



*Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada  
April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015  
Activity Report*



*(left to right photo: Lori Beaver, Patricia Dunnet, Trina Mather Simard, Keith Henry, April Richardson, Jeff Provost, Linda Sarazin, Dave Leveau, Robert Bernard, Robin McGinley, Blake Rogers, Carole Bellefleur, Dpugl;as Dillon, and Brenda Dragon)*

Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC)

International Aboriginal Tourism Conference

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*The Great Spirit Circle Trail M'chigeeng, Ontario*

## 1) About ATAC

The Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC) includes over 20 Aboriginal tourism industry organizations and government representatives from every province and territory in Canada. Through a unified Aboriginal tourism industry voice, ATAC focuses on marketing, product development support, and creating partnerships between associations, organizations, government departments and industry leaders from across Canada to support the growth of Aboriginal tourism in Canada



*Aboriginal Experiences, Ottawa, Ontario*



*Yukon First Nation Tourism Association*

## 2) Purpose

The purposes of the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC) is to improve the socio-economic situation of Aboriginal people through the provisions of economic development advisory services, conferences, professional development training and workshops, industry statistics and information for Aboriginal tourism operators and communities or those looking to start a tourism business within the 13 regions; 10 provinces and 3 territories of Canada.

ATAC will develop relationships with other groups and/or regions with similar mandates, uniting the Aboriginal tourism industry in Canada. ATAC will work to enable collective support, promotion and marketing of authentic Aboriginal tourism businesses in a respecting protocol.



*Nunavut Tourism*



### 3) Chairperson Message



The Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC) has taken significant steps during 2014-2015 to support Aboriginal tourism in Canada. A dedicated group of Aboriginal tourism industry volunteers from across Canada continued working to create a new national Aboriginal tourism voice providing key policy, programming and marketing strategies to increase support for Aboriginal tourism operators and the entire tourism industry.

Under the previous title as the Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC) approximately 24 representatives supported a number of key initiatives to build the Aboriginal tourism industry. This included developing a consistent Aboriginal industry-led national approach to market readiness and marketing strategies, and maximizing key partners such as the Government of Canada, Tourism Industry Association of Canada, and the Canadian Tourism Commission.

Through this approach ATMC members accomplished many significant steps; presentation to the First Minister Meeting on Tourism in Prince Edward Island, the first ever presentation of the National Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Award at the Canadian Tourism Awards, successful partnership support for the International Aboriginal Tourism Conference in Quebec City, and many other successful projects.

One of the most significant and rewarding accomplishments was the incorporation of ATAC after months of developing governance that founding members agreed represented the interests of the Aboriginal tourism industry in Canada. ATAC is legally registered as a federal non-profit society that includes 14 founding board members.

The following report outlines the key ATAC successes delivering several national Aboriginal tourism projects. This includes new research assessing the economic value of Aboriginal tourism in Canada, the launch of the new national ATAC marketing website portal, and representation at Rendez-vous Canada in May 2015.

I want to acknowledge our founding members and Aboriginal leaders who continue to recognize the tremendous opportunity the Aboriginal cultural tourism sector provides for employment, cultural revitalization and economic benefits for communities and entrepreneurs. I also want to acknowledge the key support from Industry Canada and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada for contributing to the current success.

The future growth for authentic Aboriginal tourism will ensure growth of the entire tourism industry and ATAC and our future planning will ensure success.

Thank you

Keith Henry  
Chair and Chief Executive Officer  
Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada

#### 4) Consumer Branding and Website Portal Project



The Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada contracted with The Update Company to deliver a consumer branding, logo design, domain name acquisition and a consumer web portal design and development.

Work commenced on August 1, 2014, an update report was provided on August 15, 2015 and the final project report on March 18, 2015.

The website with the new brand now includes approximately 80 Aboriginal tourism experiences and events from every province and territory in Canada with significant interest from many other Aboriginal tourism operators in Canada to join. The website is located at [www.AboriginalCanada.ca](http://www.AboriginalCanada.ca).

#### 5) National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project 2015



Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada posted a Request for Proposal on May 2, 2014. After reviewing submissions O'Neil Marketing & Consulting was the successful proponent.

Work commenced on July 15, 2014, an interim report was provided in August and the final report was delivered March 31, 2015. The report has been available on the ATAC website since April 30, 2015 <http://aboriginalcanada.ca/corporate/national-aboriginal-tourism-research-report-2015/>.

The final report was presented at the ATAC Members Meeting held on March 23, 2015 in Quebec City, Quebec.

