

**REPORT TO NWT CUMULATIVE IMPACT MONITORING PROGRAM:
2004-2005**

***COMMUNITY-BASED MONITORING OF WILDLIFE POPULATIONS AND
HEALTH IN THE SAHTU***

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SUMMARY

The health and sustainability of wildlife populations is important for subsistence harvesters as well as the overall economy of the NWT. Global warming, renewable and non-renewable resource development, and a greater human footprint can alter the patterns of disease occurrence in wildlife and have a direct impact on both wildlife and human health. In January 2005, we traveled to all 5 communities in the Sahtu settlement region to increase awareness of wildlife health issues and foster long term community-based monitoring and management of wildlife health.

We did this through:

1. *Wildlife Health Monitor Program* – We trained 4 more wildlife health monitors in 2 additional communities and met with the two previously trained monitors to assess the overall program.

2. *Youth education* - In the schools we delivered powerpoint presentations on wildlife biology and health to (457) youth from kindergarten to grade 12 and with the senior students (total 69) we held hands-on dissection labs of marten

3. *Focus-group Interviews on the Historical Occurrence of Wildlife Disease:* New to the program this year was knowledge exchange focus-group interviews on past and present occurrence of wildlife disease that were held in all five communities with 33 elders and experienced harvesters.

4. *Graduate student education* – Two veterinary graduate students participated in the development and delivery of this program.

As in previous years we received extremely positive feedback from students, teachers, and harvesters. Elders and harvesters were very pleased with the information exchange sessions, and graduate students indicated that participation in the program was an extremely valuable experience.

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Colville Lake students enjoying dissecting marten carcasses!