

For Immediate Release
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Memorandum of Understanding Signed between Indigenous Tourism BC & Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association

*Organizations pledge a collaborative approach to promoting growth of Indigenous tourism
in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region*

Secwépemc Territory (Williams Lake, BC)

Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) and the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association (CCCTA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the BC Tourism Industry Conference in Vancouver, the shared traditional territory of the Tsleil-Waututh, Musqueam, and Squamish Nations. The MOU establishes a coordinated and collaborative approach in promoting growth and increased awareness of Indigenous tourism in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region.

“There are exceptional Indigenous experiences, an abundance of cultural sharing opportunities and untapped potential to support a thriving Indigenous tourism economy in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast,” shares Amy Thacker, CEO of Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association. *“I am thrilled with today’s memorandum of understanding signing and what it means to those businesses and entrepreneurs looking to support their families and way of life.”*

The parties agree there is an opportunity to promote awareness and connectivity to tourism stakeholders, policy makers, leaders and organizations to understand the value of Indigenous cultural tourism and the value of non-Indigenous tourism. Subsequently, this will create new market demand for Indigenous and collaborative tourism experiences. This relationship will allow the organizations to leverage each other’s programs, expertise and resources to support Indigenous entrepreneurs; learn and share local history and cultures; and help to cultivate a sustainable visitor economy throughout the region.

“This MOU shows a high level of trust between ITBC and CCCTA, and reflects the spirit of a genuine strategic partnership for the benefits of the Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast region,” says Brenda Baptiste, Chair of ITBC. *“This includes the development of world-class Indigenous tourism experiences that will attract more visitors to the region.”*

ITBC and CCCTA developed the MOU to more clearly define their partnership in enhancing and expanding the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast's Indigenous tourism sector, and supporting communities and individual entrepreneurs as they develop new product and programming.

“Indigenous tourism is a fast growing sector and I'm proud that BC is recognized as a world leader where Indigenous people want to share their landscapes, cultures, traditions and experiences with tourists,” said Lisa Beare, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture. *“This MOU will help Indigenous Tourism continue to flourish and is a great example of organizations working together to address the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.”*

A key component of this new partnership is the establishment of an Indigenous Tourism Specialist for the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Region. This full-time role, based in Williams Lake, will oversee execution of the terms set out in the MOU, including engagement with regional First Nations communities and entrepreneurs; implementation of priority projects; acquisition of content for marketing activities; and advancement of training and product development programs, among other responsibilities.

About Indigenous Tourism British Columbia: ITBC is a non-profit, Stakeholder-based organization committed to growing and promoting a sustainable, culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry. Through training, information resources, networking opportunities and co-operative marketing programs, ITBC is a resource for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities in BC who are operating or looking to start a tourism business. ITBC works closely with tourism, business, education and government organizations to help BC's Indigenous tourism businesses offer quality experiences and actively promote these experiences to visitors and local residents. www.Indigenoussbc.com.

About Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association: CCCTA is a non-profit, stakeholder-based Regional Destination Management Organization that leads tourism in development and marketing in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture, Destination British Columbia, Destination Canada and industry partners in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Region to help foster the growth of the tourism and the visitor economy. www.landwithoutlimits.com.

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