

USDA Forest Service 1993

WOLVERINE HABITAT GUIDELINES  
FOR THE  
MALHEUR NATIONAL FOREST  
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Wolverine Habitat Guidelines  
Malheur National Forest

The following information is an updated summary of habitat requirements and management considerations for use in biological evaluations and associated project planning on the Forest. This information complements the existing guidelines for wolverine, developed for the Blue Mountain Forests in 1991. It is intended to assist in clarifying and maintaining a consistent evaluation of potential habitat and assessing effects.

The information represents a compilation of literature and personal communication reflecting common points of agreement on habitat needs and associated management considerations. Sources include the 1991 Blue Mountains Guidelines, Bob Naney (R6 Furbearer committee representative), Bill Rudiger (R6 furbearer committee representative), the Umatilla National Forest (lead forest) and a summary of input developed by Mark Crites, in contact with a number of Districts across the Blue Mountains.

Additional information is anticipated in the near future from a working committee of biologists for the same Blue Mountains area and the Interagency Furbearer Committee. The Blue Mountains committee is addressing a landscape strategy for management of wolverine across northeast Oregon. This committee of Forest wildlife biologists from the Malheur, Ochoco, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman N.F. met in May and work is continuing.

The Interagency committee has been actively developing a comprehensive strategy for furbearers, including wolverine, lynx, fisher and pine marten. Region 5 is the "lead region" and Bob Naney is the Region 6 representative on that committee. Tim Holden has attended several of the meetings and assisted in the technical development of a lynx survey protocol.

## POTENTIAL WOLVERINE HABITAT

It is recommended that potential habitat be examined and discussed as two distinct components, FORAGING/REPRODUCTION (core area) habitat and CONNECTIVITY (dispersal) habitat.

Below is a brief portrayal of linkage between key life history information (biology), habitat associations (some of which are quantified) and related management implications to consider. As stated earlier, this is meant to assist in clarifying habitat associations and ensuring a consistent evaluation of potential effects of management activities and recreational uses. It should be used in combination with the 1991 Blue Mountains Guidelines and current literature, as opposed to a substitute for that information.

### FORAGING/REPRODUCTION (core area)

#### BIOLOGY

#### HABITAT

#### MANAGEMENT

Solitary

Unroaded, wilderness  
low accessibility

Isolated from human activity.  
Especially vulnerable to  
bait/scent trapping via  
snowmobile. Limit access.  
Recreation use intensity,  
resource management activities  
should be low intensity.

Large home range

x150 sq miles (female)

Limit disturbance,  
displacement (< 1mi/sq mi)

Seasonal movement

High elevation summer &  
fall

Hudsonian zone (subalpine)  
subalpine fir/engelmann spruce  
high basins, benches, south &  
east aspect. Recreation use  
intensity and induced  
fragmentation via management  
activities (harvest, px fire,  
access, etc) should be low.

Special habitat

Cliffs, tallus rock  
caves, swamps. mdw

Avoid fragmenting, isolating  
through removal of cover,  
access development. Valuable  
for denning habitat, potential  
source of small mammal popula.

Opportunistic  
scavenger

Maintain large areas  
yielding concentrated  
food source such as  
big game WR (carrion),  
sm. mammal populations.

Avoid gopher baiting, other  
lethal treatments to reduce  
mammal populations. Maintain  
or enhance winter range areas  
(habitat capability), down  
woody logs/material (diversity  
of structure). It has been  
suggested that wolverine will  
not follow migratory big game  
> 3 miles into "managed lands"  
with moderate to high  
fragmentation.

CONNECTIVITY HABITAT (dispersal)

BIOLOGY

Wide ranging, may  
travel up to 90 miles  
between core areas

HABITAT

Maintain landscape  
connectivity between  
potential core areas,  
Forest/Blue Mtns.

Maintain >40% in some  
form of cover.

MANAGEMENT

Avoid "corridor" management.  
Emphasize connectivity 3-6 mi  
wide between core areas,  
include major ridge/stream  
drainage features. Avoid  
developed openings on ridges.  
Maintain low road densities

Mid-high elevation  
winter & spring  
(above 4,000 ft.)

Canadian zone (upper montane)  
Douglas fir, grand fir, white  
fir, lodgepole and ponderosa  
pine. May include big game  
winter range area. Maintain/  
enhance winter range. Utilize  
timing restrictions for mgt.  
activities. Limit access.  
May include wolverine den  
sites.

Quantified forest attributes applied within the core area (home range),  
irrespective of seasonal movement, are as follows:.

Forest structure	A mosaic of seral stages	30-50% mid/late (>100 yrs) (mature/late seral)  25-35% (50-100 yrs) (pole/young mature)  15% young stand (20-50 yrs) (sapling/pole)  10-15% forested openings (grass/forb/seedling)
Security cover	>50% cover (marginal or hiding cover)	Avoid large created openings or young dense stands(<50 yrs) , particularly along ridges and stream courses (<600 ft. max opening width/min cover width) In big game winter range util. satis cover requirements in meeting wolverine cover needs.