

THE TELLURIDE PROJECT, LLC PRESENTS

THERE'S A PLACE WHERE
NATURE & DEMOCRACY MEET

FOREVER WILD

**"SOMEONE HAD TO
SPEAK FOR THE LAND!"**

HILARY WHITE

Valley Floor Preservation Partners



WWW.FOREVERWILDMOVIE.COM

Forever Wild

Contact: info@foreverwildmovie.com

Web: <https://www.foreverwildmovie.com>

FB: facebook.com/ForeverWildMovie

LOGLINE

FOREVER WILD tells the story of a tenacious community in Telluride, CO who unites to save the open land surrounding their town from being turned into a massive, man-made lake and golf resort.



Wildlife on the valley floor

SHORT SYNOPSIS

FOREVER WILD tells the story of a tenacious community in the historic town of Telluride, Colorado, who unites to save the open land surrounding their town from a billionaire developer. The film is a stirring portrayal of how everyday citizens can take action to protect our precious natural habitats and resources.

This film chronicles an environmental and democratic triumph. An out-of-town developer plotted to turn 600 acres of pristine valley floor into a mammoth lake and golf resort by manipulating local politicians and press. Nothing stood in his way, until a small group of citizens united the community, and fought for the land.

The winner of several awards, **FOREVER WILD** has screened at prestigious film festivals across the globe. Currently, we are sharing the film's story with communities across the country and collaborating with partners committed to supporting environmental preservation and civic engagement. The film will inspire audiences nationwide when it heads to PBS stations Spring 2022.



Hundreds gathered to support saving the valley floor

LONG SYNOPSIS

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Through community events and generous donations of time and money, the town of Telluride was able to raise \$50 million in three months to go to court with the developer. The Colorado Supreme Court declared that Telluride had the constitutional right to condemn land outside its borders and preserve it from development.

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Director of Photography Jim Hurst setting up the shot

THE FILMMAKERS

FOREVER WILD was directed and produced by a team of creative activists dedicated to promoting environmental preservation and utilizing their collective talents to catalyze change.

Bryan Reinhart (Director) is an American producer, director, and editor. Reinhart's first Hollywood experience was producing a documentary on the feature film Hoosiers which led to an opportunity to work with the Coen Brothers on Raising Arizona. As a filmmaker, he finds it just as important to take the time to teach. For 17 years Bryan Reinhart has been a film instructor in Sedona, AZ.

Ron Melmon (Executive Producer) is a businessperson with a finger on the pulse of environmental and democracy issues facing our world today. He started shooting with still film cameras in 1968 and then owned camera stores in the 1970's. Most recently he was awarded a Digital Media Arts Degree from Yavapai College in Sedona, AZ. Ron has been a producer all his life and is extremely proud of **FOREVER WILD**.

Christopher S. Johnson (Editor) is a career documentary film editor who is drawn to stories concerning the environment and human rights. Before joining the team that created **FOREVER WILD**, Christopher edited documentaries for television, including the Emmy Award winning, Sonic Sea and Acid Test for Discovery Channel, Cesar's Last Fast for Netflix, Harmony for NBC and HRH Prince of Wales, and The Sierra Club Chronicles for the Sundance Channel.

Jim Hurst (Cinematographer) Jim Hurst is an Emmy-nominated cinematographer, photographer, sound recordist, adventurer, and filmmaker who has worked on documentary films from the peaks of the Himalayas to Midway Atoll in the center of the Pacific Ocean. He

specializes in self-sufficient location documentary shooting in places where a large crew would be impractical or obtrusive. His camerawork was featured in the Oscar-winning *Free Solo* for National Geographic.

FILMMAKER STATEMENT

From the Producer, Ron Melmon:

When people ask me how this project came together I remember it was the result of a visit to my niece who lives in Telluride, CO. On a recent trip to visit her, I asked about the gateway to the town – this big beautiful, open green space that the San Miguel River meanders through, greeting locals and visitors everyday. I was curious why the gateway hadn't been developed.

She told me the 600 acres had been slated for homes, condos, golf courses, lakes, and commercial development. The majority of Telluride opposed this and were given a court ultimatum that included a price tag of \$50M and a three month deadline to raise the funds to keep the Valley Floor forever wild.

