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PUNTHIP ATIPUNCHAPONG : TOURIST GUIDES' ROLES TO PROMOTE TOURISTS' CONSCIOUSNESS ON CONSERVATIVE TOURISM : A CASE STUDY OF THE THAI ECOTOURISM AND ADVENTURE TRAVEL ASSOCIATION. THESIS ADVISORS : TIPPAN NAWAWONGS, M.A., C.A.S. THAWATCHAI CHAIJIRACHAYAKUL, Ph.D. AMORNSAK PIMONMANOMAI, M.A. 155 p. ISBN 974-664-567-6

The purposes of this research were to study tourist guides' role to promote tourists' consciousness on conservative tourism. The relationship between tourist guides' roles and related factors, including problems, obstacles and suggestions were investigated. The target population for this study were 122 tourist guides in travel agencies, which were members of the Thai Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Association (TEATA). Representatives of related groups were also studied, including: other employees of travel agencies, sub-committees on producing tourist guide training courses, community leaders and local people from Bann Hnong Kaw community in Kanchanaburi Province. Data were collected by using questionnaires and scheduled interviews. Data were analyzed by percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation and modes. The statistics of chi-square tests were used for testing the hypotheses.

Results indicated that tourist guides' role performance to promote tourists' consciousness on conservative tourism was at a moderate level. Their role as knowledge providers and leaders or motivators for appropriate tourism was performed regularly. Their role as activity and experience organizers to raise tourists' consciousness on conservation was performed occasionally. Tourist guides had a low level of access to messages concerning conservative tourism sent through mass media. Factors which statistically affected their roles were access to related mass media information and knowledge of conservative tourism at the 0.05 level. Problems and obstacles in performing their roles to promote consciousness were tourists' lack of interest and ignorance on conservative tourism, guides' lack of knowledge, experiences and motivational skill to lead a conservative tour.

According to the results, there should be more disseminated information and public relation campaigns on conservative tourism through the mass media, supported inservice training courses for guides on ecology, conservation, and other related subjects as well as techniques for raising consciousness. Nature-related information and interpretative programs for learning should be prepared. Standards of tours should be controlled and well prepared.