and ecological relationships in the eastern Talkeetna Mtns and western Wrangell Mtns in Southcentral Alaska. We will further test the accuracy of a density estimation technique and investigate wolverine natality, survival, dispersal, recruitment, and density relative to food and habitat conditions and harvest levels. The data will be used to construct a wolverine population model that allows managers to determine sustainable harvests. We have devised a 3-phase project: (I) 2-year pilot study; (II) 5-year investigation in the Talkeetnas; and (III) 3-year expansion of Phase II into the Wrangells. Phase I results will help set research objectives for Phases II and III. In year 1 of Phase I, the Talkeetnas were chosen as the primary study area based on a higher density of tracks. We radio collared 4 wolverines in the Talkeetnas to give insight into logistic requirements, and we examined harvest history and prey/predator abundance in both areas.

Seventh Northern



Furbearer Conference

Agenda and Abstracts
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