

A Noble Pursuit

This 45 minute documentary film is the story of a community coming together to achieve one of the most significant oil and gas lease buyouts in American history.

Synopsis

This film is about the importance of every person's voice when it comes to deciding what happens to our public lands.

I have lived in Wyoming for over 20 years and when 1000's of acres in the Wyoming Range was planned for energy development, I decided to make the commitment to document the story of citizens mobilizing in an effort to preserve their land. This film is a celebration of my community and all the interesting, diverse, and passionate residents of Sublette County, Wyoming. Ranchers, cowboys, cowgirls, hunters, energy industry professionals, wildlife experts, and local residents all came together, across political divides, in unprecedented support of one another in their fight to save a cherished mountain wilderness.

A main character of the film, author and resident of Bondurant, Wyoming, Florence Krall Shepard, speaks to this urgent necessity, in that the air that we breath, water we drink, and other vital ecosystems, are dependent upon our last remaining wild places.

The energy leases were located within the Hoback Basin, which is the headwaters of the Wild and Scenic Hoback River. This part of the Wyoming Range is home to elk, moose, deer, pronghorn antelope, native trout, and Canada Lynx. It is also a crucial portion of a centuries old mule deer migration route that has recently been mapped by the University of Wyoming. The people of Wyoming showed up, and what began as a grassroots coalition became a chorus of voices repeating the words, this area is "too special to drill."

The people's message resonated loud and clear and resulted in overwhelming support for a buyout of the company's leases. Thanks to concerned citizens, 58,000 acres will now be protected in perpetuity. This success story is a road map for how other communities across the United States can effectively work along side our neighbors, elected officials and conservation groups to continue to preserve and protect our public lands.

Director's Statement

The goal of this finished documentary film project is to honor all the people who have fought tirelessly, without funding or accolades, for land that connects them to a deeper part of themselves. It is for all those who explore and cherish our country's forests, craggy canyons, lakes, rivers, streams, and meadows alive with flowers and animals.

I, myself feel a deep connection to the wilderness that surrounds me and to the people who live in admiration and respect to our last remaining natural spaces.

This film is for everyone and it will be shared and screened in public libraries across the state of Wyoming, as well as PBS. My hope is educate, inspire, and inform other communities across the United States as they make decisions pertaining to open spaces.

Why Now

Wildlife refuges, national parks, and national forests are a key piece of our natural heritage and the birthright of all Americans, regardless of their backgrounds, income, or where they live.

This Wyoming story is an inspiration for how people from all walks of life can work together for a common vision in achieving one of the most significant oil and gas lease buyouts in American history. In this case, residents from a small cattle ranching town and neighboring communities showed that conservation not only preserves nature, but also the traditional cultural uses of the land, such as hunting, fishing, camping, horseback riding, and grazing.

To this day, these Wyoming voices can still be heard as our country and public lands face challenges in the years ahead.

We all have a voice. Our voices not only matter, but they make a difference.

Producer

Ron Chilcote, Founder of The Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation

The Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation supports projects and organizations committed to environmental sensitivity and social responsiveness with an emphasis on working with and preserving nature. FSI is committed to innovation involving creativity and new ideas that make this world a better place to live. For more information go to, www.fsifoundation.com.