

Tibbitt Lake to Contwoyto Winter Road

Monitoring Station Report



May 8, 2008

**North Slave Region
Environment & Natural Resources**

BACKGROUND

Prior to 2003 little or no information was collected as to how people were utilizing the Lupin Winter Road for non-commercial purposes. Due to increased use on the winter road The Department of Environment & Natural Resources (ENR) established a check station on Ross Lake in 2003 to monitor activities by collecting data from non-commercial road users. ENR continues to have three monitoring stations. They are on Ross Lake, the Discovery Winter road; north of Prosperous Lake and on the Tłjcho winter road. This report provides statistical information for the Ross Lake monitoring station and Prosperous Lake monitoring station.

All non-commercial users are asked to stop at the check station to answer a questionnaire (attachment 1). The data collected is put in to a database and gives insight as to why people use the road and may help determine what impacts the road users have on the environment. Examples of information collected are: how many and what type of wildlife was harvested, why people are using the road and what communities they come from. This questionnaire also records valuable caribou information such as harvest numbers, sex of the caribou harvested, health and condition, pregnancy rates as well as numbers of caribou sighted along the winter road.

PARTNERS

ENR holds contracts with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, the North Slave Metis Alliance. Each contract is in place to hire monitors who work at the monitoring stations. The monitors are responsible for maintaining the camps and ensuring that the questionnaires are completed fully.

Partial funding for winter road monitoring comes from parties with interest in environmental monitoring concerns. The Winter Road Joint Venture Committee (JVC) provided \$20,000 in funding for the Ross Lake and Prosperous Lake monitoring stations. Costs to run the two monitoring stations exceed \$35, 000. The JVC continues to provide ENR with a building to house the monitors at the Prosperous Lake monitoring station.

ENR also meets with the JVC to discuss survey results and address concerns. The JVC also shares road information with ENR, which allows us to prepare for operation of the check station. Nuna Logistics builds and maintains the road and ENR stays in contact with them throughout the season to discuss any concerns in regards to wildlife issues. In the past Nuna has built a turn-off leading up to the cabin, creating a driveway for vehicles checking into the station. Nuna also gives the monitors access to their camp at Dome Lake.

SURVEY RESULTS

We have compiled the last five years of data for the Ross Lake check station and last two years data for Prosperous Lake. Data provided includes: numbers for wildlife harvested by hunters, hunter type and provides communities / region that hunters came from; those can be found in attachment 2 through 8.

Overall numbers from the last four years show a decline in all aspects of the survey. Reasons for this vary from year to year. In 2006 lower numbers were blamed on a shorter operating season and there was not a lot of caribou migrating around the winter road. The 2007 operating season shows low numbers as well. Harvest numbers for the 2007 are low because the caribou migrated more to the western side of the North Slave Region. This year harvest numbers are up along the Prosperous Lake portion of the road, as there was a small population of caribou situated along that portion of the winter road for much of the season.

Attached are comparisons of the official operating dates from the JVC and our opening date. Although our dates generally show that we open earlier and operate past the official dates, road users typically travel when the road is open. Below are the dates:

| Year | Official Date Opened | Ross Lake Opened | Official Date Closed | Ross Lake Closed |
|------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 2004 | January 28 | January 09 | March 31 | April 09 |
| 2005 | January 26 | January 19 | April 5 | April 4 |
| 2006 | February 5 | February 4 | March 26 | April 12 |
| 2007 | January 27 | February 6 | April 9 | April 12 |
| 2008 | January 26 | February 1 | April 8 | March 27 |

Official Opening dates provided by the JVC

All check stations will be operating again in the 2009 season.

ATTACHMENT I

Winter Road User Survey

SIDE ONE: USER INFORMATION

Monitoring Station: **Ross Lake** **Prosperous Lake** **Tłı̨ Cho Winter Road**

Monitor's name: _____

Vehicle Information

Description of vehicle: _____

Vehicle license place origin (Territory/Province): _____ License plate no: _____

Accessory vehicles: (Snowmobiles/ATVs) **NO** **YES** How many? _____

Number of people in the vehicle: _____

Northbound Date: _____ Time: _____ am / pm
(Spell out Month)

Southbound: Date: _____ Time: _____ am / pm
(Spell out month)

Community representation (indicate the community for EACH person in the vehicle)

