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## THOMPSON OKANAGAN TOURISM ASSOCIATION (TOTA)

July 12, 2010

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The Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) is a vibrant organization working proactively with communities, economic development professionals, local businesses and more than 3,200 tourism stakeholders to ensure the growth and sustainability of the region's tourism industry and economy.

Over the past year TOTA has revitalized itself, adding high-powered new staff and programs to pursue a world-class tourism management strategy that focuses on community and industry development. TOTA emphasizes partnerships with stakeholders throughout the region, drawing on a foundation of robust research and close linkages with communities and top industry programs. It also carries out work on behalf of the B.C. Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts in the region. Thompson Okanagan Tourism is determined to become a champion of excellence and innovation in destination marketing, management and industry development.

The global tourism marketplace is highly competitive, and TOTA is committed to being holistic as it works with its partners throughout the region to strengthen all parts of our tourism industry. The organization manages the investment of more than \$3 million per year in public and private funds into tourism market and product development. It recently attracted an additional \$260,000 in federal funds for industry research and development.

As part of its energetic new approach, TOTA has developed a strategic focus with goals that include: developing a Regional Destination Development Plan; developing new training and business advisory services; advocating for improved access to the region; spurring more industry research; using new marketing and social media methods; and creating a new high-value TOTA website.

Thompson Okanagan Tourism policy is overseen by a Board of Directors comprised of 14 professionals and business leaders drawn from across the region. Its programs are implemented by a dynamic Kelowna-based staff headed by veteran tourism and economic development leader Glenn Mandziuk.

TOTA welcomes contact and partnerships with economic development professionals, business owners, community leaders and others throughout the Thompson Okanagan. Each month it publishes an informative newsletter full of news about TOTA and the region's tourism industry, available to anyone upon request. For more information about TOTA:

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