



Eeyou Istchee Tourism Association

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Annual Report*

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On August 15 2007, the Government of Québec granted regional tourism association (RTA) status to the Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA).

The association was the 22nd RTA to come into being in Québec and the 3rd to share the administrative region of Northern Québec. This new RTA covered the nine Cree communities of the Eeyou Istchee tourism region.

Given the considerable difference between the RTA and COTA in terms of roles and responsibilities, a decision was made to create a separate organization, namely Eeyou Istchee Tourism (EIT) to provide for proper fulfilment of the RTA's mandate.

As set out in the formal agreement between EIT and the Government of Québec, the role of the RTA is to promote tourism and regional operators, support the development of new products, make information more readily available to tourists, and cooperate with other RTAs in creating a Québec-wide tourism policy.

Objectives of Eeyou Istchee Tourism

- Position and promote Eeyou Istchee as a key destination for First Nations tourism, outdoor and adventure tourism, and outfitter services;

- Support the development of marketable tourism products and the upgrading of existing products with a view to contributing to regional economic growth and development of the tourism industry;
- Enhance regional tourism infrastructure by facilitating access to information relating to tourism products and services;
- Develop a tourism industry based on the principles of sustainable development and designed to have a positive impact on youth, elders and cultural life in the region.

Dues-paying COTA members are automatically members of EIT. Some of the additional benefits for our members include a listing in the James Bay Eeyou Istchee Tourism Guide and eligibility to have their tourism business included on the provincial blue road panels.

EIT is responsible for the planning and delivery of projects, initiatives and events such as the Grands Prix du Tourisme gala, the development of the Regional Tourism Guide and advertising.

Projects

Tradeshows

Regional Awards Gala

Tourism Guide

Advertising

2010 Symposium

Marketing Plan

1. 2011 Tradeshow Strategy

Tradeshows continue to be an important way to promote the tourism industry in Eeyou Istchee. Attending these shows provides an invaluable opportunity to meet and talk to potential visitors and share our enthusiasm for the unique travel experience offered by Cree tourism operators. As in previous years, the current tradeshow roster is comprised of shows that promote fishing and hunting. However, as we continue our work with Cree entrepreneurs to develop market-ready cultural tourism packages, we will expand our tradeshow roster to include shows that deal specifically with this market.



EIT members are invited to accompany us to the tradeshows which not only provides them with a great opportunity to promote their own tourism businesses but is a great learning opportunity. While at tradeshows our members can source suppliers and can see first-hand what other similar businesses are doing in terms of marketing and promotion. Members are asked to cover the cost of their travel to the show, and we cover the cost of hotel accommodations and meals.

Following is a list of the shows attended during the 2011 tradeshow season:

Canada

Salon de la pourvoirie, chasse et pêche
Québec, Québec

Salon de la pourvoirie, chasse et pêche
Montreal, Québec

Ottawa Boat & Sportsmen's Show
Ottawa, Ontario

Toronto Sportsmen's Show
Toronto, Ontario

United States

Springfield Sportsmen's Show
Springfield, Massachusetts

Annual State of Maine Sportsman's Show
Augusta, Maine

Tradeshows are made possible thanks to a generous contribution by Niskamoon Corporation.

2. Regional Awards Gala

Each year, EIT in collaboration with TBJ has the pleasure of organizing and promoting an annual awards event as part of the province of Québec's Grands Prix du Tourisme. The Grands Prix du Tourisme québécois were created to highlight businesses that have excelled in the tourism industry and increase public awareness of the important role tourism plays in Québec's economy. This year the Regional Québec Tourism Awards Gala was held on March 10 in Chibougamau. Over 150 people attended the event.

In past years we have been pleased with the number of distinguished guests who accept our invitation to attend the Gala and this year was no exception. Our guest list included Dr. Matthew Coon Come, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees, Mr. Gérald Lemoyne, Mayor of Lebel-sur-Quévillon and of the Municipality of James Bay, Mr. Luc Ferland, Ungava Deputy, the Mayors of the Cities of Chapais and Chibougamau, Mr. Steve Gamache and Ms. Manon Cyr, as well as the Chief and Deputy Chief of the Cree Nations of Oujé-Bougoumou and Mistissini, Ms. Louise Wapachee and Mr. John S. Matoush respectively.