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|----------|-------|----------------|-------|
| Yellowknife | _____ | N'Dilo | _____ | Ingraham Trail | _____ |
| Dettah | _____ | Rae/Edzo | _____ | Wha Ti | _____ |
| Gameti | _____ | Wekweti | _____ | Ft. Providence | _____ |
| Other (specify) | _____ | | | | |

Purpose for using the winter road (check all that apply):

Sight-seeing: _____ Camping: _____ Trapping: _____ (Licence #) _____
Cutting wood: _____ (Licence #) _____ Fishing: _____ (Licence #) _____
Hunting: _____ (Licence #) _____
Other (specify) _____

Hunter classification: GHL _____ Special GHL _____ Resident _____ Non-Resident _____
(Use one ✓ per hunter) Non-Resident Alien _____

How many days for hunting? 1 2 3 Other _____

What animal species are you hunting? (check all that apply)

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Caribou | _____ | Moose | _____ | Grouse | _____ |
| Wolf | _____ | Wolverine | _____ | Ptarmigan | _____ |
| Other (specify) | _____ | | | | |

Winter Road User Survey

SIDE TWO: HARVEST / SURVEY DATA

See previous page for road user data.

Did any of you kill any wildlife this trip? YES / NO If YES, what species and how many?

(please specify details below)

Caribou _____ Moose _____ Wolf _____ Wolverine _____ Grouse _____
Ptarmigan _____ Other (specify) _____
Where? _____ Grid # _____

For Caribou Kills:

How many were : Male: _____ Female: _____ Were any females pregnant?: _____
Adults: _____ Young: _____

How healthy were the caribou? Were they: Skinny _____
Not so skinny _____
Fat _____
Really Fat _____

Did you notice any disease or injury with these? **YES / NO**

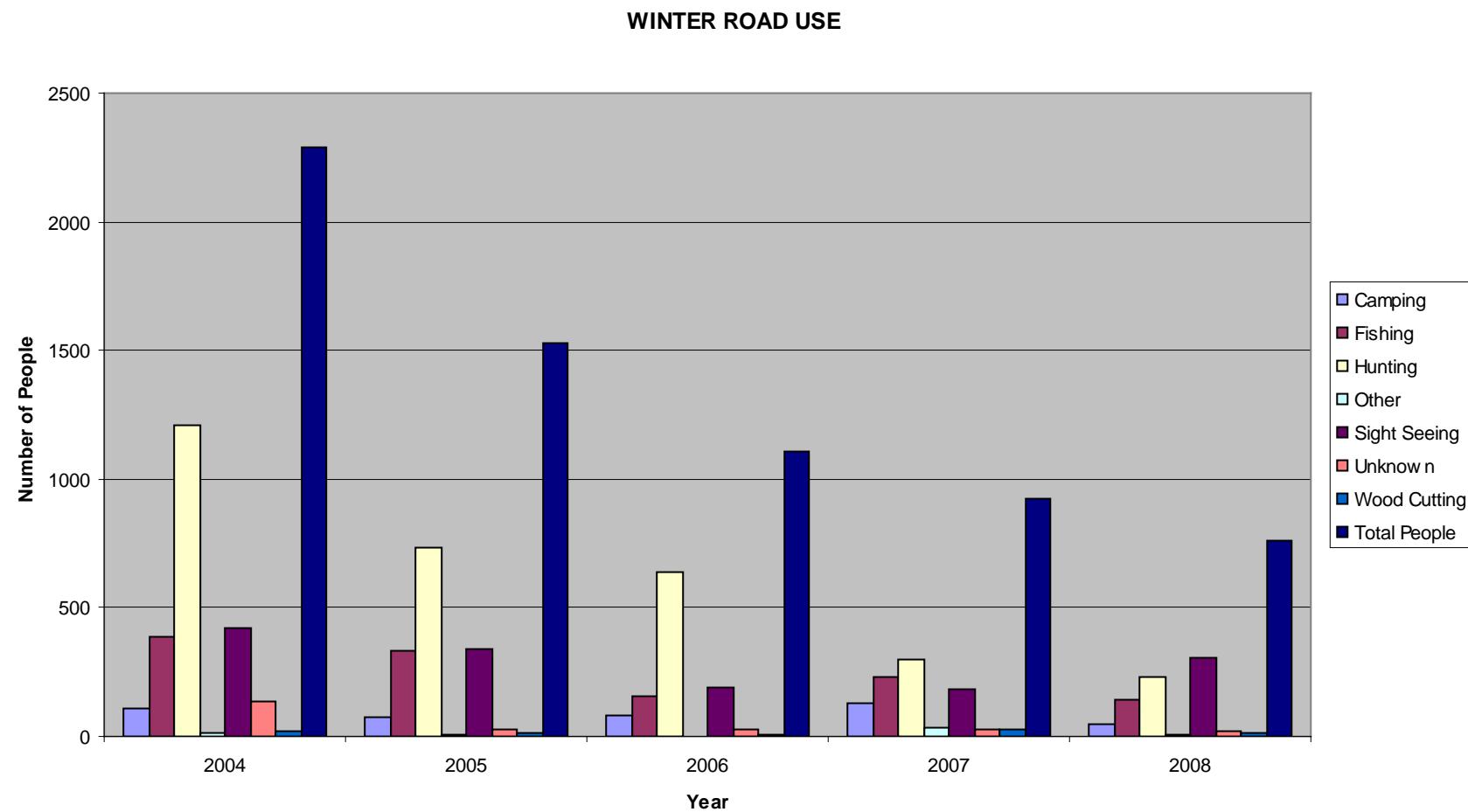
What wildlife did you see? (Indicate how many):

