

Aboriginal Tourism:

Recommendations for a Strategic Action Plan

Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council

JULY 2013



Sharing Our Culture

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Executive Summary

Tourism is a vibrant and important sector of the Northwest Territories economy. While the overall tourism industry is well established, Aboriginal tourism is at the early stages of development.

A thorough research and literature review of Aboriginal tourism initiatives in other jurisdictions provided background and direction, however, it is recognized that Canada's Aboriginal tourism industry is also in its infancy and Aboriginal tourism in the NWT is considered to be just off "square one" with unique challenges and the *Recommendations for a Strategic Action Plan (Recommendations)* are reflective of our beginning.

The *Recommendations* have been drafted and endorsed by the Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council (ATCAC). The council is made up of northern people who have interests and experience in tourism in the NWT.

Their primary objective is to support the development of Aboriginal tourism in the NWT and to advise the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI). The *Recommendations* are based primarily on information found in the *Aboriginal Tourism Engagement Strategy 2010* and findings from public input at the *Aboriginal Tourism Forum April 2012*.

For development of the industry, we are focusing our energy and support on people, communities, and business. Through Aboriginal tourism we will strive to protect and preserve culture and language and develop our human resources and skills. We will engage communities, Aboriginal governments and organizations to help them to realize and meet their potential for tourism development. We will provide ideas and options for infrastructure that are required for tourism expansion. In terms of business, we will need to support the development of more and quality Aboriginal tourism products.

Assisting the entrepreneur and business owner with sound business skills and organizational capacity will be accomplished through effective communication with access to and delivery of training.

Implementation of these *Recommendations* will require significant time, drive and resources. The results will be a strong foundation for a viable Aboriginal tourism sector that will add significant value at the territorial, regional and community level. It is important to consult and proceed in partnership with Aboriginal peoples to ensure the industry is authentic and sincere in both its delivery and direction.



Introduction

Aboriginal tourism will showcase our unique northern cultures, create business opportunities, provide employment and support traditional and cultural preservation in our communities. Tourism is seen as environmentally friendly, sustainable development that has the added benefit of building pride for Aboriginal people of the North while sharing their rich culture with the world. The interest in tourism as an economic generator has been long standing, but it is today, with a positive political climate and community receptiveness, that we are ready to move forward with a solid plan for growth.

Tourism in Canada shows tremendous growth potential and we look to tourism for opportunity to capitalize on our pristine landscape and our vibrant cultures. We know the tourism industry relies on personal contact – every personal interaction has an impact on the visitor’s experience. By supporting and fostering a culture of service

and hospitality in our communities, we position ourselves to meet the expectations of the global visitor. Tourism is seen as a way of generating cross-cultural understanding while creating economic development and well-being for communities.

The *Recommendations* provide direction for the sustainable growth and development of the territory’s Aboriginal tourism industry. It points the way forward with the spirit of sharing, the engagement of partners, including individuals, communities, Aboriginal governments, tourism business owners and operators, and tourism officers. Our plan specifies concrete steps towards cultural preservation, the development of youth and steps to develop an Aboriginal tourism industry with world class nature-based experiences.

Vision

Respectful sharing of our unique cultures through Aboriginal tourism for our prosperity.

Definition:

Authentic NWT Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Experience

An experience offered to a visitor in a manner that is appropriate, respectful and true to the culture of the Aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories. This experience and the people who deliver it have been endorsed by the Aboriginal organization whose culture is being represented. Authenticity is ensured through the active involvement of Aboriginal people in the development and delivery of the experience.

Guiding Principles

- Respect the values, languages and cultural diversity of the Aboriginal people of the NWT;
- Support the relationships between cultural tourism businesses and the preservation and protection of traditional ways of life;



- Build pride and self-reliance through meaningful work;
- Respect spirituality and sacred knowledge and sites;
- Work cooperatively and in partnership with Aboriginal governments, community governments, and other agencies and organizations;
- Create a sustainable industry through sound business practices;
- Make decisions at the community level to lay the foundation for change;
- Preserve and pass on knowledge to youth through engagement with elders for future prosperity;
- Commit to the authenticity of Aboriginal tourism products and experiences;
- Provide inclusive access to programs and support for the tourism industry;
- Adopt an open and flexible approach to developing Aboriginal tourism;
- Recognize and celebrate individuals, communities and businesses; and
- Be stewards of our animals, land and the environment.



Goals People

People in the North show interest in developing the Aboriginal tourism industry and believe it could have significant economic, community development and cultural values.

However, many residents feel that the greatest value of the Aboriginal tourism industry may be reinvigorating a sense of pride in Aboriginal culture and traditions.

While all community members can benefit from participating in Aboriginal tourism, one of the goals for the *Recommendations* is to encourage and support opportunities for youth to learn about their culture and language from elders and this is key to our initiative. Elders will continue to pass down language, traditions and knowledge to the youth and together, they are the future – they will keep our culture alive.

In addition to enhancing culture and language, the *Recommendations* will provide support for human resource and skill development in order to increase the capacity and participation of Aboriginal people in the tourism industry. Training, particularly for the youth, will rejuvenate Aboriginal traditions as the youth become involved in providing authentic experiences to visitors.



The *Recommendations* increase the basic awareness and appreciation of the tourism industry. Communities, operators and people interested in tourism require a much better understanding of the industry.

Communities

Community support for tourism is the key to the successful development of the industry throughout the north. Partnerships will be fostered between current and potential tourism operators and employees, communities, community and Aboriginal councils, and local and regional leadership - all with the goal of moving forward for a prosperous industry together.

In the early stages, the majority of work will focus on creating an understanding of the basics of the tourism industry and ensuring that communities are aware of how to provide positive tourism experiences for visitors. Creating awareness will also help to identify those who are interested in tourism to understand the steps required to develop further capacity for business development opportunities and market ready products.

Infrastructure shortcomings affect the tourism potential in the North and creative solutions are needed to meet these and lift the barriers so we can offer hospitality in safe, welcoming communities. Working with both our territorial and federal park systems, we can build the industry through existing systems and established infrastructure while planning for the future.

The Aboriginal Tourism Champions will advocate and guide the development of the industry in their territories and in their own communities and regions; working to bring people together by building partnerships and through the support of business owners and entrepreneurs.

Business

The *Recommendations* support the development, expansion and authentication of tourism products and experiences for the visitor. Many entrepreneurs and small business owners are interested in receiving training in business, hospitality and increased opportunity to network and share experiences.



Through additional programming and mentorship there will be both education and support to owners and operators. There is a need to support the market ready product and to assist business owners to meet the expectations of the tourist. Working with our partners we hope to assist in the establishment of high school and post-secondary education in the field of tourism available to students at select high schools and Aurora College.



A marketing plan will be developed for Aboriginal Tourism by NWT Tourism in consultation with the ATCAC. Participating in research will help to determine the target markets and key messaging. By highlighting the products available, regions and communities can showcase and market their best features, experiences and unique cultures. The affiliation and participation in the

country-wide consortium, the Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC) will ensure representation at the national level for the NWT.

