



Cruise Tourism in Arctic Canada

Community Report for Gjoa Haven

What's Going on With Arctic Cruise Tourism?

The number of planned cruise itineraries in Arctic Canada doubled between 2005 and 2006 from 11 to 22 and has increased by an additional 9.5% on average over the past four years. Cruise ship activity has now begun leveling off and we are no longer seeing dramatic increases in itineraries as we did during the 2006 season. Although some additional growth is expected the observed leveling off of itineraries is likely due to the 2009 economic recession, the limited number of ice-strengthened ships available for tourism purposes, and a fluctuating market of individuals seeking to experience the Canadian Arctic by sea. Despite expected overall growth in the sector the actual patterns of cruise activity reveal a great deal of variability. We are now observing more cruise ship activity through the Northwest Passage and in the western Canadian Arctic and less activity in the southern Arctic than we have in the past

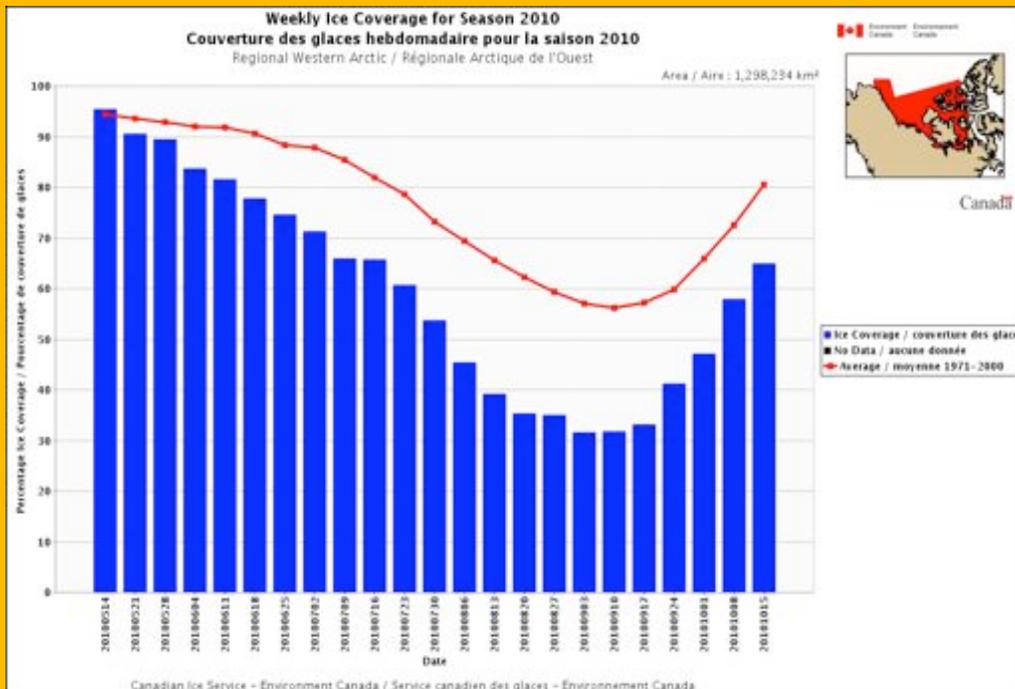


Total Cruise Itineraries in Arctic Canada

Year	Total	Gjoa Haven
2005	11	-
2006	22	-
2007	23	-
2008	25	2
2009	26	3
2010	23	2

Are More Ships Coming?

In Arctic Canada decreasing sea ice extent and thickness has facilitated an increase in navigable shipping routes. Sea ice retreat has been primarily concentrated in the Beaufort Sea but is also evident across the entire Canadian Arctic. During the 2010 summer season weekly sea ice concentration was between 20 and 35% lower than it is normally and the open water season was considerably longer than it has been in the past. As a result, it is more accessible for cruise ships to travel in the Arctic and the season for safe travel is getting longer. However, a number of factors that are difficult to predict will effect whether or not more ships will be visiting in the future including, changing cost of fuel, availability of ice-strengthened ships, fluctuating demand, global economic conditions, political situations, and changing regulations and policies.