Caribou _____ Moose _____
Wolf _____ Wolverine _____ Other (Specify) _____
Where were these sightings? (identify lake or portage #, if possible)

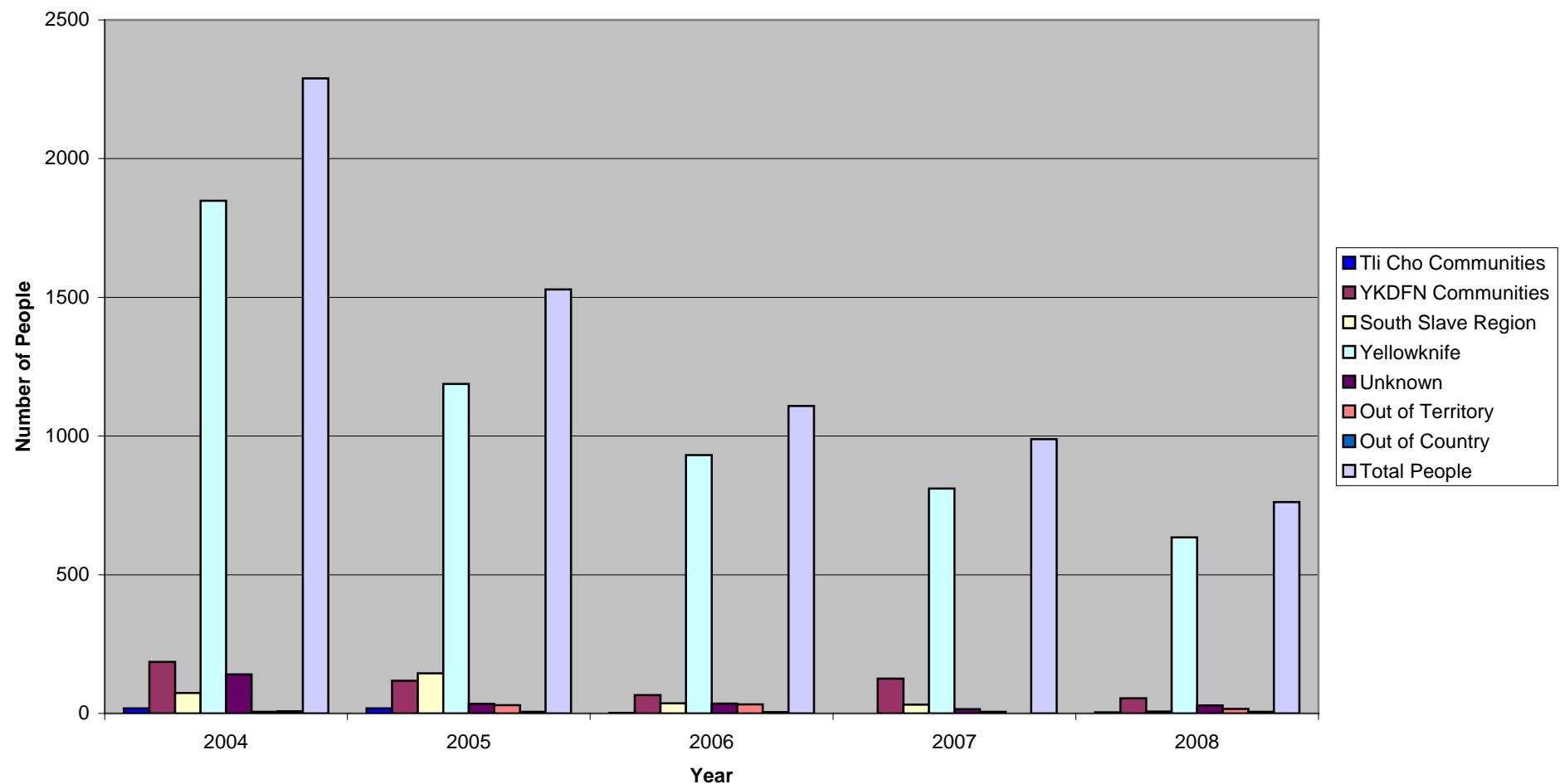
Were any of them lame or injured? **YES / NO** (please specify details below):