Background

Current State of Tourism in the NWT

Tourism is a key sector of the Northwest Territories economy and contributes more revenue than all other renewable resource sectors combined. Tourism continues to create economic opportunities in each region and for many communities.

Visitor spending increased 1.3 percent during the 2011/2012 fiscal year to 99.5 million, even though the number of visitors fell slightly (1.2 percent) to 64,400 people. The gains in spending were likely attributable to more anglers taking short, guided (afternoon or day) fishing tours and a 9.6 percent increase in the number of hunters who spend more than any other visitor segment.

There were strong gains in the aurora viewing and outdoor adventure segments, which are likely due to the timing and popularity of Solar Max (a time of increased solar activity, which affects the intensity and frequency of the Aurora Borealis) and product development investments in the outdoor adventure businesses.

Continued investments in marketing, Aboriginal tourism, community and industry engagement, infrastructure, skills development and research will play key roles in increasing tourism numbers and visitor spending in the NWT. The capital city, Yellowknife, has been experiencing decreasing costs in airfares from southern destinations and significant enhancement of existing product have also been contributing factors. The increasing demand for Aboriginal cultural tourism is expected to result in growth in three key market segments: Aurora Viewing, General Touring and Outdoor Adventure.



Demand for Aboriginal Tourism

Research shows that there is a direct relationship between travellers who want to experience nature and the outdoors and travellers who participate in Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences. Both groups of travellers want to explore what makes a destination distinctive, authentic and memorable. They want to experience the essence of the destination – they want to meet the people, taste the food, see the landscape and share in the uniqueness by the ways the people live their lives. Aboriginal cultural experiences can make encounters with Canada’s outdoors exceptional.

Analysis of travellers to and within Canada shows that there is significant interest in seeing and experiencing the “Canadian” outdoors, but the market for “culture-only” travel is considerably smaller and more difficult to reach. Aboriginal cultural tourism business operators will meet with greater success if they target tourists who want the outdoor experience and may be also open to cultural experiences during their trip.

The 2010 NWT Visitor Exit Survey showed that while there is a definite interest in Aboriginal tourism experiences in the North, it is not a key tourism motivator to attract visitors to the territory and it is viewed as a value-added product. In other words, it is an experience that travellers purchase or participate in once they are actually at their destination.

In 2010, 14 percent of all visitors to the NWT reported that they participated in an Aboriginal event or activity, or they visited an Aboriginal site while in the NWT. Similar to national research findings, 24 percent of general tourists (visitors whose main purpose of travel was to see and experience everything the territory has to offer) and 25 percent of outdoor adventure travellers reported participating in some sort of Aboriginal tourism experience or activity. For the NWT, designing and marketing Aboriginal cultural experiences for these two particular markets is key to the development and success of Aboriginal tourism in the territory.

Furthermore, over half of the outdoor adventure visitors from Canada, the USA and overseas markets come during the peak calendar quarter – July through September. The seasonal “skew” is likely to present challenges to northern communities as we develop Aboriginal tourism. Essentially, the majority of visitors that come to the NWT to have an “outdoor adventure” travel here over a three month period which suggests that businesses may struggle if their only focus is that market. One way to make





businesses more viable and sustainable is to broaden their customer base and work with hotels and meeting planners who work with business travellers year-round. In this capacity, tour operators who are flexible and can offer specialized or custom-designed tours for groups during their “off” season may be more successful.



Only nine percent of aurora viewers, our prime winter market, reported that they participated in an Aboriginal tourism experience. This is interesting because one of the prime Aurora tourism operators in Yellowknife offers cultural experiences and activities, but the visitors seemed unaware of the links to Aboriginal culture. This finding suggests that more work needs to be done to promote the fact that certain experiences and activities are actually featuring Aboriginal cultures. If we don't tell visitors that they are participating in an Aboriginal cultural experience, some won't know they are and the experience might not mean as much to them.

During the *2010 NWT Visitor Exit Survey*, visitors were asked why they didn't participate in an Aboriginal tourism experience or event and 48 percent respondents reported they did not have time, while 27 percent reported they were not aware of what was available.

Overall, the research demonstrates the need for more market-ready Aboriginal cultural tourism products targeted

specifically at General Tourists and Outdoor Adventure Travellers with the flexibility to cater to other business or group travellers. In addition, we have recognized the lack of and need for businesses that support Aboriginal cultural tourism products like clean, welcoming and reliable hotels, restaurants and ground transportation.

Current Supply of Aboriginal Tourism Products in the NWT

In 2012-13, there were 43 licensed tour operators in the Northwest Territories whose businesses were either Aboriginal owned or listed Aboriginal cultural experiences as part of their offerings to tourists. Examples of these businesses include dog mushing, guided nature walks, making crafts and hunting/fishing lodges.

NWT's Territorial Parks and Campgrounds currently offer Aboriginal cultural programming to their visitors on an irregular and contractual arrangement. These activities and tours are quite popular with visitors and residents staying at the campgrounds.



While the City of Yellowknife has a year round Visitor Information Center (VIC) and there are VICs in the larger communities of Fort Smith, Hay River, Fort Simpson and Inuvik – open in summer months. Most of these offer static displays of Aboriginal culture but little in the way of interpretive or active programming. Similarly, there are six museums in the North but they are information only with little programming.

Local festivals and events such as hand game tournaments and winter festivals are of interest as experiences for tourists, but marketing and delivery of the events are geared towards locals and not visitors. Visitors are often unaware that events are happening or that they are welcome to attend these events and festivals.

Results of Previous Efforts in the NWT

Aboriginal people have been hosting visitors since the early 1800s, acting as guides, providing shelter and hunting for food. The early explorers were said to be unprepared and relied on the sharing of Aboriginal peoples' skills to survive and travel on the land unknown to them.

More recently, fifteen years ago, in 1998, a conference was held in Fort Simpson, NWT for government and Aboriginal leaders, industry stakeholders and tour operators. People gathered to talk about Aboriginal tourism in the Western Arctic. Times were changing - division from the east was imminent and there were already rumblings of the uncertain economic future with oil, gas and mining. The Conference Report conveyed the optimism and positive attitude towards developing Aboriginal tourism. Present Premier, Honourable Robert McLeod, was the Deputy Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development at the time. He spoke of the need to work together to develop a strategic approach to tourism in the NWT and that the GNWT saw industry taking the lead and government continuing to participate and provide resources to ensure tourism remained one of the most important contributing economic sectors in the NWT.

In May 2010, Northways Consulting completed the *Aboriginal Tourism Engagement Strategy* and set the wheels in motion for tangible steps forward.



The report provided the basis for the GNWT to focus on the realities of developing Aboriginal tourism through consultation with northern people and tourism business owners/operators in the regional centers. The research included examination of Aboriginal/cultural industries in other jurisdictions and the distribution and compilation of various survey results. The report advised the government on how to move forward and many recommendations from the report have been implemented; namely, the formation and development of a lead agency - an Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council (ATCAC) and the hiring of an Aboriginal Tourism Development Officer.



