

## Module 2 – Welcome To Rural

In this video, we provide a brief overview of this particular region of Ontario, which we position in the consumer marketplace as ‘the great Canadian wilderness just north of Toronto’.

We’ll also discuss what makes this region so popular as a four-season vacation destination in Canada.

First however – at the start of the remaining training modules, I would like to do a land acknowledgement out of respect for the Indigenous peoples who are the original inhabitants of this place and to recognize the need for ongoing reconciliation efforts.

*We acknowledge that this region is located on the traditional lands and waterways of the Anishinabek, Algonquin, Mohawk and Métis peoples, and is part of the Robinson Huron and Williams Treaties territory.*

*At Explorers' Edge, we are committed to working diligently to listen, to learn, to take action, and to being respectful towards all First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.*

Welcome to summer in the Great Canadian Wilderness just north of Toronto!

With thousands of sparkling blue lakes and rivers found everywhere you turn, and with lush, green forests too, summer is definitely high season for our busy, rural tourism industry.

For over 150 years, visitors from all over the world have arrived in summer to enjoy one of the most welcoming, relaxing and picturesque spots in all of Canada, and to escape the hustle and bustle of daily urban living.

This is a special place, where exceptional tourism businesses and incredible staff have long-catered to every type of traveller; from avid outdoor adventurers and campers, to those seeking a more pampered experience in a resort or spa setting.

For purposes of domestic and international market positioning, we call this ‘the great Canadian wilderness’ because, as the name suggests, the region offers everything a visitor would hope for in an iconic Canadian wilderness experience, including stunning landscapes, wildlife encounters, and plenty of space to spread out and explore.

In fact, over 4 million visitors annually spend approximately \$600 million Canadian dollars in about 1,900 establishments that are considered regional tourism providers.

Location-wise, the region is found exactly where the name suggests:

If you head due-north from Toronto by car, you will arrive in the region within approximately two hours. The use of “just north of Toronto” in our branded destination name is on purpose; though there are many wonderful wilderness vacation spots throughout the province of Ontario, our region’s proximity to Canada’s largest urban centre makes it easy for visitors to experience the Canadian wilderness *without having to travel far to do so*.

The geographical area of the destination stretches from beautiful Georgian Bay on Lake Huron in the west – which is part of the UNESCO-designated Georgian Bay Biosphere – to the south-east side of world-renowned Algonquin Park – which is Canada’s oldest provincial park. From the southern-most tip in what is known as “Ontario’s cottage country”, it reaches almost up to the shores of Lake Nipissing.

If you were to travel from west to east across the region by car, it would take you approximately 2-1/2 hours. The same is true going from the southern-most tip to the northern-most.

The region is also accessible by flying in to one of two airports and by the Ontario Northland Bus service that carries passengers along the south-north corridor.

Hundreds of harbours and marinas are found throughout the region as well, including on Georgian Bay, where cruise lines touring the Great Lakes dock so passengers can explore local shops, attractions and restaurants.

There are six sub-regions to be found here also, each with its own distinct and charming characteristics that appeal to visitors from all over. These include:

- world-renowned Algonquin Park
- the beautiful Almaguin Highlands to the west of Algonquin
- stunning Port Loring & Restoule in the north
- iconic Muskoka in Ontario’s cottage country
- West Parry Sound District – including the Georgian Bay Biosphere
- and South Algonquin, which is situated along the route towards the nation’s capital.

To learn more about each sub-region, please do check out the [GreatCanadianWilderness.com](http://GreatCanadianWilderness.com) and explore the information found under “Regions” in the navigation bar.

As the regional tourism organization, our role is to develop and promote sustainable rural tourism in this wonderful region of Ontario.

At Explorers’ Edge, we are honoured and privileged to help attract people to work and play in the great Canadian wilderness just north of Toronto.

We hope this module has given you a better understanding of where the region is and what it has to offer.

## QUESTIONS MODULE 2

1. Which world-famous park is located in the Great Canadian wilderness North of Toronto?
  - Banff National Park
  - Algonquin Provincial Park
  - Polar Bear Provincial Park
  
2. Why is the phrase “just north of Toronto” used to describe where the branded region of ‘The Great Canadian Wilderness Just North of Toronto’?
  - To indicate that the region is close to the nation’s capital
  - To show how close an iconic Canadian wilderness experience is to Canada’s largest urban centre
  - Because visitors to Canada are only interested in urban destinations
  
3. What is the approximate pre-pandemic annual visitation and spend to the region?
  - 2 million visitors and \$300M Cdn
  - 12 million visitors and \$900M Cdn
  - 4 million visitors and \$600M Cdn
  
4. Which of the following pairs of sub-regions are located in the Great Canadian Wilderness North of Toronto?
  - Muskoka and South Algonquin
  - West Parry Sound and the Almaguin Highlands
  - Port Loring/Restoule and Algonquin Park
  - All of the above
  
5. Which of the following experiences are NOT found in the region?
  - Hiking
  - Biking
  - Swimming
  - Golf
  - Lounging lakeside on a dock

- Climbing the CN Tower

6. Which world-famous bay is found in the region?

- The Bay of Fundy
- Hudson Bay
- Georgian Bay
- James Bay