Did you see any infractions, e.g., meat wastage? **YES / NO** If Yes (identify where) _____
Did you see any contaminant spills? **YES / NO** If Yes (identify where) _____

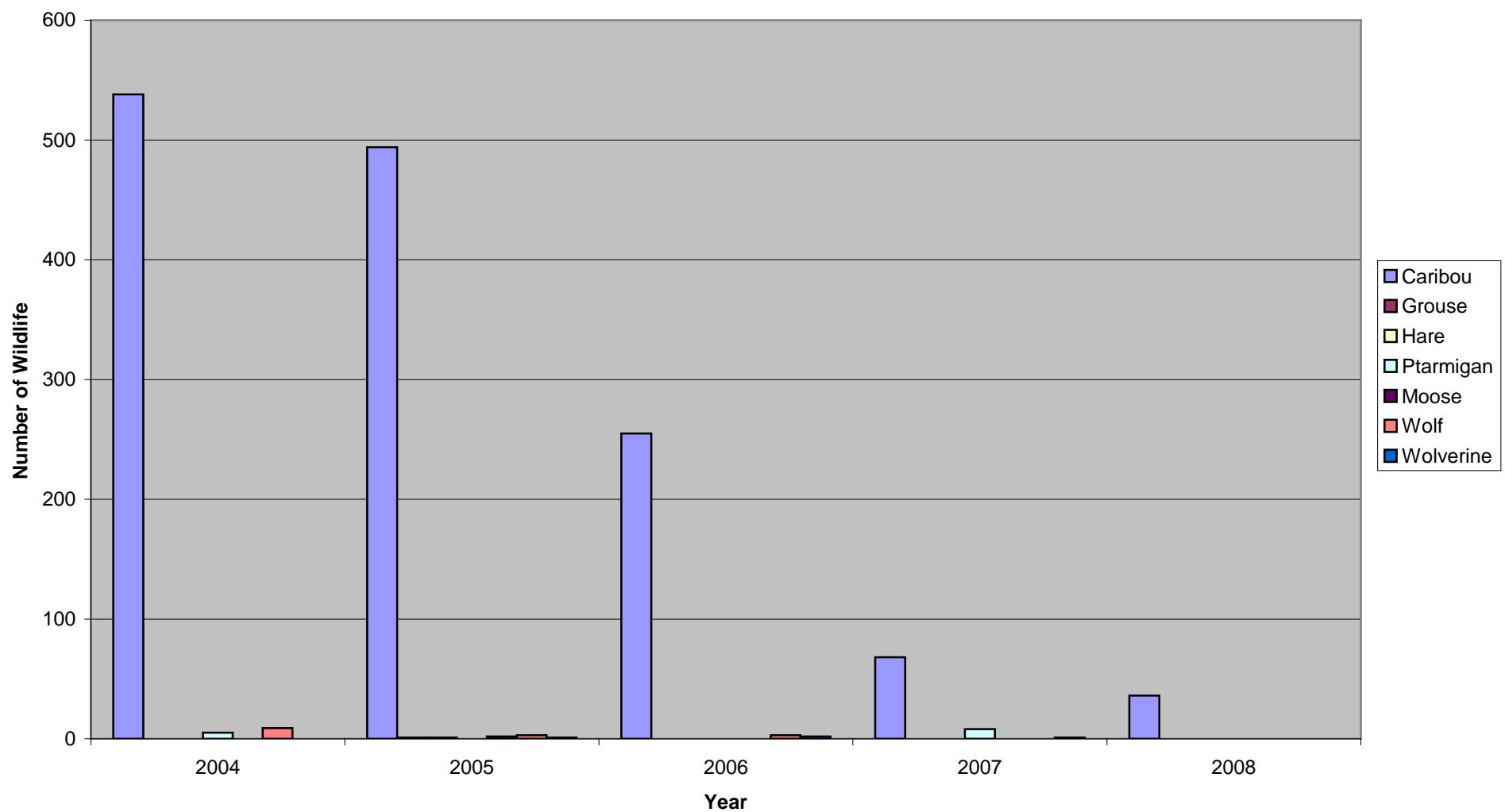
Comments: _____



