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To the media and press

Government of Kutchan Town
Tokyu Land Corporation

Notice of Execution of Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement between Government of Kutchan Town, Hokkaido and Tokyu Land Corporation for Formation of All-Season International Resort to Mark 50th Anniversary of Ski Town Declaration

The Government of Kutchan Town, Hokkaido (Location: Kutchan Town, Abuta County, Hokkaido; Mayor: Kazushi Monji) and Tokyu Land Corporation (Head Office: Shibuya City, Tokyo; President and CEO: Masashi Okada) have executed a comprehensive cooperation agreement for the formation of an all-season international resort to mark the 50th anniversary of Kutchan's Ski Town Declaration.

Tokyu Land Corporation opened "Niseko Tokyu Grand HIRAFU," one of the largest ski resorts in the entirety of the Niseko mountain range, in Kutchan Town. In its capacity as one of the region's leading ski resort operators, the company arrived at the decision to enter this agreement based on its desire to contribute to improving the value of the Niseko area in cooperation with Kutchan Town for the purpose of putting an environment in place where local residents, patrons of ski resorts and employees could spend more quality time.

Scheduled to host the extension of the Hokkaido Shinkansen rail line and the opening of an expressway in fiscal 2030, Kutchan Town is expected to experience further regional revitalization going forward. While facilitating a broad range of mutual cooperation, such as addressing environmental consideration and regional challenges and collaborating with downtown areas, Tokyu Land Corporation will tackle this endeavor with the aim of realizing an all-season resort that is loved by local residents and mindful of sustainability as the company it keeps its sights on the ideal form of a next-generation resort.



■ About the Ski Town Declaration

In 1912, Theodor von Lerch, a Major General of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, visited Kutchan in order to climb Mount Yotei. From that time, skiing became popular as a sport and skis popular as a practical tool in Niseko given the area's high volume of snow. Subsequently, Niseko built up a record for itself for its ample ski resorts and its hosting of numerous official tournaments that includes two national ski competitions. In 1972, Kutchan Town declared itself a "Ski Town" and established skiing as the town sport.

Skiing and other winter sports are consistently a close part of the lives of Kutchan Town residents. Even after 50 years, the sport continues today to contribute considerably to the development of the town as part of its culture.

■ Circumstances Leading up to Execution of Agreement

Powder snow in Niseko is currently recognized globally as “JAPOW,” which stands for “Japan Powder.” The area is now visited by skiers and snowboarders from around the world. With skiing as Kutchan’s town sport and tourism as its main industry, ski resorts are a special presence in the town. Based on the view that the 50 years since the Ski Town Declaration of 1972 marks a milestone, Kutchan Town intends to contribute to the formation of mutually-beneficial relationship between resorts and downtown areas through collaboration between the two and to the formation of an all-season international resort that originates from the Niseko HIRAFU area by sharing recognition of changes in the social environment and regional resources and challenges with Tokyu Land Corporation, which operates “Niseko Tokyu Grand HIRAFU,” and by reinforcing mutual cooperation with the company that includes effectively utilizing the intellectual and human resources that both hold.

<Overview of Agreement>

- (1) Initiatives geared towards an all-season resort
- (2) Environmentally-friendly initiatives for safeguarding regional resources in preparation for forming a sustainable resort
- (3) Development of resort core in the Niseko HIRAFU area
- (4) Initiatives geared towards responding to regional challenges (transportation, infrastructure, etc.)
- (5) Environmental improvement aimed at seamless movement to accompany the opening of Kutchan Station on the Hokkaido Shinkansen rail line and the Kutchan-Yoichi Road
- (6) Initiatives aimed at the revitalization of downtown areas
- (7) Initiatives for smart resorts
- (8) Popularization of winter sports based on the Ski Town Declaration
- (9) Other matters required to achieve the purpose of the agreement



■ Future Action Policy

Restrictions on inbound travel are being gradually lifted. The full removal of those restrictions is expected to result in visitation by a number of tourists that even exceeds last season's figure. Tokyu Land Corporation believes that this will give momentum to the recovery of post-COVID-19 tourism. Given that a good number of the charms of Kutchan Town, which go beyond the ski season to include the green season as well, remain unknown, the company aims to realize a resort where visitors can enjoy their stay throughout the year. Tokyu Land Corporation recognizes areas such as town development and the improvement of public facilities in the resort area, initiatives for tourism DX and the connection of the resort with the Shinkansen rail line and expressway as challenges to be positively tackled with a view to reinforcing the town's future international competitiveness. Using this comprehensive cooperation agreement as a springboard, the company intends to bolster mutual collaboration with the Government of Kutchan Town and further pursue the formation of an all-season international resort and the promotion of tourism.

■ About Kutchan Town

Located in the Shiribeshi district in western Hokkaido, Kutchan Town has a population of approx. 15,000. As of 2021, 130 years has passed since the town was cultivated by the first wave of migrants from areas such as Tokushima Prefecture in the Shikoku Region in 1892. Kutchan is surrounded by Mount Yotei, which is also called "Ezo Fuji," and the Niseko Volcanic Group, and hosts the clearwater Shiribetsu River. The town has an abundance of nature as a result. In the summer, outdoor sports such as rafting in the Shiribetsu River and cycling around the foot of Mount Yotei are considerably popular. In the winter, many skiers and snowboarders visit Kutchan from the rest of Japan and the world in search of high-quality powder snow. The town also has a healthy agricultural industry that takes advantage of the rich infiltration water on Mount Yotei. Its specialty products include potatoes, melons, and asparagus.

With the forthcoming opening of Kutchan Station on the Hokkaido Shinkansen rail line and the Trans-Hokkaido Expressway, the Government of Kutchan Town will continue to pursue a myriad of initiatives going forward.

■ About Niseko Tokyu Grand HIRAFU

Niseko's very first ski lift made its debut in 1961 at Niseko Tokyo Grand HIRAFU, which was named Niseko HIRAFU Ski Resort at the time. Since Tokyu Land Corporation took over the operation of that resort from Niseko Kogen Kanko Co., Ltd. in 1985, it has endeavored to contribute to the development of the Niseko area as one of the region's leading ski resort operators.

Niseko Tokyu Grand HIRAFU boasts the largest size out of the four ski resorts in the whole Niseko mountain range. Including the HIRAFU Gondola that seats eight, the facility is equipped with a total of thirteen lifts and gondolas, the most of any resort in the area. Moreover, it is also pursuing initiatives that contribute to improving the value of the Niseko area as an all-season resort by utilizing slopes outside of the skiing season.



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