



Sustainable
Tourism



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Hamilton Halton Brant Region Achieves Prestigious Sustainable Tourism Certification

ONTARIO, CANADA - Ontario's Regional Tourism Organization 3 (RTO3) has achieved [GreenStep's Sustainable Tourism Destination Certification](#), marking a significant milestone in sustainable tourism development for the [Hamilton Halton Brant region](#).

The certification follows a comprehensive two-year assessment process that evaluated the region's sustainability performance across four key categories: environmental, socio-economic, natural and cultural, and management. The evaluation was conducted using GreenStep's Sustainable Tourism Destination Standard, which is recognized by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and aligns with the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

"Achieving this certification demonstrates our region's dedication to building a more sustainable and resilient tourism sector," says Maria Fortunato, Executive Director of RTO3 Hamilton Halton Brant. "What makes this particularly meaningful is that it represents the beginning of a collaborative journey with our stakeholders across Hamilton, Halton, Brant, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation."

The certification process involved a detailed assessment review and extensive evidence submission, evaluated by GreenStep assessors. RTO3 achieved bronze-level certification, joining an elite group of over ten Canadian destinations certified by GreenStep.

Bev Scott, Manager of Business and Visitor Experience Development at RTO3 and manager of the GreenStep Destination Certification initiative, outlines the organization's next steps:

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"Building on this foundation, we've developed a comprehensive roadmap that includes establishing a Destination Sustainability Committee, implementing a Regional Sustainability Action Plan, and signing the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge."

The achievement has garnered recognition from industry leaders. Carol Greenwood, Vice President of Operations & Partnerships at the [Tourism Industry Association of Ontario](#) (TIAO), commends RTO3's accomplishment: "RTO3 has demonstrated exceptional community engagement and regional representation throughout this process. Their comprehensive action plan showcases a strong commitment to sustainable tourism development in Ontario."

Angela Nagy, CEO & President of GreenStep, emphasizes the certification's significance: "Awarding the Destination Certification for the Hamilton Halton Brant region marks the beginning of an important journey towards improving sustainability for the entire region. The designation lays important groundwork through the creation of an industry-led Destination Sustainability Stakeholder Committee."

Looking ahead, Fortunato adds, "Together, we will implement our Destination Sustainability Action Plan to address crucial environmental, economic, and social aspects of tourism development. Our goal is to ensure that tourism growth benefits our communities, supports local businesses, and protects the unique natural and cultural assets that draw visitors to our region."

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About GreenStep

GreenStep was founded in 2008 to help small to medium-sized enterprises measure and improve their sustainability performance. To date, the organization has worked with thousands of businesses and organizations of all sizes, in a variety of industries such as tourism and hospitality, retail, professional services, and manufacturing. Through the Sustainable Tourism Division, GreenStep provides assessments, training, strategy and certifications to tourism businesses and destinations. GreenStep is the only Canadian-based provider of sustainable tourism certifications that cover all types of tourism businesses and destinations. For more information, visit www.greensteptourism.com

About RTO3 Hamilton Halton Brant

Regional Tourism Organization 3 (RTO3 - Hamilton Halton Brant) is one of 13 Regional Tourism Organizations established by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming to lead tourism development, marketing and management in designated tourism regions across the province. Serving the communities of Hamilton, Halton, Brant, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, RTO3 works collaboratively with tourism stakeholders, municipalities, Indigenous communities and industry partners to support a thriving visitor economy.

The organization is mandated to provide industry leadership and coordination, support product development, lead tourism investment attraction, conduct workforce development, and deliver marketing programs that generate increased visitation and tourism receipts for the region. Through strategic partnerships and industry engagement, RTO3 supports sustainable destination development while enhancing the competitiveness of the region's tourism sector.

Located between Toronto and Niagara Falls, the region offers visitors diverse experiences across urban, rural and Indigenous communities. For more information, visit www.hamiltonhaltonbrant.com