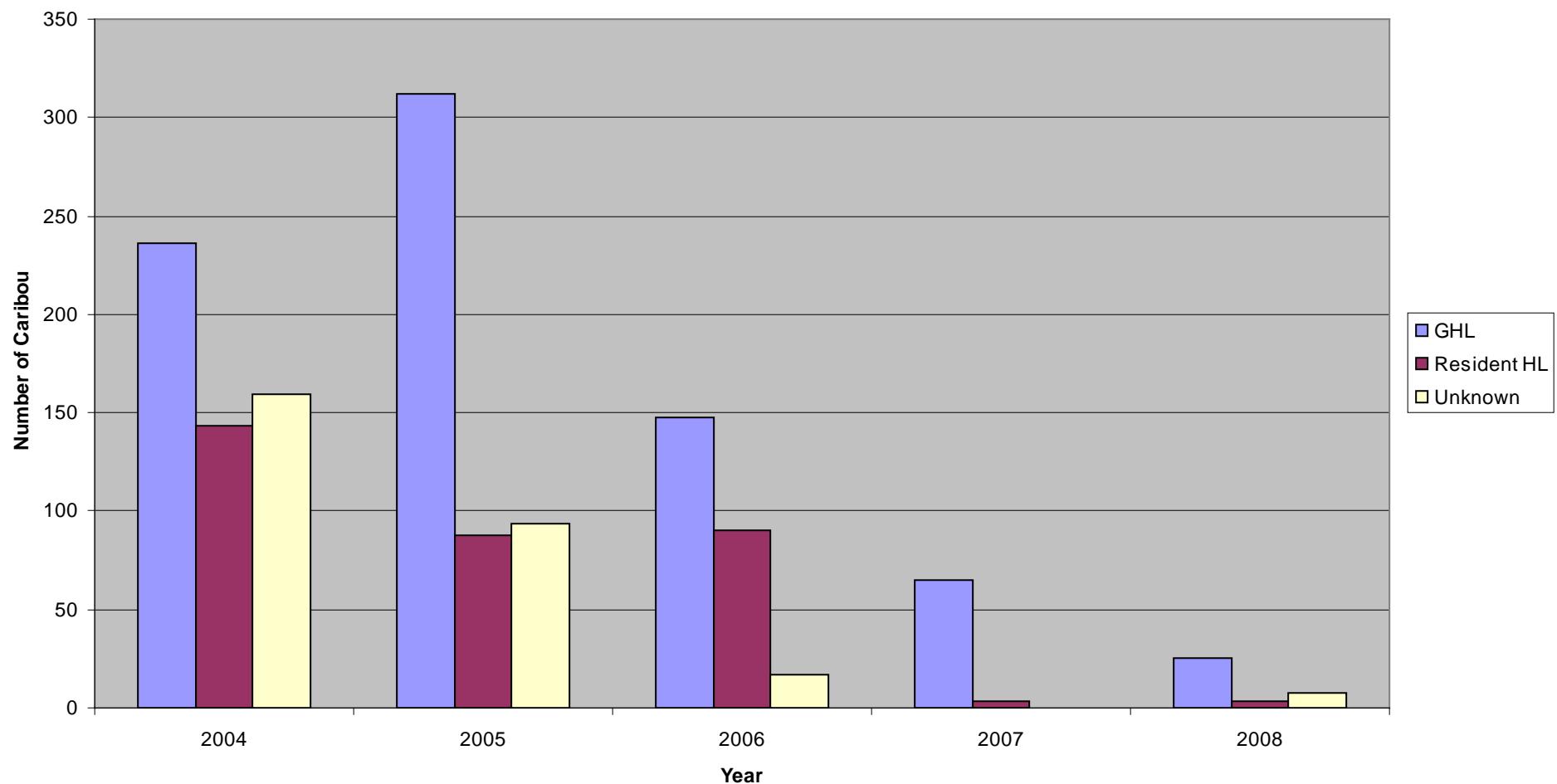
PERSON COUNT BY COMMUNITY / REGION

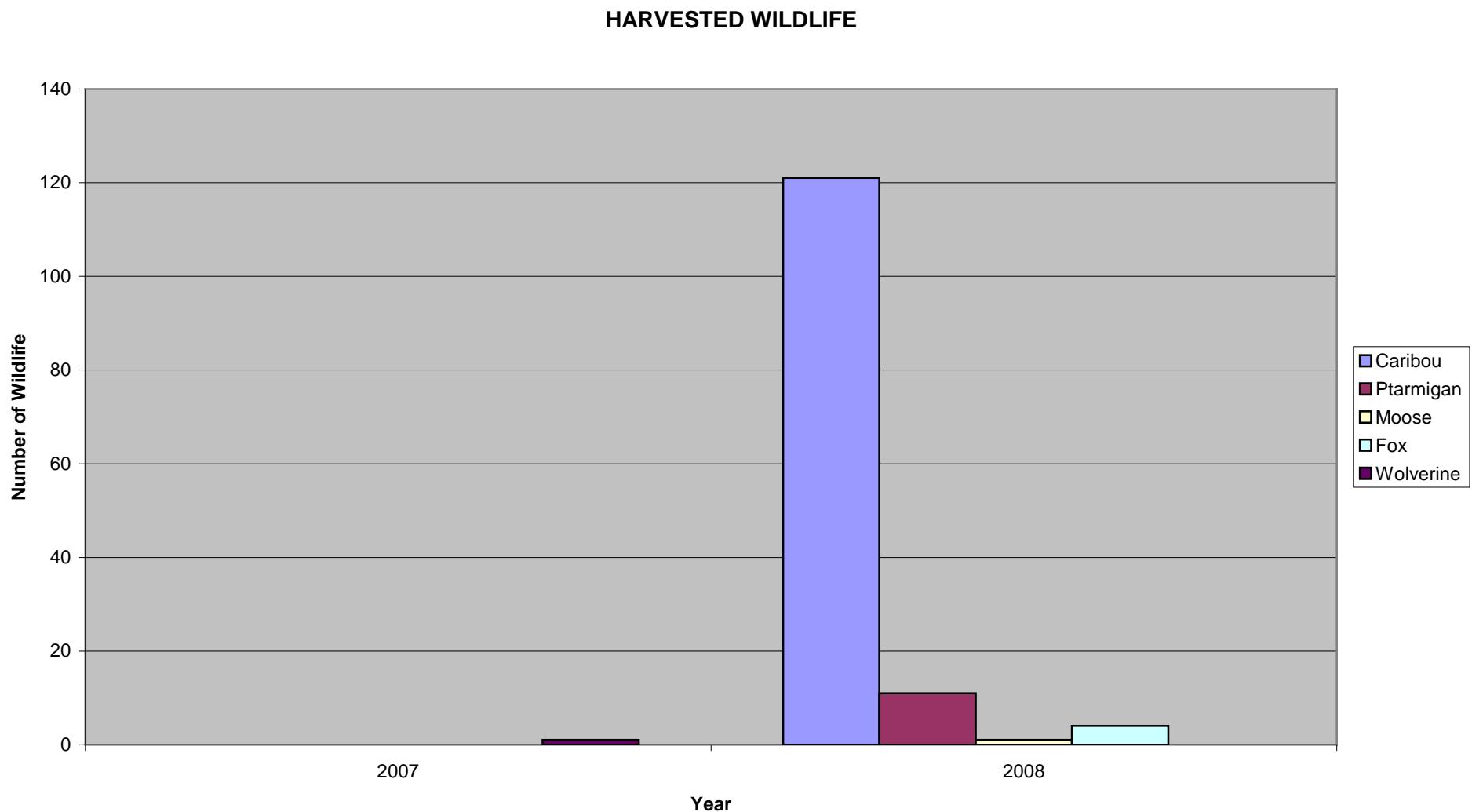