The council hosted a two day forum for northerners in April 2012. The feedback from participants in the forum guided the creation of a meaningful definition for Aboriginal tourism and identified priorities for a Strategic Action Plan meant to guide and move the industry forward. The people who attended and contributed to the Aboriginal Tourism Forum held a strong belief that sharing

culture and traditions with visitors would provide opportunities to preserve and share their culture. Training, particularly with youth, was highlighted by participants as a means to pass on Aboriginal traditions and ensure people are properly trained to build and operate successful and sustainable businesses.

ATCAC is confident these *Recommendations* will help create new employment, economic development opportunities and, indeed, cultural pride for Aboriginal people and communities throughout the NWT. We are presenting these *Recommendations* for the formation of an Aboriginal Tourism Strategic Action Plan.

Challenges and Opportunities – SWOT Analysis

It has been shown that there is potential to develop an Aboriginal tourism sector in the NWT and that the benefits outweigh the negative impacts. It will require a considerable investment and the equivalent economic returns may

not be realized for a period of time. Therefore, it is essential to look at the value of Aboriginal tourism from a larger context than strictly business or economic perspectives.

ATCAC conducted their own SWOT analysis identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, to help guide development of the sector. A SWOT analysis involves specifying the objective and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving that objective.

Strengths

Characteristics of the business or project that give it an advantage over others:

- Pristine wilderness, abundant wildlife and world class waterways;
- National Parks and reserves established and others being developed;
- Growth in demand for Aboriginal cultural tourism products;



- Large Aboriginal population making up over half of NWT population;
- Aboriginal youth represent large potential workforce;
- General willingness to learn, share and teach culture;
- Desire for healthier lifestyles and viable communities;
- Community interest to preserve Aboriginal culture and languages;



- ATCAC established and committed;
- Partnerships with governments are encouraged;
- NWT Tourism is a strong marketing organization;
- Aboriginal arts and crafts are a thriving industry in the north;
- Momentum and interest from Aboriginal Tourism Forum in March 2012;
- GNWT – supportive political climate;
- Existing cultural identity and active traditional lifestyles in communities is active and alive;
- Relationships established with Aboriginal Tourism BC and membership on Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle;
- Self-Governments are functioning and empowered;
- The use of technology is making Aboriginal language applications possible;

- Recognition of Aboriginal tourism opportunities in communities by both GNWT and community governments; and
- Interest and awareness of protecting the environment through a sustainable economy.

Weaknesses and Limitations

Characteristics that place the project at a disadvantage relative to others:

- Regional and community leadership communication has not been established;
- Community engagement to explore and discuss tourism has not occurred;
- Lack of general understanding of the tourism industry and what it takes to be successful;
- Communities' economic plans currently not addressing tourism;
- Little understanding of hospitality skills required to successfully serve tourists;
- Almost no youth engagement on tourism;



- Many operators/business owners express they lack business and operational management skills;
 - Limited business training availability;
 - Low level literacy in many Aboriginal adults;
 - English as a second language presents communication challenges;
 - Risks of cultural misunderstandings with visitors;
 - Accessing funding is challenging for small business owners;
 - Engaging elders is a challenge;
 - Lack of business resources available in Aboriginal languages;
 - Lack of market ready products available;
 - Little or no understanding of market readiness;
 - Seasonality affects the viability of the tourism business because it does not provide year round income;
 - No options for post-secondary training in the tourism field in the north;
 - Aboriginal people are engaged in their traditional, on-the-land activities such as hunting and fishing and have to make a choice about level of commitment to tourists;
 - Lack of infrastructure for tourism throughout the NWT; and
 - Tourism related jobs often do not pay as well as other jobs; seasonality affects secure employment.
- ## Opportunities
- Elements that the project could leverage to its advantage:
- GNWT is encouraging partnerships with Aboriginal and community governments;
 - Territorial and federal parks are interested in Aboriginal tourism products;
 - Many elders willing to share their history and traditional knowledge for preservation;
 - Tourists desire authentic cultural experiences;
 - "Arctic Air" commercials may be an opportunity to spotlight Aboriginal tourism;
 - Film Commission and Media outlets;
 - NWT Arts and Crafts - has established branding and thriving arts culture;
 - MACA/Schools - open to relationships for engagement of youth;
 - Youth Ambassador's Program established;



- European travelers - France and Germany known interested markets;
- Business travelers – consistent in their travel;
- Events, Festivals and Competitions are established;
- NWT Tourism - established "Spectacular NWT" brand;
- Non-Aboriginal Partners – Industry interested in supporting culture;
- Empowerment of community decision makers through devolution;
- Aboriginal Economic Development Agencies are established;
- Partnerships are becoming more popular in delivering programs and services;
- Territorial and national Events hosted in communities; and
- General media is receptive to "good news" stories.

Threats

Elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the project:

- Lack of funding;
- People are unaware of visitors motivations and expectations and are challenged to meet their needs nor to see what would negatively affect them;
- Reluctance of some Aboriginal persons to engage in social interactions with tourists;
- Misunderstandings about the tourism business market leads to poor business;
- There is a fear of consultants taking financial advantage;
- Loss of language speakers;
- Employment demands from other industries affecting entrepreneurship;
- Negative environmental effects on the land for industrial development;
- Aboriginal political stability and lower priority of tourism;



- Climate change causing changing weather patterns;
- Global events affecting tourism in general;
- General uneasiness and fear towards the responsibility of running a business;
- Unsuccessful tourist trip outcomes affect reputation of tourism in NWT;
- Regulations causing limitations;
- Push from national organizations to conform to their agenda;
- Our priorities might have potential for alienation from national bodies; and
- Competition for a limited workforce with other, higher paying industries such as mining and oil and gas.

Monitoring and Reporting

ATCAC will approve an annual reporting cycle and will receive regular progress reports from the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. There will be regular communication with partners in the form of public meetings, newsletters and through the use of social media.

Monitoring progress, identifying challenges or weaknesses and reporting on successes are expected to alter and improve the direction of development.

Recommendations for a Strategic Action Plan

The following section describes recommendations for specific actions to be taken to address the goals of a Strategic Action Plan. The recommended actions focus on three pillars: People, Communities and Business. For each pillar, priorities and objectives are identified that support the overall goals of a strategy.



People



I. Culture and Language Enhancement

Many of the Aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories are actively practicing their traditional ways of life for subsistence, enjoyment of the land and of each other. Efforts will be made to preserve and promote cultural skills and activities to ensure the cultures are strong, shared and celebrated. Aboriginal cultural tourism can build pride, bridge relationships between elders and youth and create lasting opportunity for economic wealth in communities.

Priorities

- Preserve cultural heritage and reinvigorate cultural pride;
- Teach ways of sharing culture and traditions for business opportunity;
- Encourage the sharing of knowledge and the practicing of traditional ways of life; and
- Encourage the use of Aboriginal languages through the tourism industry.

