

MAROON CREEK PRODUCTIONS

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New Documentary Film to Screen
at Taos MountainFilm On October 7th

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ASPEN, CO A new documentary film calls it the biggest land grab in American history, far outstripping the gold rushes and silver strikes that rattled the West in the 19th Century. This time the oil and gas industry is laying claim to tens of millions of public land acres throughout the Rocky Mountain West.

A Land out of Time, a feature documentary produced and directed by Mark Harvey, lays out the vast scale and frantic pace of the rush to drill, telling the story through ranchers, hunters and outfitters being pushed off the land after several generations. The cast includes Aztec, New Mexico ranchers Chris Velasquez and Linn & Tweeti Blancett.

The film will screen at Taos MountainFilm Festival on Saturday, October 7 at 5:45 p.m., at the Old County Courthouse.

Harvey, winner of the National Outdoor Book Award, has written about the Western gas boom but he feels Americans are not fully aware of dramatic extent of the drilling threat.

“Unless you were an energy analyst, it just didn’t occur to you that the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management would suddenly be leasing millions of acres to the gas and oil industry and then issuing tens of thousands of permits to drill all over the heart of the West,” Harvey said.

The film laments the loss of Western heritage and warns of the threat to the West’s “last, best places” like New Mexico’s Otero Mesa and Valle Vidal, Wyoming’s Red Desert and Colorado’s Roan Plateau. The film also questions whether the democratic process is working as the government decides how Americans’ public lands are used.

“In our travels while making *A Land out of Time*, from Montana to New Mexico, we heard the same story again and again: the Federal government has stopped listening to the American public,” Harvey said. “They hold the public hearings mandated by law, take tens of thousands

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of public comments favoring conservation, and then proceed with energy development as if the hearing never took place.”

The film highlights the unlikely political alliances developing over the drilling issue. Keith Goddard, a Colorado outfitter, says just five years ago he couldn't imagine being in a room full of environmentalists. He is now proud to work along side mountain bikers and hikers in the fight to save the Roan Plateau.

Political strategists have identified the public lands drilling issue as a potential wedge issue in the upcoming mid-term elections. Under pressure from their conservative ranching and hook and bullet bases, formerly pro-drilling politicians have begun to reverse course, embracing conservation laws to protect specific areas from drilling. The film invites more people to engage in the politics of drilling on public land.

The film also touches on energy policy, charging that the Bush Administration is giving the public a false choice: cheap energy or conserving the Rockies' premiere lands. The most contentious battles are over a few relatively small areas that will satisfy American energy demand for only a few days, or at most a few weeks. Harvey says, “It's tantamount to burning the furniture for firewood.”

More information, and free DVDs of the film, are available at www.alandoutoftime.com

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