*Cree Arts & Crafts Cree Tourism, Quebec*

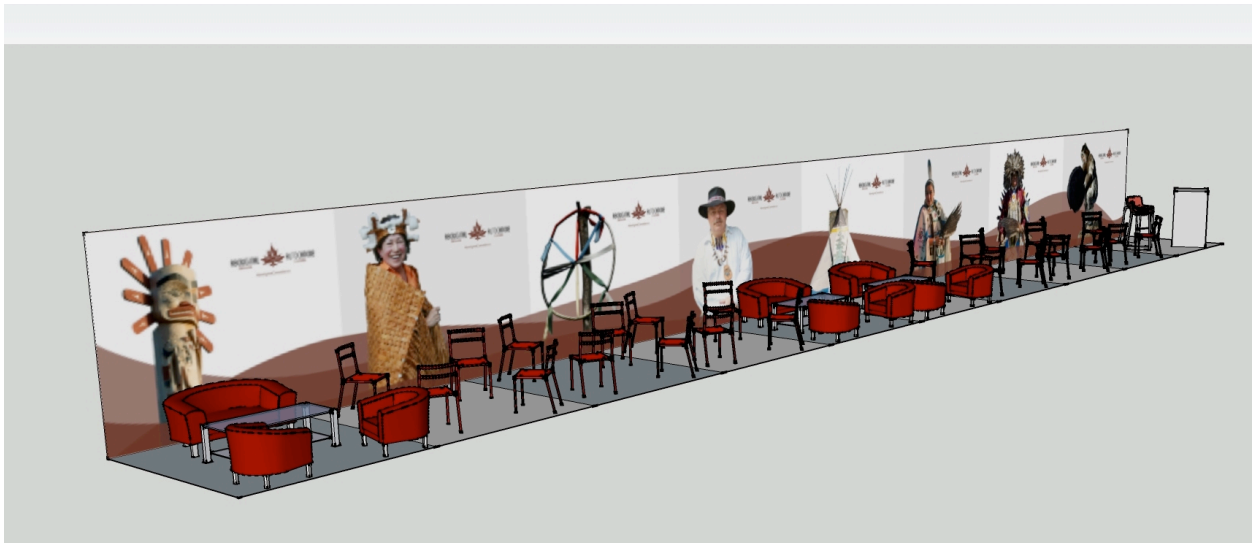
#### 6) Rendez-vous Canada 2015 Partnership

Rendez-vous Canada is Canada's premier international tourism marketplace, led by the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), connecting international tourism buyers with sellers of Canadian tourism experiences and products. The event reunites more than 1,500 international tourism professionals gathered over four days for a series of 12-minute appointments to promote and

discover unique Canadian tourism experiences. RVC is an important industry-trade platform for Canadian and Aboriginal communities to generate hundreds of millions of dollars for tourism products and experiences.

There is a growing global demand for authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism, prompting ATAC to unveil the inaugural national Aboriginal tourism section on the tradeshow floor with 18 Aboriginal Tourism businesses from across Canada at RVC. This showcase is designed to feature authentic Aboriginal tourism experiences while facilitating productive business connections with domestic and international buyers. Distinctive Aboriginal themed banners and booth signage was been designed for the event.

ATAC sponsored a luncheon on Friday May 29<sup>th</sup> including Aboriginal themed signage, cuisine, crafts and art demonstrations, lacrosse demonstration and artifacts, traditional drumming, singing & dancing, contemporary music, aboriginal fashion and audio-visual arts.



## 6) a. 2015 Rendez-vous Canada Participants Feedback

*“First I want to thank you and the Aboriginal Tourism team for doing an absolutely amazing job. This was my 10<sup>th</sup> RVC and it was an honor to represent Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump within the Aboriginal Tourism section in Niagara Falls. It was a very special experience”*

*Duncan Daniels, Government of Alberta  
Hwy #785, Alberta*

*“Thank you so much for organizing the Aboriginal Canada section at RVC 2015 and allowing Grey Goose Lodge/Destination Deline to participate. This is the second year we have represented Destination Deline and I am overwhelmed at the response we received this year. Moving from the NWT section to one that is dedication to Aboriginal Experiences in Canada has proven very beneficial!”*

*Jackie Frederick, Destination Deline/Grey Goose Lodge*

*Great Bear Lake Deline, Northwest Territories*

*“Thanks on the amazing work you guys put out! I’m glad we got to be part of the adventure and hope we can continue on the way. Congrats to you and your team.”*