Objectives

1. Focus on building cultural strength in Aboriginal youth with the guidance of elders;
2. Support and encourage current and traditional cultural activities and events; and
3. Increase Aboriginal language use through the development and promotion of Aboriginal tourism.

Recommended Actions

SHORT TERM:

1. Objective: Support and encourage current and traditional cultural activities and events

- Identify and initiate partnerships with cultural and on-the-land training programs; and
- Collaborate with other government departments working with communities on the preservation of sacred and heritage sites to determine community tourism potential.

2. Objective: Focus on building cultural strength in Aboriginal youth with the guidance of elders

- Seek funding and partnerships to support opportunities and programs for youth to develop cultural and traditional skills;
- Promote youth participation in cultural events and traditional activities with elders;
- Promote activities that empower elders to share their knowledge; and
- Encourage opportunities for youth to participate in events and activities that promote cross-cultural awareness.

3. Objective: Increase Aboriginal language use through the development and promotion of Aboriginal tourism

- Engage Official Languages Division of Education, Culture, and Employment (ECE) for best practices for language preservation and use;
- Explore partnership with ECE Language Division to incorporate language use; and



- Develop general tourism community benefits brochure and/or poster for public distribution to encourage the use of regional languages.



MIDTERM:

1. Objective: Support and encourage current and traditional cultural activities and events

- Provide financial support to encourage community cultural events;
- Seek and sponsor opportunities for traditional activities and events;
- Provide information and highlight tourism potential and value to organizers and communities;
- Explore partnerships with Aboriginal governments for their direct involvement; and
- Encourage relationships with NWT and federal park programs to support cultural tourism.

2. Objective: Focus on building cultural strength in Aboriginal youth with the guidance of elders

- Sponsor additional youth participation in on-the-land programs;
- Explore options to work with Municipal and Community Affairs' Youth Ambassador Program;

- Create opportunities for youth to engage elders through mentorship; and
- Work with ECE to identify and encourage students to participate in a youth mentorship program.

3. Objective: Increase Aboriginal language use through the development and promotion of Aboriginal tourism

- Engage communities to assist in the development of regional tourism materials and consider mandatory training instruction to be translated into Aboriginal languages (i.e., marine safety training, guide training, food safety courses, hospitality, etc.);
- Explore the options for renaming of GNWT territorial parks and other historic sites to their original Aboriginal names or to names that reflect Aboriginal culture; and
- Partner with Official Languages Division of ECE and Aboriginal governments in developing regional language guides with local community people.



LONG TERM:

1. Objective: Support and encourage current and traditional cultural activities and events

- Encourage Aboriginal cultural programming and events by providing funding and support; and
- Provide advice and assistance for development of new and established traditional activities and events.

2. Objective: Focus on building cultural strength in Aboriginal youth with the guidance of elders

- Support youth outdoor programs with emphasis on tourism for High School students; and
- Look for ways to celebrate and recognize cultural skills and proficiency for youth in partnership with ECE.

3. Objective: Increase Aboriginal language use through the development and promotion of Aboriginal tourism

- Use traditional Aboriginal names in all tourism-related documents and publications – complement translations with pronunciation guides where appropriate; and
- Encourage the use of Aboriginal languages and phrases in tourism publications and promotion with NWT Tourism (NWTT) and ITI.

Potential Partners

- Aboriginal governments and organizations;
- Aurora College;
- CanNor and other federal agencies;
- GNWT Departments of ITI, ECE, ENR, HSS, Justice, and MACA;
- NWT Tourism (NWTT);
- Parks Canada; and
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.



II. Human Resources and Skills Development

A critical component of the *Recommendations* is the support for entrepreneurs and employees for business capacity building. The lack of a trained workforce/management skills and the need for education and awareness about the industry are the most significant challenges facing development.

Priorities

- Encourage Aboriginal people to become involved and active in the tourism industry;
- Promote and initiate tourism career development opportunities;
- Encourage business and management skill development; and
- Increase awareness and communication of tourism and business training opportunities.

Objectives

1. Engage Aboriginal youth and elders in the tourism industry;
2. Communicate and facilitate access to tourism and business training resources and opportunities;
3. Collaborate with ECE, MACA, and Aurora College to develop tourism training courses and programming; and
4. Promote existing programs and resources designed to preserve traditional knowledge.

Recommended Actions

SHORT TERM:

1. **Objective: Engage Aboriginal youth and elders in the tourism industry**
 - Work with communities to solicit and encourage youth and elders to be actively involved in the community engagement consultation by targeting their participation;

- Initiate a communications campaign to focus on benefits of tourism-related business for youth and role of elders;
- Explore ways to engage and assist elders to share their traditional knowledge;
- Investigate cultural and on-the-land programs available for youth;
- Seek financial resources for building tourism-related programming and opportunities aimed at youth;
- Add “Youth” as a category to the ITI Business Mentorship Program; and
- Encourage ECE to include tourism studies in the curriculum for high school students.



2. Objective: Communicate and facilitate access to tourism and business training resources and opportunities

- Educate Economic Development Officers (EDOs) and Business Development Officers (BDOs) on tourism training resources available to assist current and potential tourism operators;

- Distribute ITI's tourism training calendar;
 - Ensure the revamped Northernmost Host Program and Welcome NWT are reflective of the unique requirements for Aboriginal tourism and includes a section specifically on Aboriginal tourism;
 - Review all tourism-related public materials ensuring plain language guidelines are followed; and
 - Investigate best practices for the communication of training opportunities with communities.
- 3. Objective: Collaborate with ECE and Aurora College to develop Tourism training courses and programming**
- Identify past, present and upcoming course offerings related to tourism; and
 - Initiate consultation with ECE for development of Aboriginal/ General Tourism Program.

4. Objective: Use existing programs and resources from other agencies to promote the sharing of traditional knowledge

- Develop an inventory of existing tourism and cultural programs and courses; and
- Partner with existing programs aimed at cultural preservation while incorporating a tourism lens and perspective.

MID TERM:

1. Objective: Engage Aboriginal youth and elders in the tourism industry

- Facilitate work experience opportunities for youth;
- Develop guidelines for an elder-in-residence program for lodges and tourism businesses; and
- Provide support and assistance for the development of a youth mentorship program.



2. Objective: Communicate and facilitate access to tourism and business training resources and opportunities

- Develop a communication strategy for available training opportunities; and
- Develop a calendar or training resource book identifying tourism and cultural training programs linking to Aurora College's training programs and programs offered by other agencies and



educational institutions (i.e.: Parks and Recreation Association, universities, etc.).

3. Objective: Collaborate with ECE and Aurora College to develop tourism training courses and programming

- Establish formal meetings with ECE and Aurora College to identify tourism course curricula including business management, marketing, hospitality, guide training, wilderness and standard first aid, etc.; and
- Assist in the development of curriculum for college-based programs.