HARVESTED WILDLIFE

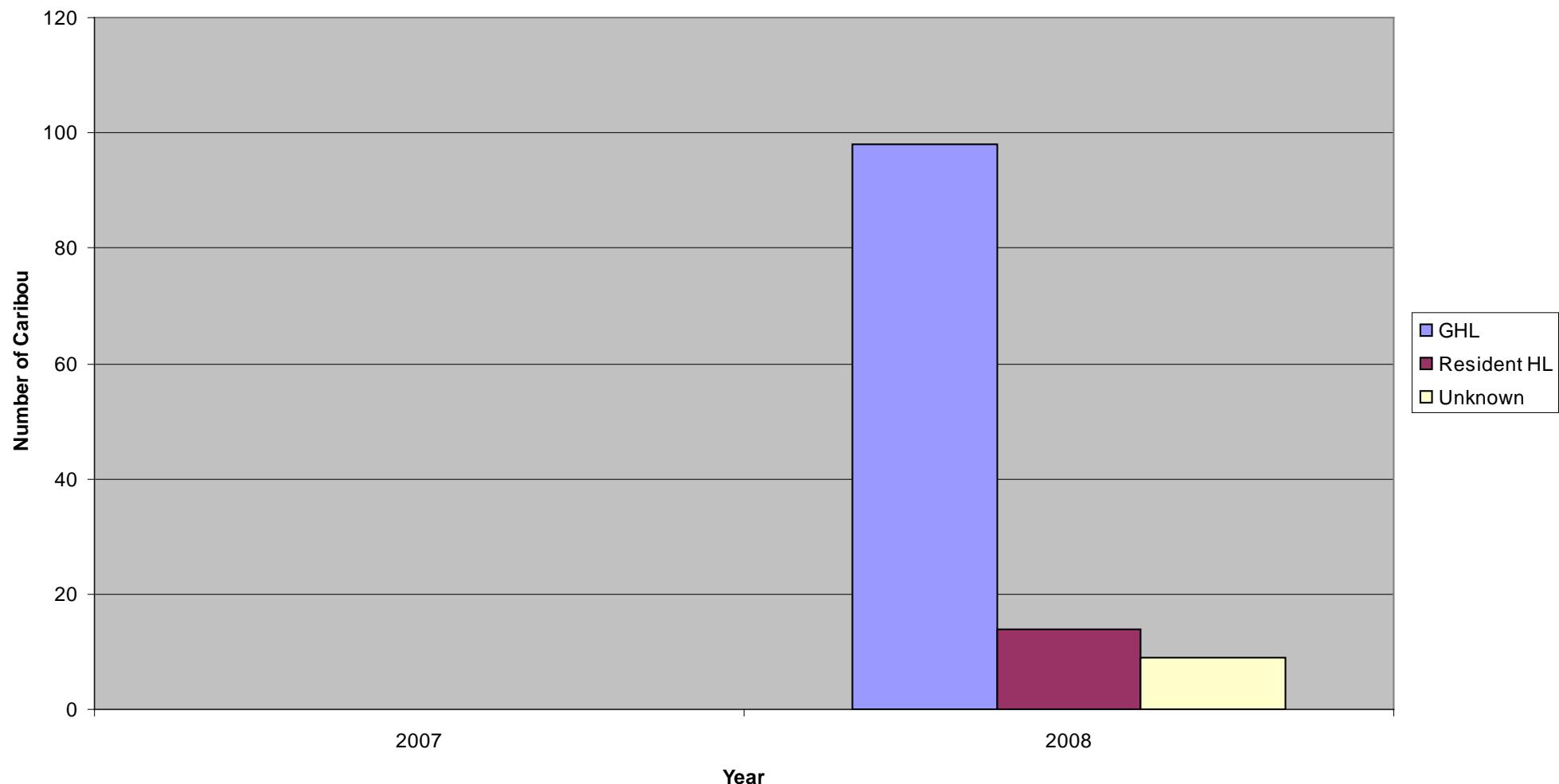


HARVESTED CARIBOU BY HUNTER TYPE