Weekly Ice Coverage in the Regional Eastern Arctic for 2010 (blue columns) Compared to the 1971-2000 Average (red line)

About Cruise Ship Tourism in Gjoa Haven

Cruise tourism is relatively new in the community of Gjoa Haven with between 2 – 4 ships arriving per season for the past few years. The rich history of the region and its prime geographic location at the heart of the Northwest Passage makes it a desirable community for cruises. During the summer of 2010 a cross-section of Gjoa Haven residents were interviewed about the benefits and drawbacks of cruise tourism. Residents were also asked to share possible strategies that could be used to deal with any community concerns that exist.



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The good things about tourism

Benefits identified:

The guided walks, and cultural demonstrations were highlighted to provide opportunities to share local culture, unique history, and traditions with visitors. Cruise tourism was reported to provide some income for the community and for local carvers, sewers and artists and was thought to play a role in encouraging and rejuvenating a culture of arts and crafts.

The opportunity to meet new people, make 'friends' and to participate in activities with visitors was highly valued. Cruise ships were thought to provide a sense of 'excitement' in the community and also a sense of pride.



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The not so good things about tourism

Concerns identified:

- Minimal money spent.
- Tourists don't stay long enough.
- Possibility of criminal activity such as bringing drugs and alcohol into the community.
- Increased risk of marine pollution.
- Adverse effect on marine wildlife.
- Poor communication between cruise ships and the community (i.e. 'surprise ships').
- A sense of intrusion by cruise visitors compounded by tourist's lack of understanding of subsistence lifestyles, and by inappropriate photography of local people, children, and property.
- Standard and salability of arts and crafts could be improved through training for local artisans.
- Fear of passenger safety due to vessel grounding and/or sinking with only limited SAR capability.
- Tourists might disturb Franklin gravesites or other historically or culturally significant sites.
- Language barriers prevent communication between elders and visitors.
- Increased risk of security breaches and issues relating to sovereignty.
- Tourists may bring illnesses or disease to the community.
- There has been high EDO and point person turnover making it difficult to ensure consistency.

Action Plans and Ideas: Where Should We Go From Here?

Potential Strategies to Minimize Concerns:

- Plan for tourists to stay in the community longer allowing them to hire a boat, shop, view carvers or other artists working, and attend a cultural show.
- Provide a local liaison person to help improve communication and coordination between ship, shore and the community.
- Provide a pre-trip planning guide for tour operators about the community and in particular to establish what is and what isn't appropriate behaviour in the community and to educate tourists about local culture and traditions.
- Get schools involved. Organize a meet and greet between students and tourists where students learn about people from other places and share presentations, art or performances with tourists.
- Provide reliable up to date itineraries ahead of time so communities can be prepared
- Develop tourism and entrepreneur training programs for local residents (i.e. marketing training, small business training), and provide assistance in developing marketing techniques for selling arts and crafts (i.e. business cards, DVDs).
- Establish more Protected Areas to help preserve sensitive areas and historic sites. A 'special hunting area' could be designated where ships are not permitted.
- Build a museum and develop additional activities unique to Gjoa Haven for tourists to participate in.
- Consider a landing fee or other policy to ensure sufficient revenue.
- Provide community with additional SAR training and equipment.
- Organize community clean-ups before cruise ships arrive.
- Print postcards or develop a community book to sell to tourists.
- Ensure security and health screening on ships to protect northern people



What Are Other Communities Saying?

Interviews were conducted with residents of other communities across the Canadian Arctic including; Ulukhaktok, Cambridge Bay, Pond Inlet, Nain and Kuujjuaq. The most common concerns across the region included:

- Threats to National Sovereignty and Possible Security Threats to Communities
- No Regional Organization. Similar Cultural Shows (drum dances) are Performed in Every Community
- Risk of Ship Passengers Bringing Drugs, Alcohol or Illegal Substances to Communities
- Strong Need for Better Communication Between Ships and Communities
- Increased Risk of Marine Pollution and Impacts on Marine Wildlife and Subsistence Hunting
- Limited Amount of Money Staying in the Community



Case Study Communities

Ulukhaktok, Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Pond Inlet, Nain, Kuujjuaq



For Additional Information Contact:

Jackie Dawson:

jackie.dawson@uottawa.ca
University of Ottawa
Canada

Emma Stewart:

Emma.Stewart@lincoln.ac.nz
Lincoln University
New Zealand

Margaret Johnston:

mejohnst@lakeheadu.ca
Lakehead University
Canada



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