4. Objective: Use existing programs and resources from other agencies to promote the sharing of traditional knowledge

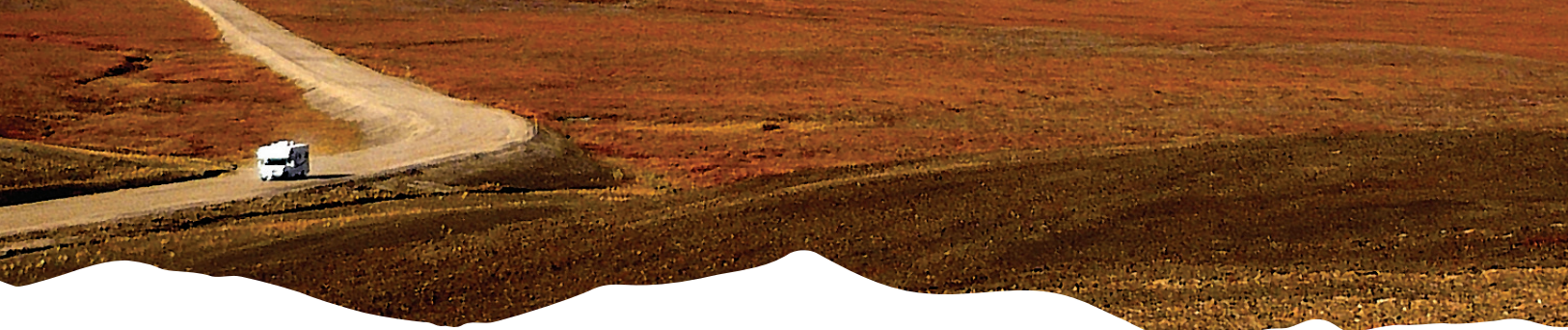
- Liaise with the GNWT Tourism Training Committee to identify and meet the needs of Aboriginal cultural tourism about their training offerings;
- Engage Aboriginal governments and agencies in partnerships to deliver business skills and tourism development training; and

- Provide support for programming and partnerships with organizations or agencies that provide business and management skills development in communities.

LONG TERM:

1. Objective: Engage Aboriginal youth and elders in the tourism industry

- Administer the Youth Tourism Mentorship Program;
- Administer the Elders-in-Residence Program;
- Engage and support elders in the Youth Mentorship Program;
- Provide assistance to tourism operators for the Mentorship and Elders programs;
- Support an established high school curriculum with on-the-land and exchange opportunities for youth to explore tourism-related activities and opportunities; and
- Create scholarships for post-secondary studies in tourism.



2. Objective: Communicate and facilitate opportunities to access training resources and opportunities

- Assess and monitor communication protocols with tourism operators and NWT communities;
- Develop a permanent Aboriginal tourism training fund;
- Encourage attendance for Aboriginal tourism businesses at regional tourism conferences and meetings; and
- Provide financial assistance for training to Aboriginal tourism businesses, their employees and students.

3. Objective: Collaborate with ECE and Aurora College to develop tourism training courses and programming

- Assist and advise ECE and Aurora College in the delivery of programs and courses.

Potential Partners

- GNWT Departments of ITI, ECE, Justice, Human Resources, and MACA;
- CanNor and other federal agencies;
- Aurora College and NWT Business Development and Investment Corp;
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre; and
- Aboriginal organizations such as Dene Cultural Institute, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, etc, and Seniors groups.





Communities



I. Community and Aboriginal Organization Engagement

It is important to communicate clearly and regularly while working directly with people to develop the interest and educate when securing partnership within communities and with governments. Support staff at ITI regional offices and headquarter will follow best practices of engagement while the ATCAC plays an important role in championing the benefits of tourism and the sharing of resources with people in their regions.

Priorities

- Gain community support and further understanding of tourism and its benefits;
- Engage Aboriginal and community leaders for community tourism planning; and
- Raise the profile of the tourism industry with Aboriginal governments and organizations.

Objectives

1. Encourage community understanding and support for tourism;
2. Educate community members to foster a welcoming attitude towards visitors;
3. Develop skills of Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council (ATCAC);
4. Identify and encourage local tourism champions in communities; and
5. Obtain investment and active involvement of Aboriginal governments and organizations in regional tourism development.

Recommended Actions SHORT TERM:

1. **Objective: Encourage community understanding and support for tourism**
 - Identify government departments' best practices for community engagement;



- Initiate formal meetings with regional Aboriginal governments and land claim organizations on the benefits of tourism and available support;
- Identify communities that demonstrate receptiveness to tourism;
- Develop the strategy for engagement and orientation workshops;
- Develop the engagement and orientation workshops (curriculum, materials, presentations, etc.);
- Deliver the workshops to receptive communities; and
- Develop communications strategy to promote the workshops – ads, posters, radio (using Aboriginal languages).
- Develop PowerPoint presentations with speaking notes for the champions for their specific region;
- Sponsor members of ATCAC to attend annual National Aboriginal Tourism Conferences; and
- Develop a communications plan to promote ATCAC incorporating traditional and social media.



2. Objective: Educate community members to foster a welcoming attitude towards visitors

- Develop community tourism hospitality programs;
- Identify and engage partners to share in the delivery of tourism hospitality programs; and
- Sponsor the delivery of tourism hospitality programs in communities.

3. Objective: Development of skills for Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council (ATCAC)

- Develop a plan to educate and empower ATCAC by providing training and resources;

4. Objective: Identify and encourage local tourism champions in communities

- Identify and encourage tourism champions to actively promote and support the development of Aboriginal tourism in communities.

5. Objective: Obtain investment and active involvement of Aboriginal governments and organizations in regional tourism development

- Encourage senior-level GNWT officials to engage Aboriginal government leaders on tourism potential and initiatives;



- Arrange for champions and ITI representatives to speak with various levels of Aboriginal governments through formal meetings; and
- Actively lobby for tourism to be on the agenda for discussion at regional assemblies and meetings.

MID TERM:

1. Objective: Encourage community understanding and support for tourism

- Facilitate community open houses to demonstrate the alignment of tourism with community goals;
- Deliver the engagement strategy to more communities;
- Implement the communications plan; and
- Communicate with GNWT EDOs to ensure they play a stronger role in tourism development in their communities.

2. Objective: Educate community members to foster a welcoming attitude towards visitors

- Continue to deliver tourism hospitality programs;
- Evaluate tourism hospitality programs to ensure relevancy; and
- Develop promotional and support materials for schools, Aboriginal organizations and communities.

3. Objective: Develop skills of Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council

- Continue to build skills for ATCAC by providing ongoing resources and training;
- Members to attend national conferences or events;
- Develop a succession plan for ATCAC; and
- Provide support and opportunities for networking and sharing with local and regional community champions.

4. Objective: Identify and encourage local tourism champions in communities

- Investigate ways to recognize and celebrate contributions and commitment to the development of Aboriginal tourism (i.e.: publicity, promotion and awards).



