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For Immediate Release

Federal Government Signs New Agreement with ATMC

(Ottawa, Ont.) – The Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC) and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), through the Aboriginal Procurement and Business Development Directorate, signed a major agreement yesterday in Ottawa. ATMC Chairperson Keith Henry and AANDC Director General Nicole Ladouceur signed the first ever Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning Aboriginal Tourism.

ATMC is a national Aboriginal cultural tourism industry based member-based organization. ATMC has twenty four (24) members from across Canada and creates partnerships between associations, organizations, government departments, and industry leaders. The members work to collectively pursue initiatives to support the growth of Aboriginal tourism in Canada.

The purpose of MOU signed yesterday is:

- a) Formalize the commitment of the Parties to work together to ensure that the implementation of the Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development (the Framework), more specifically as it relates to national tourism opportunities for Aboriginal business and commitments outlined in the Federal Tourism Strategy occur in a coordinated fashion that optimize the value of federal investments and lead to more positive outcomes in supporting Aboriginal economic development;
- b) Strengthen and clarify mechanisms for communication between the federal government and the Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle, and identify key points of contact. For the purposes of this MOU, the Aboriginal Procurement and Business Partnerships (APBP) directorate of the Aboriginal Entrepreneurship Branch of Lands and Economic Development Sector will be the primary point of contact on this initiative for AANDC. The Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle will be the primary point of contact for the Canadian Aboriginal tourism industry;
- c) Establish a collaborative and coordinated partnership in key areas to promote and foster economic development through Aboriginal tourism among Aboriginal businesses, individuals and communities in Canada; and,
- d) Engage other potential partners, including other federal departments, provincial, territorial and municipal authorities, to identify opportunities for greater collaboration, as well as projects or activities that can be undertaken.

ATMC Chair Keith Henry stated; “ATMC members are grateful to AANDC and the Government of Canada for supporting the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry. This MOU is an important step forward to formalize the relationship and signal the importance of Aboriginal tourism in Canada. The leadership by Nicole and her team at AANDC has led to this important next step.”



ATMC Chair Henry concluded; “ATMC and AANDC are taking steps to implement the MOU including a future presentation regarding the economic value of Aboriginal tourism at the Canadian Council of Tourism Ministers, National Research project, and expansion of the ATMC website portal. There is important new work to complete together and ATMC members are very pleased with the progress after years of work together as an industry. Moreover ATMC members recognize the important work yet to be completed throughout all Provinces and territories to increase Aboriginal participation in Aboriginal tourism. There is growing Aboriginal tourism demand from a variety of markets and together with partners we can significantly increase the value for all tourism in Canada.”

For more information about ATMC or the tools developed to support Aboriginal communities, organizations and entrepreneurs please view at www.aboriginaltourismmarketingcircle.ca.

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Media Inquiries:

Keith Henry
Chair
Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle
k.henry@aboriginalbc.com
1-778-388-5013

And

Chief Executive Officer
Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia