Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada releases its 2016/17 year-end report

June 26th, 2017, Coast Salish Territories (Vancouver, BC) – The Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC) has released its 2016/17 year-end report showing significant progress in the growth of the Aboriginal tourism industry in Canada through the implementation of year one of the five-year strategic plan: A Path Forward.

In the first year of this plan, ATAC was able to complete a number of notable achievements in each of the four strategic pillars that guide ATAC’s actions and annual operations planning: leadership, partnerships, development, and marketing. Especially vital to the ongoing success of the organization, ATAC was able to secure organizational resources to fulfill the five-year plan through a confirmed multi-year funding agreement with the Government of Canada, announced in Federal Budget 2017. This fulfilled a key achievement for ATAC and sets the stage for a very successful first year in the implementation of the Five Year Plan.

On the leadership front, ATAC initiated agreements to grow and establish Aboriginal tourism associations; showed active leadership in Aboriginal communities and the tourism industry, finding and encouraging champions; ensured effective financial processes for ATAC (including financial reporting, risk assessment, audit, financial controls & procedures); and created a national representation structure for ATAC Board of Directors.

ATAC confirmed and continued to build on successful partnerships with industry and community organizations including Destination Canada, Assembly of First Nations, and Tourism HR Canada to leverage resources, deliver programming, and collaborate for success. Other notable achievements on the partnerships front included establishing the first regional coordinator in Alberta to assist with region-specific programs; supporting Aboriginal representation on major Canadian tourism industry associations and organizations; growing partnerships in the International Aboriginal Tourism Conference; and increasing ATAC membership and e-mail subscribers with regular and meaningful content.

ATAC also delivered the first product development support funding of $110,000 to 19 businesses to increase the number of market and export-ready Aboriginal tourism experiences as members of ATAC as well as the first capacity development workshop for Aboriginal tourism businesses to attain and maintain market and export-ready status in partnership with Tourism HR Canada. Also on the development front, ATAC hosted the largest and most successful International Aboriginal Tourism Conference in December 2016 in the Mi’kmaw community of Membertou, Unama’ki (Cape Breton), Nova Scotia, with more than 350 participants.

Major marketing achievements include an effective and targeted marketing program to increase engagement through website, social media, travel trade & media channels; the building of marketing and sales assets including video and photography; aligned marketing with key partner Destination Canada through year one of the three-year partnership agreement; and leveraging more than $467,000 in earned media.

To learn more about ATAC, visit www.aboriginalcanada.ca.

About the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada
The Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada (ATAC) works to improve the socio-economic condition of Aboriginal people through the provisions of economic development advisory services, tourism conferences, capacity development training and workshops, industry research and information for Aboriginal tourism operators and communities within the 13 regions; 10 provinces and three territories of Canada. ATAC develops relationships with other groups and regions with similar mandates, uniting the Aboriginal tourism industry in Canada and works to enable collective support, product
development, promotion and marketing of authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism businesses in a respectful protocol. The ATAC Board is made up of Aboriginal tourism industry representatives from each of the provinces and territories. For more information, visit www.aboriginalcanada.ca.

-30-

Media contacts:
Brian Cant, Tartan: 250-592-3838 or brian@tartangroup.ca
Keith Henry, ATAC: 604-639-4408 or k.henry@aboriginalcanada.ca