*Sébastien Desnoyer Picard, Tourisme Autochtone  
Quebec City, Quebec*

*“It was being part of ATAC that inspired us to go to the Rendez-vous Canada trade show and I am so pleased that Metepenagiag Heritage Park has successfully booked two confirmed site visits with a seller from Italy and the Netherlands. Thank you for your support and encouragement.”*

*Patricia Dunnett, Metepenagiag Heritage Park  
Red Bank, New Brunswick*

*“I want to take this opportunity to thank you for including Skwachays Lodge Hotel and Gallery in the ATAC sponsored RVC 2015 to represent Aboriginal tourism products and services. The dynamic group of businesses showcased at the event had a huge impact.*

*We met with several direct book tour operators from China, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary and Japan including Explorer Fernreisen, Can Am Dreams, Arapro, Travel Canada.be, Exclusively Hotels, Tiptoes Canada and La Case Depart.”*

*Maggie Edwards, Skwachays Lodge,  
Vancouver, British Columbia*

*Thanks again for the work you and your team did to set the stage for a very successful RVC for Spirit Bear Lodge. We felt very proud to be a part of the ATAC team. Many buyers commented at how impressed they were with the caliber of the Aboriginal products at the show. The ATAC sponsored lunch was truly a hit out of the park. We look forward to 2016 in Montreal with an even bigger ATAC presence!”*

*Tim McGrady, Spirit Bear Lodge  
Klemtu, British Columbia*

*“This is my 5<sup>th</sup> RVC and I can honestly say the best not only in having a dedicated Aboriginal Tourism section, but also to the response we received from the travel trade. There really is a demand for Aboriginal experiences from Canada. The sponsored lunch was well organized and had people raving about the food and entertainment for the rest of RVC! Thank you to Destination Canada for their support. Looking forward to next year and the continued growth of Aboriginal tourism in Canada.”*

Jeff Provost, General Manager, Eastside Aboriginal Sustainable Tourism Inc.  
Winnipeg, MB

Link to Rendez-vous Canada 2015 Aboriginal cultural tourism slide show:  
<http://aboriginalcanada.ca/corporate/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/RVC-Lunch-Presentation-v2-smaller.pdf>

Link to Rendez-vous Canada 2015 Welcome Video (English):  
<https://vimeo.com/aboriginalcanada>

Link to Rendez-vous Canada 2015 Welcome Video (French):  
<https://vimeo.com/129465605>

## 7) ATAC Members Meeting March 23, 2015

Sixteen members of the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada members attended the 2015 International Aboriginal Tourism Conference (IATC) in Quebec City, QC on March 23 – 25, 2015.

ATAC took advantage of the gathering to hold an Association meeting on March 23, 2015. Attending guests included Nicholas Yee and Brad Cline from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada along with Ilona Rehbarg and Jena Cameron from Industry Canada. Key agenda items – ATAC Incorporation, ATAC Projects, Regional Updates, IATC Conference and the Pacific Asia Indigenous Tourism Operators Conference September 2015 in Vancouver.

## 8) ATAC Next Steps

Given the successful delivery by ATAC of the projects and results of the research the key recommended next steps are to:

- Further stabilize ATAC operational effectiveness;
- Prepare new five year plan for ATAC as the industry lead to achieve increased visitor spending and capacity development for operators;
- Implement the recommendations identified in the national research project;
- Develop international marketing strategy to support export and market ready Aboriginal tourism businesses

## 9) Budget

<b>Revenue</b>			
	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
	National Aboriginal Tourism Research and Web Portal - AANDC	183,500	183,500
	Rendez-vous Canada Partnership - AANDC	60,000	60,000
		<u>243,500</u>	<u>243,500</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
	<b>National Aboriginal Tourism Research and Web Portal</b>		
	Consultant and Research Cost	82,175	82,175
	Consultant and Web Portal	65,000	65,000
	Translation and Auditor	10,000	10,000
	Administrative Costs	3,500	640
	Travel	22,825	25,685
		<u>183,500</u>	<u>183,500</u>
	<b>Rendez-vous Canada</b>		
	Registrations and Trade Floor Show	60,000	60,000
		<u>60,000</u>	<u>60,000</u>
	<b>Net Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada  
 707 – 100 Park Royal  
 West Vancouver, BC  
 V7T 1A2

[www.OriginalCanada.ca](http://www.OriginalCanada.ca)