

OFI, AANDC & ATMC Discussion on Projects – Summary Report
August 17, 2012
12:45 AM – 2:00 PM EST

PARTICIPANT	AFFILIATION	PARTICIPANT	AFFILIATION
Keith Henry	ATBC – BC A/Chair ATMC	Trina Mather-Simard	Aboriginal Experiences – Ottawa ATMC Executive member
Angela Singh	OFI - Ottawa	Barry Parker	AANDC - Ottawa

Agenda Items: (Pacific Standard Time)

1. Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (ATMC) Priorities AM
2. AANDC Federal Tourism Strategy (FTS) Commitments
3. Office of the Federal interlocutor (OFI) - Urban Tourism Development

1. ATMC PRIORITIES

Keith advised that the national strategy from ATMC’s national study is yet to be completed but a priority in it is to put a legal entity in place with accompanying administrative capacity. This is the best way to engage on national issues and to undertake projects.

Barry advised that AANDC is not prepared at this time to entertain any organizational development projects nor should it be looked at to provide core funding.

Keith agreed that perhaps it was not the time to push these items but they will remain an ATMC priority.

After discussion it was generally agreed that ATMC member organizations, upon appropriate endorsement, may undertake national initiatives on behalf of the group. It was suggested that for a national project, one organization may undertake the contract and subcontract components to other ATMC members in an effort to reduce unnecessary travel costs, etc.

Action Item:

ATMC is to discuss at their next executive committee meeting August 22, 2012.

2. AANDC FTS COMMITMENTS

AANDC believes that national level projects should focus on research, coordination and collaboration. Business development or specific regional development should be approached at regional levels.

The approach could be through brokering, facilitation and advocacy (ATMC endorsing proposals from ATMC members who will undertake projects on behalf industry at large)

In addition to what ATMC may put forward from their national study AANDC’s primary focus is on its FTS Commitments. The following is an outline of the original commitment and proposed new approach.

2.1 Online Toolkit and National Manual:

Originally AANDC committed to the following: *By March 2013, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) will create a suite of online tourism development tools to help community-based organizations pursue opportunities, attract investment, assess market readiness and overcome capacity obstacles.*

Proposed New Approach to Toolkit and Manual

Discussion Toolkit (consider dropping as an FTS Priority)

Of the existing FTS priorities the online toolkit may not be viable as it requires ongoing national operational support and management. There would also be a need for a location to place the toolkit. That said, it may be better to identify key links to 'managed sites' already used to support Aboriginal tourism and include these as an appendix to the National Manual.

Manual (priority 1)

This is a national product that has already enjoyed buy-in from across Canada. It will have the greatest impact on Aboriginal tourism in all regions of Canada as quality, value and service and authenticity mean the same thing. The manual will help in determining which existing products are market ready and if not 'why not'. By identifying the reasons products aren't ready it will assist in developing solutions. For example, a business may not be market ready due to: its lack of property amenities e.g. fire and safety measures; poor service; or it doesn't know or practice marketing and packaging criteria. To get the manual produced and loaded on all partner web sites it needs polish, translation, etc. (Also, as you'll note below it should have a component specific to an approach to 'urban based' product development as well as the above noted 'web-link appendix'.)

Action Items

- Keith and Trina will outline this approach to ATMC members for possible inclusion in the national strategy.
- The ATMC National Strategy will be added to the agenda of a proposed meeting between Aboriginal Tourism Working Group. (It is expected that any resulting proposal will be submitted ASAP for considering in the 2013 – 2014 FY.)

2.2 Cruise Industry Opportunities

Originally AANDC committed to the following: *AANDC will analyze cruise industry opportunities for Aboriginal tourism by March 2014.*

Proposed new approach to Cruise Opportunities

The federal partner –Aboriginal Tourism Working Group (ATWG) has just begun to consider its options on how federal partners may be able to pursue this commitment. It is AANDC's contention that most of this work will require RDA input and perhaps assistance.