How did they do it? I was fascinated and intrigued. My niece and I started compiling notes, buying books, scouring newspapers and making lists of those who could help us tell their story. Quickly it became quite daunting!

At that time I was working as a videographer for our own Sedona International Film Festival. One of my tasks was to shoot the Documentary Film Workshop that included a panel of documentarians. The moderator was Bryan Reinhart, a filmmaker and educator I've known for 15 years. One of the answers to a question Bryan asked was very eye opening: A filmmaker from England had been working on her film for almost 15 years! I sure didn't want my project to take that long. Then it hit me. I needed help.

I wondered if Bryan would be interested in assisting me. The rest is history. Suffice it to say, we got together, surrounded ourselves with an award-winning team, and manifested a great film.

THE CHARACTERS

Art Goodtimes - San Miguel County Commissioner

"Senior" Mahoney - Town Historian

Chris Hazen - Executive Director, San Miguel Conservation Foundation

Terry Tice - Valley Floor Preservation Partners

Bo Bedford - Front Desk Manager, New Sheridan Hotel

Hilary White - Valley Floor Preservation Partners

Joan May - Former Executive Director, Sheep Mt. Alliance

Jane Hickcox - Valley Floor Preservation Partners

Gary Hickcox - Former Executive Director, San Miguel Conservation Foundation

Jerry Greene - Former Town Council member

Lance Waring - Former Town Council Member

Stuart Fraser - Former Telluride Mayor

Linda J. Miller - Sheep Mountain Alliance

Todd Creel - Valley Floor Preservation Partners

Kevin Geiger - Attorney for Town of Telluride

David Allen - Valley Floor Preservation Partners

CHARACTER QUOTES

"You have to have a big dream. And this was a really big dream" - Art Goodtimes

"You become part of the place. The place is no longer nature, you are the place. You are connected deeply to it. The people who came here not only loved the beauty of the place, but loved each other. Loved the feeling of creating a new society." - Art Goodtimes

"Never have I seen a community do something like this. Put up that much money to keep land open and free." - Art Goodtimes

"The wildlife thrive in locations like this. Wetlands are used by about 50% of the species in Colorado." - Chris Hazen

"The land needs us to speak for it right now." - Hilary White

"We needed to preserve the entire ecosystem in order to protect the river running through there, the habitat to allow for migration between open lands" - Hilary White

"We can pretty much do anything we can put our minds to, if we come together and do it. If we're divided, we're going to be arguing forever." Hilary White

"We had three months (to raise \$50 million). We hired a professional fundraising organization to come in from Denver and do an analysis. The fundraising team did their due diligence, they had a lot of experience, and they came back and told us it can't be done, it's not going to work out. But at that point we knew we had to do it, we all felt passionate about it." - Hilary White

"Another gal who lived here in the neighborhood had a 16 year old son who just inherited her father's vehicle. He just got his driver's license and that was going to be a really cool thing. It was his idea I believe he told his mom I'd like to see this car and give the money to the Valley Floor." - Jane Hickcox

FILM FESTIVALS & AWARDS

- **Best Documentary Feature**, American International Film & Art Festival, 2020
- **Best Cinematography**, American International Film & Art Festival, 2020
- **Audience Impact Award**, Sedona International Film Festival, 2019
- **Best Documentary Feature**, Arcosanti International Film Carnivale, 2019
- **Best Cinematography**, Lyons International Film Festival, 2019
- **Colorado & The West Award**, Colorado International Activism Film Festival, 2019
- **Best Documentary Editing**, Colorado International Film Festival, 2019
- **Audience Choice**, Eugene Environmental Film Festival, 2019
- **Official Selection**, Wild & Scenic International Film Festival, 2020
- **Official Selection**, New Hope Film Festival, 2020
- **Official Selection**, Catalina Film Festival, 2020
- **Official Selection**, Mountainfilm Festival, 2019
- **Official Selection**, Flagstaff Mountain Film Festival, 2019
- **Official Selection**, DocuWest International Film Festival, 2019
- **Official Selection**, Jerome Indie Film & Music Festival, 2019
- **Official Selection**, Catalina Film Festival, 2019

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