

What's New

1. As the holidays are fast approaching, we want to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very safe and happy holiday season. We look forward to continuing our work with you to structure and develop tourism in Eeyou Istchee in 2018.

2. COTA team member, Timothy Wapachee, attended the **International Aboriginal Tourism Conference (IATC)** in Calgary. Presentations are available on the conference website at <https://iatc-canada.ca/presentations/>. I had the privilege of attending the 2017 International Aboriginal Tourism Conference November 7 – 8 in Calgary, Alberta this year. The theme to this year's conference was "Raising our voices: Building economy through Indigenous tourism and community stories".

The conference featured many First Nations people who have integrated their culture in a successful tourism business. It was especially inspiring to hear Senator Murray Sinclair from Manitoba speak on how tourism can help us develop our economy while preserving and strengthening our culture. It is by sharing our stories that we will enable our language to thrive.

It was encouraging to hear the successes of other First Nations across Canada and the United States as they build their economy through tourism. Hopefully, in the years to come, more Crees who are at the grassroots level and that are thinking about developing a business in the tourism industry can attend these conferences and get insight on the possibilities of what can be offered in Eeyou Istchee. Thank you, COTA, for this opportunity.

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3. International Economusée Conference in Norway

COTA was pleased to invite Conrad Mianscum, Tourism Coordinator and Jane Longchap, Cultural Coordinator from Mistissini to attend the conference. Highlights included the opportunity to visit 9 different “Economusées -Artisans at work” in Norway that ranged from cider producers to traditional boat builders. The common thread was that they were using the Economusée model to preserve traditional knowhow and earn a living from their craft. The conference was attended by representatives from different Economusées from across Europe and Canada. More information about the Economusée network can be found on the website <http://www.economusees.com/en/>

ABOUT THE TEAM: PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT – LOUISE SÉGUIN

1. Entrepreneur Boot Camp for Cree Tourism Start-ups

COTA in collaboration with the Cree Nation Government, the Crees of Waskaganish First Nation and the ministère de l’Economie, de la Science et de l’Innovation, will be organizing the Entrepreneur Bootcamp in January 2018 in Waskaganish. Between 2 and 4 families interested in developing a tourism business will be participating in the pilot project delivered by Irene Neeposh from Waswanipi. The tourism entrepreneur boot camp is a pre-start-up and business planning training program. This program will help potential Cree entrepreneurs to better understand the commitment and personal involvement required to start and operate their own business. A coaching program could be made available for those who complete the workshop and decide to go further in the elaboration of their business project.

2. Marine Tourism Update

Summer 2017 saw the successful completion of the Marine captain training and reconnaissance program. Our Cree Captains and the zodiac tours were the highlight of our Annual Tourism Conference held in Waskaganish. The tourism potential of the coast has been confirmed and a successful media tour was hosted in August where our Cree captains shined and we were entertained by belugas and white bears. We are now starting the pre-commercialisation phase of the project with the support of AANDC, CNG and the Cree communities of Waskaganish, Eastmain and Wemindji. This project will support the development of a comprehensive business development and operations plan for the successful operation of the marine tourism product(s) in southern James Bay. The two northern Cree communities, Chisasibi and Whapmagoostui, will also eventually benefit from the results of this process.

COTA is proud to announce that Jamie Moses, himself a trained marine captain from Eastmain, will be coordinating the project on site for COTA. He will be working with Arctic Kingdom and Danielle Larose a lawyer specializing in the social economy. A joint approach that includes committed stakeholders, such as the certified marine captains, the development corporations and the tourism officers, will be used to examine the different options available and help set winning conditions for product development, marketing and operations.

3. Regional Tourism Partnership Agreement (RTPA)

A first call for projects took place in November and a total of 5 projects from 4 communities have been submitted to the RTPA Management Committee. The projects will be analysed in December by the Management Committee, which is composed of representatives of the four partners in the agreement: Cree Nation Government, Ministère du Tourisme du Québec, Eeyou Istchee Tourism and Société de développement de la Baie-James. The RTPA has been created in order to support and stimulate the development, continuous improvement and structuring of the tourism offer in the Eeyou Istchee tourism region. The projects submitted must be of a structuring nature and must contribute to enhancing and expanding the tourism offer. The next call for projects will be launched in December, with a deadline of February 28. You can find out more about the program on COTA's web site at the following address: <http://www.creetourism.ca/tourism-matters/rtpa-program/>

MARKETING – CAMILLE CASTONGUAY, VICTORIA CROWE AND ANGEL MIANSUM

1. New Marketing Coordinator – Camille Castonguay

We would like to welcome our newest team member, Camille Castonguay in the position of Marketing Coordinator. She will be working for both Eeyou Istchee Tourism and Tourisme Baie James.