5. Obtain investment and active involvement of Aboriginal governments and organizations in regional tourism development

- Arrange and facilitate government-to-government communication on tourism;
- Encourage and support ATCAC members to actively represent Aboriginal tourism to local and regional government; and
- Take initial steps to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Aboriginal organizations.

LONG TERM:

1. Objective: Encourage community understanding and support for tourism

- Plan and deliver territorial Aboriginal tourism conferences;
- Advise and provide information and support for the development community tourism plans; and
- Evaluate the communications strategy.

2. Objective: Educate community members to foster a welcoming attitude towards visitors

- Continue to deliver tourism hospitality programs;
- Evaluate tourism hospitality programs to ensure relevancy; and
- Provide follow up support for hospitality skills through Regional Tourism officers (RTOs), local EDOs, ATCAC or other local champions.

3. Objective: Develop skills of Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council

- Continue to seek opportunities for champions to further their knowledge and understanding of the tourism industry in NWT, and the national and international markets.

4. Objective: Identify and encourage local tourism champions in communities

- Provide support and opportunity for networking with other tourism advocates and leaders for local and regional community champions; and

- Establish ways to recognize the contributions and commitment for the development of Aboriginal tourism.



5. Objective: Obtain investment and active involvement of Aboriginal governments and organizations in regional tourism development

- Encourage Aboriginal governments to develop tourism support programs and initiatives within their organizations;
- Encourage and support ATCAC members to actively represent Aboriginal tourism to local and regional government; and
- Sign memorandum of understanding with Aboriginal organizations for Aboriginal tourism development.

Potential Partners

- GNWT Departments of ITI, ECE, Justice, and MACA;
- CanNor and other federal agencies;
- Aurora College; and
- Aboriginal organizations such as Dene Cultural Institute, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, etc, and Seniors groups.

II. Infrastructure Enhancement and Development

Tourists require relative ease of travel with safe, comfortable places to stay and reliable places to eat while they enjoy interesting places to visit. Each community will benefit from assessing their assets and possible weaknesses for developing their potential including upgrades to infrastructure. The vast expanse of the North creates many challenges and we need to look at meeting them for providing quality visitor experiences.

Priorities

- Acknowledge the realities of remote community access (i.e. roads, air routes, and cost of transport); and
- Address the shortage or lack of accommodations, restaurants and local transportation options.

Objectives

1. Establish community tourism infrastructure (i.e.: Visitor Information Centre (VIC), museum/interpretive center, signage for tourism);
2. Encourage advocacy for improvements to current and future infrastructure and transportation; and
3. Support options to address the lack of accommodation, transportation and food services in small and remote communities.

Recommended Actions SHORT TERM:

1. **Objective: Establish community tourism infrastructure**
 - Investigate non-traditional, innovative options for infrastructure (i.e. using community buildings such as schools/community halls or temporary structures like wall tents); and



- Review existing interpretive signage and tourism information with communities (highlighting best practices and shortcomings).

2. Objective: Encourage advocacy for improvements to current and future infrastructure and transportation

- Encourage NWTT to advocate for improved infrastructure requirements (i.e.: roads, airports, community trails, docks and marinas);
- Engage communities and Aboriginal organizations in discussions about reviving and using traditional place names



for attractions, parks and sites (see *Geographic Names – Cultural Places Project* at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre);

- Investigate procedures required for reviving and using traditional Aboriginal place names; and
 - In support of language revitalization, ensure that appropriate language experts are consulted in all name proposals.
- ## 3. Objective: Support options to address the lack of accommodation, transportation and food services in small and remote communities
- Investigate established models for homestay programs and options in other remote areas of the world;
 - Investigate options for provision of food service in small communities;
 - Determine the current rules and regulation of providing wild foods in the NWT and other places in Canada; and

- Identify communities where local transportation is a challenge or unavailable for tourists.

MID TERM:

1. Objective: Establish community tourism infrastructure (i.e. VICs, museum/interpretive center, signage for tourism)

- Identify opportunities for developing tourism attractions in non-traditional venues and establish these centers as models;
- Engage communities for partnerships to share existing resources and spaces within communities; and
- Continue to consult with communities on signage.

2. Objective: Encourage advocacy for improvements to current and future infrastructure and transportation

- Strive for best fits for advocacy (i.e.: NWTT for engagement of Aboriginal leadership to call for infrastructure improvements);



- Support community leaders in their requests for infrastructure improvements; and
 - Encourage and support ATCAC to prepare and present road access improvement as a resolution for NWTT.
- 3. Objective: Support options to address the lack of accommodation, transportation and food services in small and remote communities**
- Work with communities to support the creation of homestay programs and other accommodation solutions in small communities;
 - Evaluate findings for provision of food services and share with communities;
 - Draft plain language brochures with guidelines around the offering and selling of fish, wild game, and berries and other plants; and
 - Explore and share alternative models for providing local transportation.

LONG TERM:

- 1. Objective: Establish community tourism infrastructure**
 - Advise on the development of community tourism signage.
- 2. Objective: Encourage advocacy for improvements to current and future infrastructure and transportation**
 - Monitor and support plans for long term advocacy for tourism infrastructure improvement.
- 3. Objective: Support options to address the lack of accommodation, transportation and food services in small and remote communities**
 - Establish and support homestay programs with interested communities and promote as models for others.

Potential Partners

- Aboriginal organizations such as Dene Cultural Institute, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, etc, and Seniors groups;
- Aurora College;
- CanNor and other federal agencies;
- GNWT Departments of ITI, ECE, Justice, Transportation and MACA;
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre; and
- NWT Tourism (NWTT).





Business



I. Product Development

The current level of Aboriginal Tourism product offering is extremely limited particularly when defined as market-ready. Market-ready products are the backbone of the tourism industry and a market driven approach to product development is critical and ensures that products are grounded by consumers and travellers preferences.

Priorities

- Set guidelines for endorsement of authenticity of cultural experiences, validating the product for the visitor;
- Participate in research and development;
- Ensure a market driven approach defined by consumer preference;
- Facilitate the sampling of northern wild foods; and
- Inform and prepare the tourism industry to produce market ready, high quality products.