We are pleased to announce that representing Eeyou Istchee, Mr. Rocky Neeposh, Fishing Guide for Awashish Outdoor Adventures in Mistissini, Mr. Thomas Coon co-President of Eeyou Istchee / James Bay ACCORD Tourism Niche Committee and Mr. Gaston Cooper, Communications and Marketing Officer for the Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association each won for their hard work and commitment to the development of regional tourism. In addition, Ms. Rose Blackned, manager of the Kanio Kashee Lodge in Waskaganish was awarded a special mention for her excellence in service.

We would like to congratulate all the winners from Eeyou Istchee. The success of our tourism industry relies in large part on the people who represent us. We are honoured to share their accomplishment and we encourage them to continue their excellent work.



The success of this year's gala would not have been possible without the support of our many sponsors including Caisses Desjardins, the main sponsor of the gala, Tourism Québec, the James Bay Development Society, the SADCs of Northern Québec, the City of Chibougamau, Oujé-Bougoumou Eenouch Association, Oujé-Bougoumou Eenou Company, the Cree Nation of Mistissini, Nemaska Development Corporation, Hydro-Québec, Mr. Luc Ferland, the municipality of James Bay, the City of Chapais, the City of Matagami, the City of Lebel-sur-Quévillon, the James-Bay Conférence régionale des élus, the Cree Construction and Development Company, the Cree Nation of Eastmain, the Cree Nation of Waswanipi, the Cree Nation of Wemindji, the Cree Regional Authority/Board of Compensation, Air Creebec, Beesum Communications, Planète Radio 93.5, CIAU FM Radisson and CHEF Radio 99.9.

The Grands Prix de Tourisme offers a perfect opportunity to promote the region and provide recognition for tourism businesses that have worked diligently to meet or exceed the standards developed by COTA and the tourism industry of Québec. We are confident that with ongoing support from both COTA and EIT, tourism businesses in Eeyou Istchee will continue to excel and many Cree tourism businesses will be honoured at this distinguished event in the future.

2.1 Grands Prix du Tourisme québécois

This year, the 2011 province-wide gala of the Grands Prix du Tourisme québécois did not take place. Nevertheless, we felt it was important to continue to honour the work of our local tourism representatives which is why both EIT and TBJ made the decision to host a regional award gala.

We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Osprey Lodge for taking home the bronze in the category of Outfitting at last year's province-wide gala of the Grands Prix du Tourisme québécois.

3. Regional Tourism Guide

As part of our partnership agreement with the ministère du Tourisme du Québec, EIT must undertake to develop an annual regional tourism guide in accordance with the guidelines and standards agreed upon by the Regional Tourism Associations and Québec's ministry of tourism. At a planning session held in Val d'Or in August 2007 and attended by the COTA/EIT Board of Directors, a decision was made to work jointly with Tourisme Baie James (TBJ) to produce the regional tourism guide. As such, EIT in collaboration with TBJ recently completed our third edition of James Bay and Eeyou Istchee Tourism Guide. The guide includes a profile and photographs of each Cree community as well as a description of the region and Cree culture. The 2011-12 edition is now available at tourism outlets throughout the province.



4. Advertising

Advertising continues to represent an important opportunity to promote the region to potential tourists in eastern Canada and the northeastern United States. This year, in recognition of our partnership with TBJ, we have launched a joint advertising campaign promoting the region as a whole while highlighting popular activities such as hunting, fishing and snowmobiling. We are also looking into ways to expand our market through the creation of ad campaigns that target European travellers. We are confident that as we continue to support our members in the development of market-ready tourism products, print ads will continue to be an increasingly important vehicle for reaching larger and more diverse target audiences.

In 2010-2011, ads were placed in the following publications:

Snow Goer

European kite magazine

Destinations Magazine

Fédération des pourvoiries du Québec

STAQ Guide

Northwoods Sporting Journal

Groupe Voyage Québec

Maine Sportsmen