2. Into the North 2017-2018



From July 16th to 27th, a team of photographers, filmmakers, models and the Marketing Coordinator went for a tour in the Eeyou Istchee Baie-James region. The goal of this tour was to create promotional content for our next big international project: **Into the North**. The team visited Cree and Jamesian communities to capture great images for this project. Into the North will be organized as a contest for 6 adventurers who will win their trip to Eeyou Istchee Baie-James by entering a contest on social media. There is a complete marketing campaign designed around this project.

3. Snowmobile Map 2017-2018

The new 2017-2018 snowmobile trail map is now printed and available for distribution. Both Jamesian and Cree members participated by purchasing advertising. More than 20 000 copies of the map are distributed both in the province of Quebec and abroad.



4. Media Tour with - Go-Van

Go-Van is a blogger and a filmmaker who came to the region this summer. He was accompanied by @David_maman a large influencer who reaches more than 49k followers. A road trip through our region gave them the opportunity to live the real experience of Eeyou Istchee Baie-James. They visited Nuuhchimi Wiinuu, Smokey Hills in Waskaganish, Radisson LG2, a Pow-Wow in Mistissini and more. We are looking forward to receiving a lot of content and visibility from them.



5. Partnership with the Alliance de l'industrie touristique du Quebec-

We are actively involved with the Alliance to ensure that our region benefits from their strong position in the market. There are continuous conference calls, meetings and follow-up with the Alliance to make sure that the visibility and branding image of the Eeyou Istchee Baie-James region is optimized. We are constantly providing updated content for the various marketing campaigns such as the Summer and Snowmobile Campaigns.

6. Attendance at 2 snowmobile tradeshow October 20-22, 2017



Our Marketing team promoted our region at the Salon National Quad Motoneige de Drummondville and at the Toronto Snowmobile, ATV and Powersports show in Toronto. We spoke to many potential visitors and we were able to really connect with them and provide pertinent information such as the tourist guide and the snowmobile trail map. A majority of them expressed an interest to visit this winter.

7. Visibility of the 350th celebrations in Waskaganish

Our marketing team is working with Waskaganish to promote the upcoming 350th celebrations. Content was sent to the Alliance and they promoted the event at Go Media in October. We have also established some leads with magazines such as Reader's Digest. Another opportunity for visibility will be during the **Into the north** adventure in 2018, the participants will likely take part in the festivities and this will be filmed and broadcasted on Facebook.

8. Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA) tradeshow in Albuquerque, New Mexico

This year for the second time, we attended the Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA) tradeshow. We partnered with other Canadian cities like Ottawa, Winnipeg, Toronto and Niagara Falls to sponsor the Tour Operator Lounge where we could show videos from Eeyou Istchee Baie-James, distribute Tourism Guides and brochures and make available binders with more specific information about our destination.



9. Social Media and web

Besides learning the new software called Infusionsoft to send customized newsletters to potential clients, we have been active on social media. The number of “likes” on the destination’s Facebook page rose from 5,254 on September 30, 2016 to 11,568 a year later, which is an impressive 120.2% increase. The “Earn your badges by exploring our region” summer campaign on Facebook reached as many as 2.2 million people in markets in Quebec, Ontario, and the United States (more than 41,200 clicks). In addition, there was a 15.2% increase in the number of subscribers on Instagram during the summer season. The following hashtags – #escapelikeneverbefore, #decrochezcommejamais, #eeyouistcheebaiejames, #eeyouistchee and #baiejames – have been used in more than 10,000 publications since they were recently created.

TOURISM INFORMATION AND RECEPTION – JOANIK LINTEAU

1. Visitor experience survey:

The objective of this project is **to understand the visitor profile of travellers coming to Eeyou Istchee Baie-James**. The more we know about their travel habits, the easier it will be to reach them and attract them to the region. Up until now, we have 2 complete reports: 2015-2016 and 2016-2017. The goal of 1000 coupons **collected in a year** has not yet been reached and we really need the collaboration of all our partners to invite travellers to fill out a coupon when they check in to a hotel or visit an attraction in the region. The more coupons collected, the more accurate the study will be in describing the visitor profiles, and the more effective we can all be in our marketing and promotion efforts.

To encourage businesses to invite clients to complete more coupons, we are offering incentives: every 3 months, a **gift certificate of \$100** is drawn amongst the businesses who have collected 50 coupons or more. (December 15th, 2017, March 15th, 2018, June 15th, 2018, September 15th, 2018). In addition, any business who collects 100 coupons or more during the year receives a **FREE** copy of the **report** on the data collected **in their business**.



In the 2016-2017 report, under the section: What was the highlight of your trip to Eeyou Istchee Baie-James? The answer was “The warm welcome and the people (about 9 %)”

To receive the reports or to collaborate with us on this project, contact: Joanik Linteau: jlinteau@tourismebaiejames.com, 1 888 748-8140 poste 226.