Objectives

1. Increase the number of Aboriginal cultural tourism products;
2. Develop product guidelines/ standards and market ready criteria;
3. Provide advice and funding for Aboriginal product development;
4. Participate in research and share findings;
5. Establish endorsement bodies for authenticating Aboriginal tourism experiences; and
6. Provide methods for sharing northern wild foods with

Recommended Actions

SHORT TERM:

1. **Objective: Increase the number of Aboriginal tourism products**
 - Create awareness of existing tourism products and engage communities to explore new types and varieties of tourism products;



- Consult with community governments about tourism product development;
 - Identify partners for the development of Aboriginal tourism products; and
 - Educate communities on market readiness standards by sharing successful models and best practices.
- 2. Objective: Develop product standards and market readiness**
- Share the definition of the Authentic Aboriginal Cultural Experience;
 - Consult with Aboriginal governments and organization when developing standards; and
 - Research market ready criteria and occupational standards.
- 3. Objective: Provide funding for Aboriginal product development**
- Identify sources of funding for Aboriginal tourism product development;
 - Explore opportunities for funding partnerships with Aboriginal governments; and
 - Investigate an Aboriginal tourism subsidy program for Aboriginal entrepreneurs.
- 4. Objective: Participate in research and share findings**
- Identify research gaps and investigate opportunities for engagement with southern universities and other research institutions to fill research needs.
- 5. Objective: Establish endorsement bodies for authenticating Aboriginal tourism experiences**
- Investigate other tourism models used for endorsement of authenticity of product and industry certification; and
 - Consult partners for feedback on process considering regional differences.
- 6. Objective: Provide methods for sharing northern wild foods with visitors**
- Investigate food service options for developing local Aboriginal chefs to prepare local food products consistent with demands of visitors.





MID TERM:

1. Objective: Increase the number of Aboriginal tourism products

- Continue to create awareness of products through community engagement process with more communities as they show readiness;
- Develop a Product Development Assistance Program to build capacity; and
- Provide product development assistance to tourism businesses.

2. Objective: Develop product standards and market readiness

- Develop and confirm product standards and certification processes for market readiness in consultation with Aboriginal governments and organizations; and
- Classify existing products in terms of market readiness.

3. Objective: Provide funding for Aboriginal product development

- Assist entrepreneurs and communities to identify and utilize funding opportunities;

- Explore new sources of funding for Aboriginal tourism product development; and
- Engage Aboriginal governments for commitment to funding partnerships.

4. Objective: Participate in research and share findings

- Establish relationships for targeted research projects with universities and other research institutions.

5. Objective: Establish endorsement bodies for authenticating Aboriginal tourism experiences

- Identify and engage appropriate bodies as approval authorities for authenticating Aboriginal tourism products; and
- Provide support and training to appropriate endorsement bodies.

6. Objective: Provide methods for sharing northern wild foods with visitors

- Share food service options for developing local Aboriginal chefs and food providers to prepare local food product consistent with demands of visitors;



- Investigate northern gourmet cooking training curriculum with ECE and Aurora College; and
- Investigate engagement of a successful Canadian Aboriginal chef to come to the territory to share preparation and cooking ideas.



LONG TERM:

1. Objective: Increase the number of Aboriginal tourism products

- Encourage NWTT to administer and evaluate product development workshops for regions and communities; and
- Ensure ITI representatives have the skills and knowledge to offer support and to assist in development of product.

2. Objective: Develop product standards and market readiness

- Support and educate operators and communities about market readiness standards;
- Provide advice and assistance in packaging and pricing; and
- Review and evaluate product authenticity and market readiness.

3. Objective: Provide funding for Aboriginal product development

- Review and evaluate existing partnership for continuity and increased funding.

4. Objective: Participate in research and share findings

- Support research and communicate findings with tourism operators and communities.

5. Objective: Establish endorsement bodies for authenticating Aboriginal tourism experiences

- Continue to provide support for authenticating Aboriginal tourism products; and
- Continue to communicate and evaluate the authentication process.

6. Objective: Provide methods for sharing northern wild foods with visitors

- Support delivery methods to train local Aboriginal chefs and food providers to prepare local food product consistent with demands of visitors; and
- Initiate and support northern gourmet cooking courses through Aurora College or other institutions.



Potential Partners

- GNWT Departments of ITI, ECE, Justice, and MACA;
- CanNor and other federal funding agencies;
- Aboriginal organizations such as Dene Cultural Institute, Inuvialuit Regional Council, etc, and Seniors groups;
- Universities in southern Canada offering tourism courses;
- Aurora College;
- NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation;
- Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC);
- NWT Tourism (NWTT);
- Northern Aboriginal Business Association (NABA);
- Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee (TMAC); and
- Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC).



II. Marketing and Community Development

NWT Tourism is the destination marketing agency for the Northwest Territories and includes advertising, production of travel guides, media and trade relations, facilitates trade show attendance, and also provides tourism member services and programs. Communities, operators and business owners will benefit from education, advice and support as they determine who fits their market and how to effectively promote, while accessing the tools to deliver quality products and services that meet market expectations.

Priorities

- Work with NWTT specifically for Aboriginal tourism;
- Create awareness of Aboriginal tourism products;
- Educate and train tourism operators and communities about marketing and communication;
- Search funding sources to assist in operators in marketing; and
- Participate in specific market research to understand the demand for Aboriginal cultural tourism products.

Objectives

1. Ensure NWTT promotes Aboriginal Tourism;
2. Develop a marketing strategy with NWTT;
3. Develop marketing education programs;
4. Advocate for additional funding for NWTT for the marketing of Aboriginal Tourism; and
5. Participate and promote NWT Aboriginal Tourism at the national level.

Recommended Actions

SHORT TERM:

1. Objective: Ensure NWTT promotes Aboriginal Tourism

- Meet with NWTT to review Aboriginal tourism marketing plans;
- ATCAC to advocate and encourage recognition of existing Aboriginal tourism product; and
- Provide support and assistance to ATCAC to present the *NWT Aboriginal Tourism: Recommendations for a Strategic Action Plan* to the Tourism Marketing Advisory Council.

2. Objective: Develop a marketing strategy with NWTT

- Develop, adopt and promote a visual identity and brand for Aboriginal Tourism NWT.

3. Objective: Develop marketing training programs

- Distribute the Market Ready Handbook;

- Address marketing for Aboriginal tourism products in ITI's quarterly newsletter; and

- Determine the training needs of the EDOs and RTOs in communities.

4. Objective: Advocate for additional funding for NWTT for the marketing of Aboriginal Tourism

- Ensure future requests for funding reflect and include Aboriginal Tourism; and
- Address funding needs as part of community engagement talks with Aboriginal governments.

5. Objective: Participate and promote NWT Aboriginal Tourism at the national level

- Continue to play active national role in the Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC); and

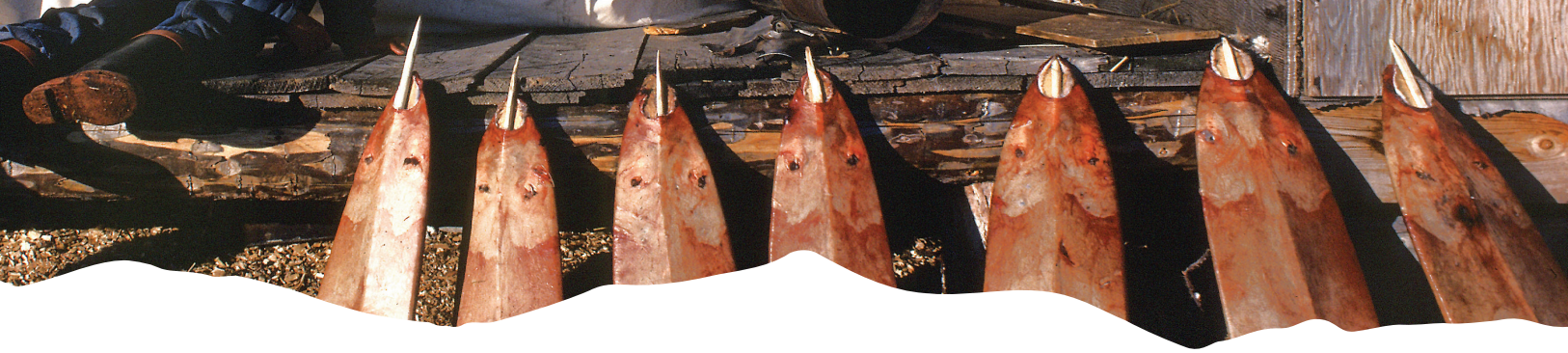
- ATCAC members to attend National Aboriginal Tourism Conferences.

