



Northern Ontario

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Northern Ontario

Introduction

First some baby steps, then a major expedition.

On my first venture north I drove to North Bay and rode Ontario Northland Railroad's *Dreamcatcher Express* train 100 km / 62 miles up through the bush to Temagami. Temagami proved to be an interesting destination.

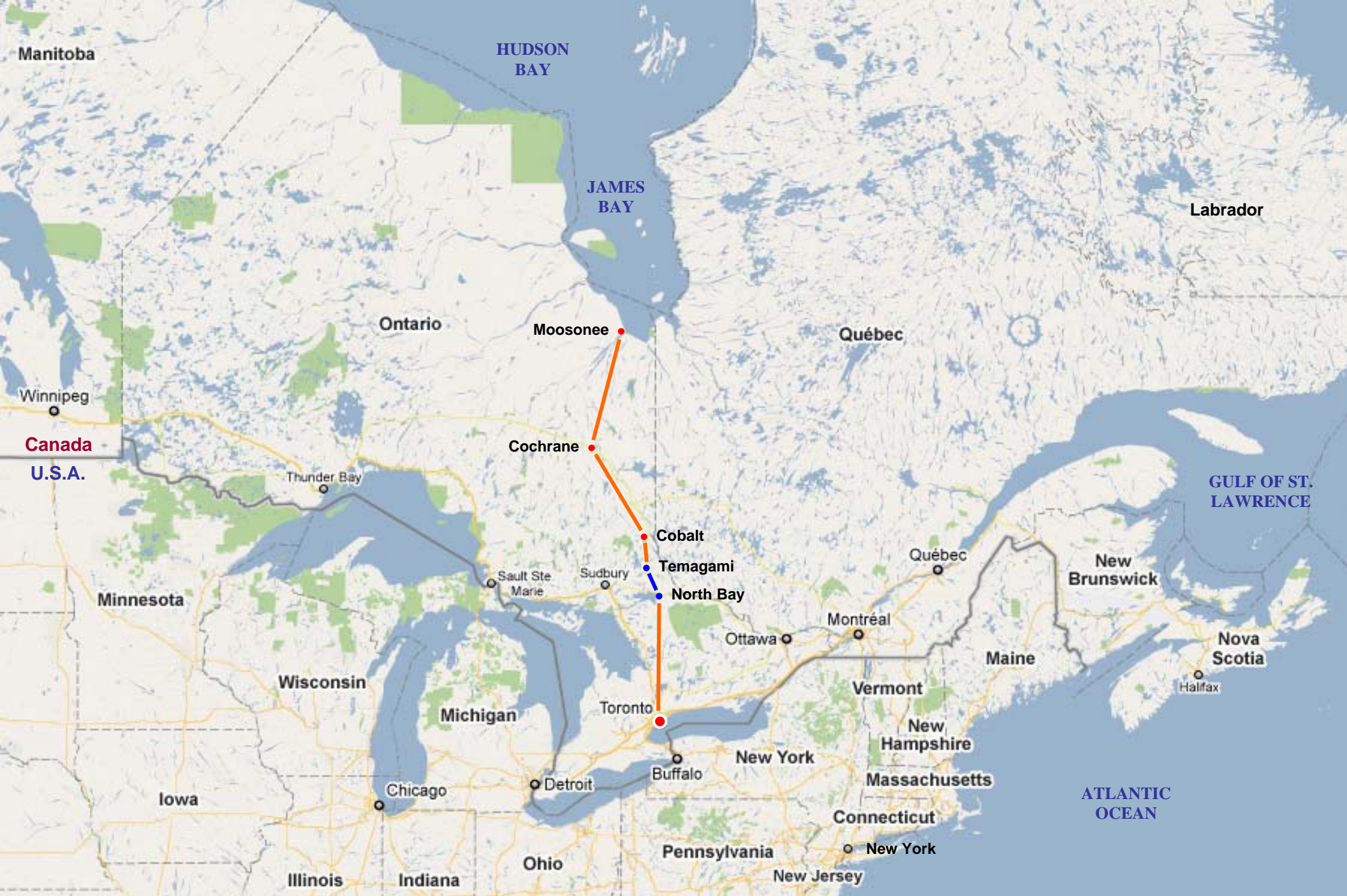
The following year I decided to be a bit more adventurous, and took Ontario Northland's *Northlander* and its so-called *Polar Bear Express* train all the way from Toronto to Moosonee on James Bay – 845 km / 525 miles.

Northern Ontario isn't heavily populated, but there is a lot of it.

Ontario's area is 416,000 square miles / 1,077,000 square kilometres. That's 1.5 times as big as Texas, 2.5 times as big as California, or 3 times as big as Germany.

I knew that real polar bear country was even further north, but Moosonee turned out to be an interesting destination just the same, and well worth the journey.