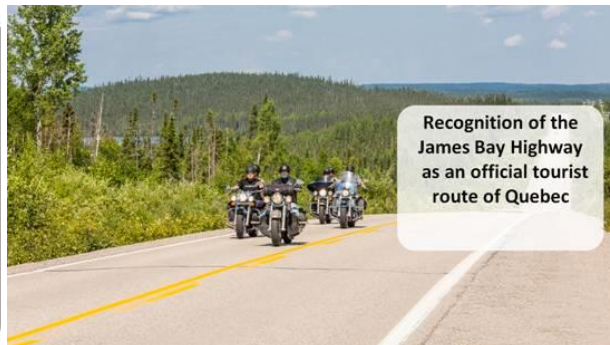
2. The recognition of the James Bay Highway as an official Tourism Route.

Eeyou Istchee Tourism and Tourisme Baie-James are working together to have the James Bay Highway recognized as a Tourist Route. The project was first presented at the **Cree and Jamesien joint committee for RECEPTION** on November 24th 2016 in Lebel-sur-Quévillon. Since then, a working committee composed of the two regional tourism associations, the Société de développement de la Baie-James and the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government has been created. The next step is to send a proposed itinerary to the "Ministère du tourisme" and "Ministère des Transports", if accepted, the consultations with the organizations and the communities involved would begin.

What is a Tourism Route?

A Tourism Road is defined as a picturesque ride, focussed on a distinctive theme that connects a number of tourist sites evocative of this theme and open to visitors. There is also a variety of additional services, such as accommodations, restaurants, gas stations and tourist information and reception services.

Objectives of a Tourism Route: To improve the visitor experience, contribute to regional tourism development, promote inter-regional collaboration for product enhancement, and complete the tourist signage system. The Tourism Road Program of is managed by the "Ministère du tourisme" and the "Ministère des transports".



HUMAN RESOURCES AND TRAINING – AUDREY PERREAU

Collegial Studies Attestation in

Greeting Services, Information and Promotion in Tourism Offered for a 2nd Time

Tourism workers met in Eastmain from November 20- 23rd to take the training. Participants included staff from Maquatua Inn, Eneyaauhkaat Lodge, Auberge Kanio Kashee Lodge and Mistissini Outfitting camps. Following this 4-day theory training, each participant will receive 2 days of individual on-the-job coaching.

Photo shoot – capsules

In July, COTA/EIT/TBJ organized a photo shoot in Lebel-sur-Quévillon, Chapais, Oujé-Bougoumou, Chibougamau and Mistissini to gather images of front line employees in action. The pictures are available to the participating businesses and they will be used in regional promotional materials. They are part of the content for the on-line training project currently being developed. One of the objectives of the project is to highlight the importance of the front-line workers to the overall success of tourism in Eeyou Istchee Baie-James.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Cree Social Economy Regional Table (CSERT) is hosting the 2nd CSERT Conference; The Cree Story February 6-8, 2018 in Ouje-Bougoumou. We will be focusing on the activities that are directly or indirectly related to the production of traditional Eeyou-Eenou arts and crafts.

For more information contact : commerce&industry@cngov.ca

CREE SOCIAL ECONOMY REGIONAL TABLE
presents

2nd Cree Social Economy Conference
THE CREE STORY

FEBRUARY 6-8 2018

Oujé-Bougoumou, Eeyou Istchee

The production and trade of arts and crafts has long been an integral part of Eeyou-Eenou culture, pride and economies. Today, more than ever, it helps define who we are as a nation and contributes to keeping teachings, harvesting practices, languages and identity both vibrant and relevant.

The demand for our creations is strong and we now have a unique opportunity to bring all of the actors who can contribute to building and rebuilding a true economy promoting our nation, our identity, our culture and our harvesting practices.

Cree Story aims to bring together the actors involved in the cultural, harvesting and other activities which are directly or indirectly related to traditional Eeyou-Eenou arts and crafts.

We need your support and guidance. Have a say in how we will meet the challenges and opportunities to not only meet the demands for traditional Eeyou/Eenou arts and crafts but to create a wonderful sustainable economic sector. Together, let's write the Cree Story!

- ✓ Registration is free.
- ✓ Travel assistance will be provided.
- ✓ For more information contact: commerce&industry@cngov.ca or visit: creesocialeconomy.com

Follow and share COTA / EIT on Facebook:

For the Eeyou Istchee tourism industry: Tourism in Eeyou Istchee Updates
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/554426294760185/>

For the COTA members and fans: <https://www.facebook.com/creetourism/>

Marketing FB page for Eeyou Istchee & Baie-James: <https://www.facebook.com/eeyouistcheebaiejames/>

Also follow the tourism web sites related to our region:

COTA : <http://www.creetourism.ca/home/>

EIT and TBJ: <http://www.escapelikeneverbefore.com>