LONG TERM:

1. Objective: Ensure NWTT promotes Aboriginal Tourism

- Ensure Aboriginal tourism remains an integral part of NWTT's annual marketing plan.





2. Objective: Develop marketing skills development programs

- Regularly schedule the delivery of marketing training sessions and establish methods for sharing information among the regions;
- Include Aboriginal tourism marketing updates at conferences and workshops; and
- Ensure EDOs and Regional Tourist Officers have access to Tourism Marketing training.

3. Objective: Secure funding for marketing Aboriginal Tourism

- Confirm partnerships with Aboriginal governments with signed Memorandum of Understanding.

4. Objective: Participation and promote NWT Aboriginal Tourism at the national level

- Look for opportunities to be recognized as leaders in Aboriginal Tourism at the National and International Levels; and

- Explore ways to promote Aboriginal tourism pan-northern partnerships with Yukon, Nunavut and circumpolar countries.

Potential Partners

- GNWT Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI);
- NWT Tourism (NWTT);
- Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee (TMAC);
- Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC);
- Canadian Tourism Commission;
- Aurora College;
- NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation;
- NWT Aboriginal governments and agencies;
- Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC);
- Tourism Industry Association of Yukon;

- Federal Government – CanNor, Human Resource Development, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC);
- Parks Canada;
- Government of Yukon (GY) - Culture and Tourism;
- Government of Nunavut (GN) ; and
- Northern Aboriginal Business Association (NABA).



III. Business and Organizational Development

There is a critical need for the development of business skills for Aboriginal tourism operators. It is important to provide business skill training in such key areas as bookkeeping, business administration including common hurdles as insurance, licenses, etc. Specific training in tourism related to marketing, bookings, financial and human resource management will be essential to ensuring businesses are sustainable and are prepared for growth and diversification for benefits.

Priorities

- Address and meet the challenges of operating tourism business in small, isolated communities; and
- Share and support best practices of successful models.

Objectives

1. Encourage and support efficient and effective business operations;
2. Share best practice business models for small communities; and
3. Educate Aboriginal organizations about opportunities to establish tourism businesses.

Recommended Actions SHORT TERM:

1. **Objective: Encourage and support efficient and effective business operations**
 - Identify business training opportunities for each region; and
 - Educate EDOs and RTOs on Aboriginal tourism challenges and opportunities.

2. **Objective: Share best practice business models for small communities**
 - Identify business best practices for tourism operators; and
 - Provide ATCAC with training materials to share with communities.
3. **Objective: Educate Aboriginal organizations about opportunities to establish tourism businesses**
 - Identify and report tourism business models to share during community visits.

MID TERM:

1. **Objective: Encourage and support efficient and effective business operations**
 - Identify and engage business mentors in communities; and
 - Ensure support is available for business operations through EDOs and RTOs.



2. Objective: Share best practice business models for small communities

- Explore the possibilities of familiarization tour models;
- Exploring opportunities to bring tour operators and people involved in tourism industry together; and
- Provide resources to ATCAC to meet with interested business operators and community governments.

3. Objective: Educate Aboriginal organizations about opportunities to establish tourism businesses

- Continue community consultation process; and
- Identify communities with a strong interest in Aboriginal tourism development to establish pilot projects for successful, sustainable Aboriginal tourism products and businesses.

LONG TERM:

1. Objective: Encourage and support efficient and effective business operations

- Monitor and evaluate various business models for success.

2. Objective: Share best practice business models for small communities

- Support familiarization tours for NWT operators to successful Aboriginal tourism operators in other jurisdictions; and
- Continue to provide support and education for EDOs and RTOs.

3. Objective: Educate Aboriginal organizations about opportunities to establish tourism businesses

- Continue to identify and work with communities with strong interests in Aboriginal tourism and develop as models for others.

Potential Partners

- GNWT Departments of ITI and MACA;
- Aurora College;
- NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation;
- NWT Aboriginal governments and agencies;
- Federal Government – CanNor, Human Resource Development, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC); and
- National Aboriginal Business Association (NABA).



Partners, Resources and Investments



The Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment and Northwest Territories Tourism will be the lead partners in the development and marketing of Aboriginal tourism.

Partners Involved in Planning, Delivery, and/or Funding

- Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC)
- Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC)
- NWT Tourism (NWTT)
- Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee (TMAC)
- Tourism Industry Association of Yukon

Funding and Development Partners

- Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council

- Federal Government – CanNor, Human Resource Development, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)
- Municipal governments
- Government of Nunavut (GN)
- National Aboriginal Business Association
- Parks Canada
- Government of Yukon (GY) - Culture and Tourism

Government of the NWT (Departments)

- Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations
- Education, Culture and Employment
- Environment and Natural Resources
- Industry, Tourism and Investment
- Justice
- Municipal and Community Affairs
- Transportation

Government of the NWT (Agencies and Divisions)

- Aurora College
- NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre

NWT Aboriginal Governments, Organizations and Agencies

- Akaitcho Territory Government
- Dehcho First Nations
- Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Inuvialuit Regional Council
- NWT Métis Nation
- Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
- Tłı̨chǫ Government



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Our logo is a vibrant representation of our Aboriginal cultures in the Northwest Territories bringing together three visual elements: Métis Sash, Inuit Snow Goggles and Dene Drum.

Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council

- Ria Letcher, Co-Chair - *Fort Simpson, NT*
- Jenni Bruce, Co-Chair - *NWT Tourism Representative*
- Grant Beck - *Yellowknife, NT*
- Knute Hansen - *Aklavik, NT*
- Peggy Jay - *Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee Representative*
- Doug Lamalice - *Hay River, NT*
- Margaret Nazon - *Tsiigehtchic, NT*
- Moise Rabesca - *Behchokò, NT*
- Judith Wright-Bird - *Tulita, NT*
- Karen Wright-Fraser - *Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Ex-Officio*
- Richard Zieba - *Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Ex-Officio*





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www.iti.gov.nt.ca/tourismparks/aboriginaltourism.shtml