– Bruce McKay



**Northern
Ontario**

On my 2006 trip north I drove to North Bay, took the *Dreamcatcher Express* to Temagami, and went for a boat ride on Lake Nipissing at North Bay.



**Dreamcatcher
Express**

The *Dreamcatcher Express* heads north from North Bay on day trips in the fall when the leaves are changing colour.



**Dreamcatcher
Express**

Destination Temagami –
100 km / 62 miles further north.



**Dreamcatcher
Express**



**Dreamcatcher
Express**



**Dreamcatcher
Express**



**Dreamcatcher
Express**



Temagami

Tourism has been important to Temagami ever since the coming of the railway in the early 1900s.



Temagami

Temagami's permanent population is about 935.



Temagami

Temagami is a staging point for wilderness canoe trips and cottage vacationing on Lake Temagami.



Temagami

The Temagami Outfitting Company is one of the town's biggest businesses. Fascinating browsing.



Temagami

Bush planes are an integral part of the transportation system.



Temagami

The town has invested in a modern welcome centre for visitors.



Temagami

**We go for a boat ride
on Lake Temagami.**



Temagami

Lake Temagami



Temagami

Lake Temagami



Dreamcatcher Soon it will be time to head back.
Express



**Dreamcatcher
Express**



**Dreamcatcher
Express**



**Dreamcatcher
Express**



North Bay

**North Bay is on the shore of Lake Nipissing
(340 sq mi / 875 sq km).**



North Bay

Day trips and dinner cruises are offered.