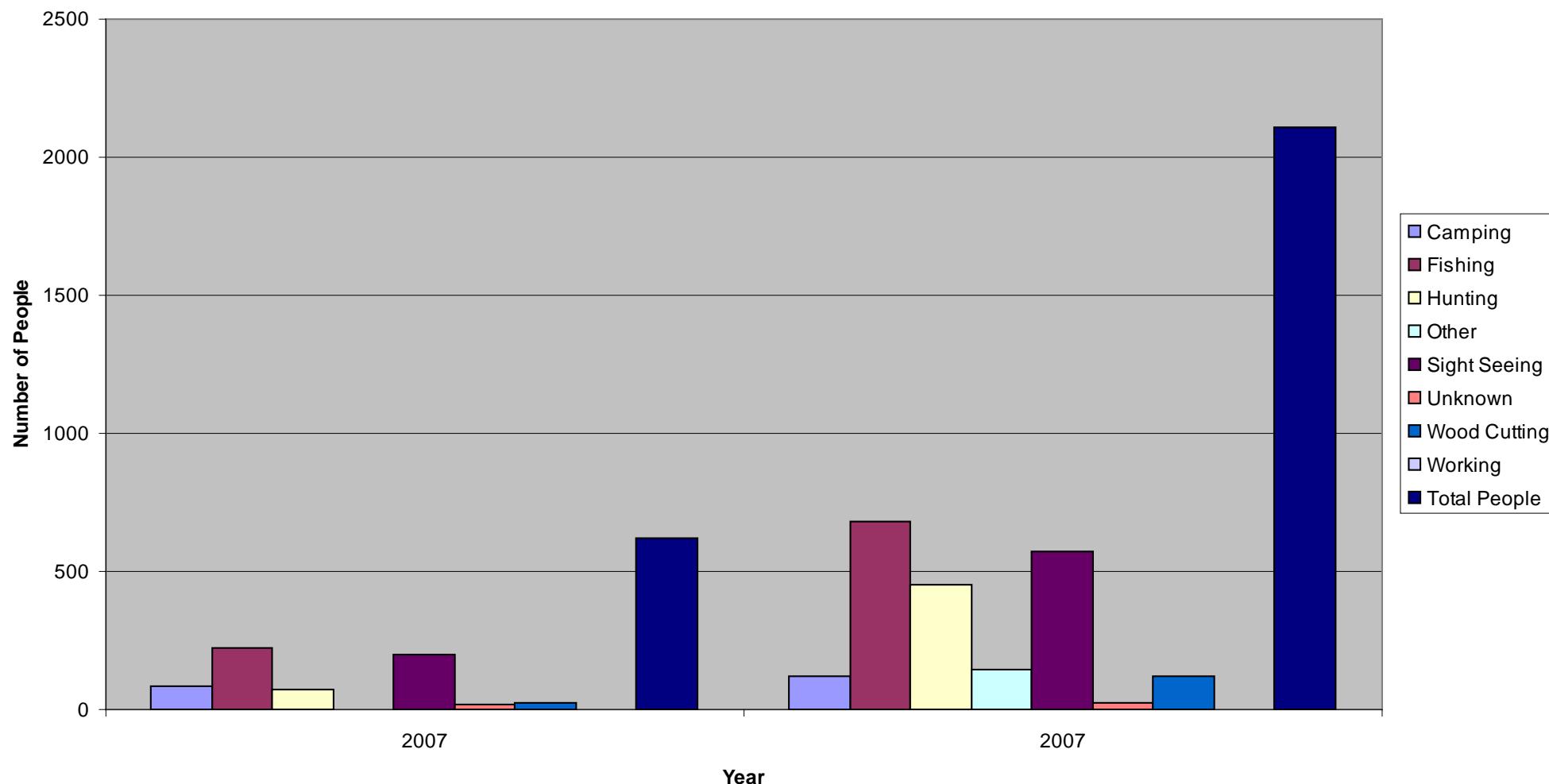




HARVESTED CARIBOU BY HUNTER TYPE



WINTER ROAD USE



PERSON COUNT BY COMMUNITY / REGION

