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**TOURISM LABOUR MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT KICKS OFF IN KOOTENAY ROCKIES TO ADDRESS SEVERE LABOUR SHORTAGE CHALLENGES IN THE REGION**

**VANCOUVER** - go2, the British Columbia tourism industry's human resources association, announced that a tourism labour market research project is kicking off in the Kootenay Rockies region. The research findings will be used to develop a regional tourism human resource plan to support industry growth to 2015.

Coordinated by go2, the project mandate is to develop a human resources plan that will include recruitment, retention and training strategies to address the labour market gaps and other human resource challenges in this region. The plan will be based on labour market and other research as determined by a regional Steering Committee.

"We know there are serious labour shortage challenges in this area right now, and for tourism to grow in the region; these challenges must be addressed," said John Leschyson, Director, Industry Human Resource Development, go2. "With some resort communities in the region in close proximity to Alberta, competition for workers is stiff."

This initiative is guided by a regional Steering Committee comprised of business leaders, tourism operators, Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association, Ktunaxa Nation, go2, College of the Rockies, and Unite Here Canada Local 40 union. It is chaired by Heather Stewart, Sage Transitions. Stewart has extensive experience in project management, facilitating the development of strategic plans, and working with labour market information.

"It is important for the tourism industry to take a proactive stance on the labour shortage and to develop a plan that will give all tourism business's guidance and direction. The lack of workers is not an issue that is going to go away, we'd better be ready," said Megan Rokeby-Thomas, General Manager, Ainsworth Hot Springs Resort and a project steering committee member.

Funded through Services Canada, the project is set to commence immediately and conclude in March 2007. This is the second region where this type of initiative is being undertaken. The first is nearing completion in the Sea-to-Sky (Whistler) region; details of this initiative can be found at [seatosky.go2hr.ca](http://seatosky.go2hr.ca).

**About go2**

Established by the BC tourism industry in April 2003, go2 – the resource for people in Tourism is an independent, non-profit industry association with a mission to assist BC's tourism operators to attract, recruit, and retain employees to support industry growth. For more information on go2 and human resource development initiatives for BC's tourism industry, visit [www.go2hr.ca](http://www.go2hr.ca).

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