Lake
Nipissing

Dinner cruise



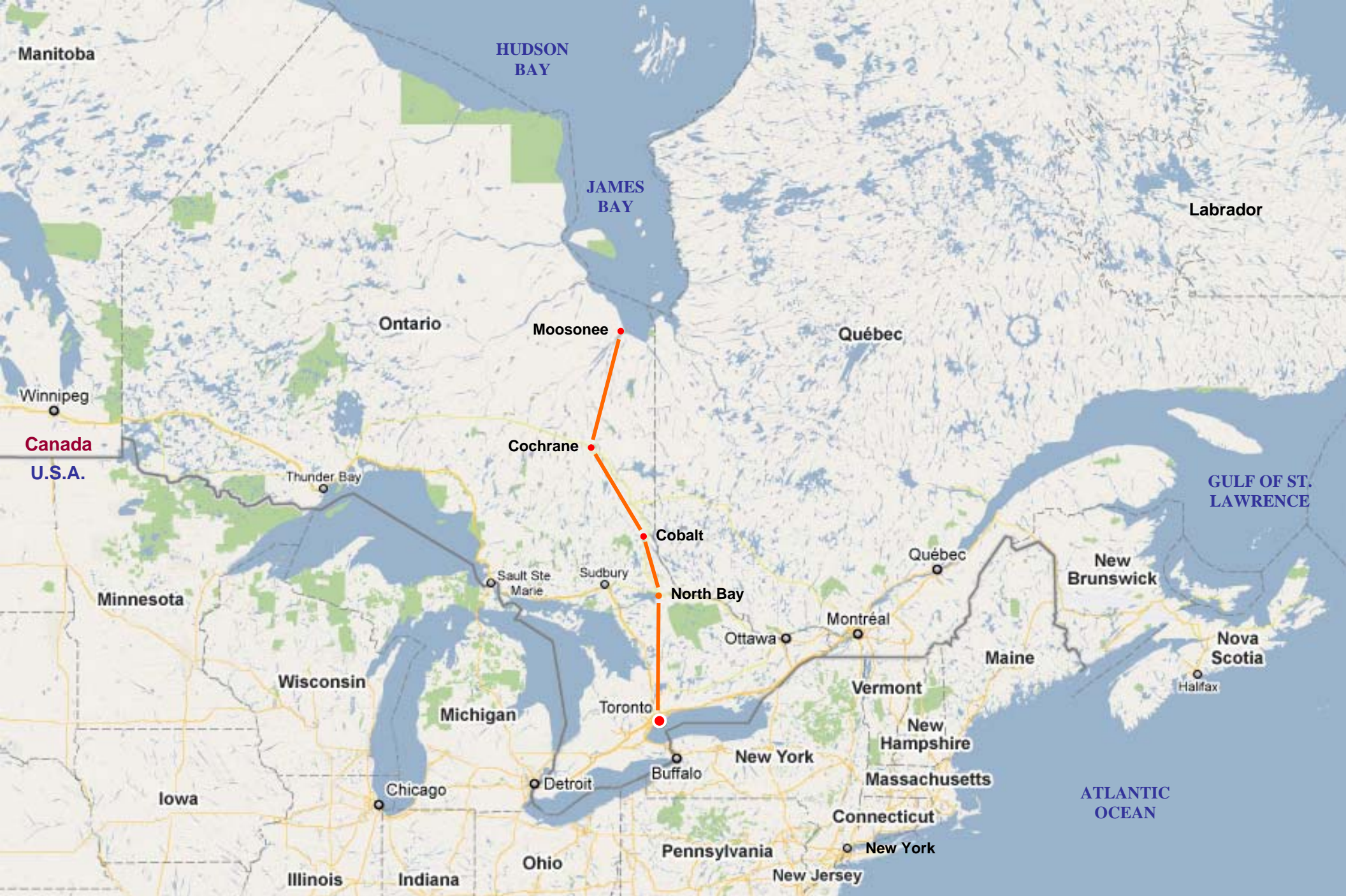
Lake
Nipissing



Lake
Nipissing



Lake
Nipissing



**Northern
Ontario**

My 2007 trip north was aboard Ontario Northland's *Northlander* to Cochrane, and then its *Polar Bear Express* to Moosonee. 845 km / 525 miles (one way).



Northlander

The terrain becomes more interesting
heading north from North Bay.



Northlander

Cobalt is a mining town that was once busier, and now has time for tourism.



Northlander

Heading towards Cochrane



Cochrane

Cochrane appears to be a typical Ontario small town, just one with a unique tourist industry.



Cochrane

There are some polar bears here,
but most of them never move ...



Cochrane

and the rest are in a zoo.



Cochrane

This is not prime polar bear country, but
Cochrane has a distinctive northern character.



**Polar Bear
Express**

**After an overnight rest we head north
from Cochrane towards Moosonee.**



**Polar Bear
Express**

**Crossing the Abitibi River, about a third
of the way from Cochrane to Moosonee.**



**Polar Bear
Express**

**Crossing the Moose River,
three-quarters of the way there.**



Moosonee

Moosonee, in Cree spelling. The goose is a respected symbol of the native Cree people.



Moosonee

The Railway Car Museum



Moosonee

The Moose Lodge, one of Moosonee's hotels.



Moosonee

Moosonee In A Nutshell (R>L): government liquor store for good times, police station for too much good times, church for forgiveness.



Moosonee

**Moose River Bed and Breakfast,
my home for the next two nights**



Moosonee

Our land and water explorations here were well organized by Two Bay Tours, though this was its final operating season.



Moosonee

The Boat House was the headquarters for the naturalists who guided us around the area.



Fossil Island
Moosonee

We set out in river boats to go hunting for fossils
on an island in the river south of Moosonee.



Fossil Island **Moose River**
Moosonee



Fossil Island
Moosonee

We find fossilized remains of marine life
from the Devonian geologic period.



Fossil Island
Moosonee

These fossils are from about 375 million years ago.



Fossil Island
Moosonee

The fossils include the remains
of snails, corals, and clams.



Quarry
Moosonee

At the Quarry just outside Moosonee we see the exposed bed of the semi-tropical ocean of the Devonian period.



Quarry
Moosonee

The loose rocks are limestone formed from mud deposited on the bottom of the shallow semi-tropical ocean of the Devonian age.



Quarry
Moosonee



To James Bay The *Polar Princess* will take us the rest of the way down the Moose River to James Bay.



To James Bay The morning we set out it is cloudy and rainy. James Bay empties into Hudson Bay, and in turn into the Arctic Ocean



To James Bay Chris, the naturalist guiding us on our tours, briefs some guests as we sail.



James Bay

James Bay. The southern reaches of the Arctic Ocean are steely grey and cold.



**Moose
Factory**

Moose Factory, the original fur trading post, was located on an island in the river to be easily reached by both local canoes and larger fur trade ships.



**Moose
Factory**

The Hudson's Bay Company post established here in 1673 to trade with natives for beaver pelts was the first English-speaking settlement in Ontario.



**Moose
Factory**

This Hudson's Bay post staff house is more recent, and dates only from 1823. The chief trader was known as the "factor". "Factory" was his trading post.



**Moose
Factory**

The Powder Magazine was one of the few stone buildings at the Hudson's Bay trading post.



**Moose
Factory**

Today's trading post is much less distinctive.



Cree Centre
Moose Factory

The Cree Cultural Interpretive Centre offers indoor and outdoor displays and exhibits, guided tours, native crafts, and a souvenir shop.



Cree Centre
Moose Factory

The Interpretive Centre is operated
by the Moose Cree First Nation.



Cree Centre
Moose Factory

Although most of the displays are designed to provide historical context for visitors, there are also blends of traditional styles ...



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**Moose
Factory**

The Cree Village Ecolodge is a modern ecotourism lodge, designed and operated by the Cree people in accordance with their own cultural and ecological values.





**Moose
Factory**

... but water taxis still provide the connections
between Moose Factory and Moosonee.



**Polar Bear
Express**

As our time here comes to an end ...



**Polar Bear
Express**

**... we again encounter the Cree greeting "Wah-chay".
Hello / Good Bye.**

< End >

 **Northern Ontario**