Action Items

- Keith and Trina will outline this approach to ATMC members for possible inclusion in the national strategy.
- The ATMC National Strategy will be added to the agenda of a proposed meeting between Aboriginal Tourism Working Group. (It is expected that any resulting proposal will be submitted ASAP for considering in the 2013 – 2014 FY.)

2.3 Increase supply of Market Ready of Aboriginal Cultural Experiences

Originally AANDC committed to the following: *AANDC will work with the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) to provide more Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Experiences to market. They plan to expand the number of Aboriginal products under the CTC Aboriginal Marketing Strategy to include those offered by both Aboriginal-owned businesses and Aboriginal-partnered organizations by March 2014.*

Proposed new approach increasing supply of Market Ready Products

AANDC and the CTC need to meet to consider options as they have been significantly impacted by budget reductions.

It is expected that significant changes in approach may be required and ATMC may consider a much broader initiative that will require support from regional development agencies and provincial partners as well.

As noted in the Manual item above, steps necessary for identifying 'market ready' need to be outlined.

For those that are market ready a national Aboriginal tourism brand can be developed. (This would umbrella regional Aboriginal brands and be linked to the CTC's brand, regional brands, et al.)

For those who aren't market ready recommendations to industry and government partners are required to bring more products up to standard.

To build on the work of the Manual and the Urban Aboriginal Tourism Development initiative it is suggested that support should be sought to undertake this work in BC, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec. This should be a two year initiative and as it will indirectly stimulate increased revenues and jobs should be considered a top priority. Note: This initiative should be developed as a Strategic Partnership Initiative. Key to success Fed and Prov. buy-in.

Action Items

- AANDC will discuss options with CTC.
- Keith and Trina will outline this approach to ATMC members for possible inclusion in the national strategy.
- The ATMC National Strategy will be added to the agenda of a proposed meeting between Aboriginal Tourism Working Group. (It is expected that any resulting proposal will be submitted ASAP for considering in the 2013 – 2014 FY.)

Tourism in or near Canada's National Parks and Historic Sites

Originally, AANDC committed to the following: - *By the end of March 2012, Parks Canada and AANDC will conduct a pilot project to establish at least five Aboriginal cultural tourism businesses in or near Canada's national parks and historic sites.*

Update: The pilot projects have been completed. They were in Forillon National Park, Sault Ste. Marie Historical site, Jasper National Park, Gulf Island National Park and Kluane National Park. None of the pilots resulted in businesses but Forillon and SSM HS were encouraged to pursue program support. The others required further work. A Pilot Project – Lessons Learned report will be completed by the end of summer 2012.

Note: The project with Parks Canada was done in house and while we worked with Trina and with Kevin from Great Spirit Circle Trail it was not an ATMC initiative.

3. Urban Aboriginal Tourism Development

Urban Product Development (Note: This item is not included in the FTS but is linked)

As per the urban study completed by Trina there exists a significant amount of groups and individuals who offer cultural offerings in urban settings. The challenge is that most aren't businesses and have no linkage to the tourism market.

To develop a tourism business model there needs to be an approach developed where proponents would:

- Undertake active recruitment of potential partners;
- Provide training/capacity development necessary to develop business case(s); and
- Provide ongoing monitoring and management support.

The primary challenge is to bring together a critical mass of underdeveloped businesses or cultural offerings to make a development exercise worthwhile.

Also, besides basic 'market readiness' information there should be time spent on tourism services and cultural knowledge. Much of this information will be included in the Manual.

To develop a 'how to' approach to meet these objectives it is suggested that perhaps a Western Case Study led by ATBC (B.C. - Alberta) and an Eastern Case Study led by Aboriginal Experiences (Ontario - Quebec) be undertaken.

These case studies will also inform the Manual because the Manual should be used as a guide to business development not just an assessment tool.

As a result of these initiatives OFI requires that they lead to urban based business models focusing on increased revenue generation and jobs.

Action Items

- Keith and Trina include this in the ATMC Executive Committee meeting August 22, 2012.
- OFI wants ATMC to submit a proposal by August 24, 2012.

4. Meeting Adjourned