



FISH TALES: FILMMAKER HUNTER WEEKS WILL FIND A STORY IN EVERYTHING FROM SEGWAYS TO BASS.

Where the Filmmaker Goes

Intrepid Montana-based filmmaker Hunter Weeks talks about his path to success.

Filmmaker Hunter Weeks just finished touring his third feature length documentary "Where The Yellowstone Goes." Like many documentary and independent filmmakers today, Weeks did not go to film school. He suppressed his interest in film while in college to avoid being ridiculed as a hopeless dreamer, and for a short while ended up with a steady-eddy office-bound marketing job.

Where did you learn about filmmaking?

I went to a small school called Principia College where I was able to dabble with cameras in the Mass Comm department, and some friends asked me to do some camera work for them and had me act in their video projects. Then I found there was lots to learn online. When I got serious about making my first film, I partnered with my good friend Josh Caldwell who loved the technical side of things and figured all of that out. We were inspired by Morgan Spurlock who did "Supersize Me" and we figured 'how hard can it be?' I've realized, it's hard and even after three films, I will always be learning.

Where did the idea for your first film, "10 MPH," about riding a Segway scooter from Seattle to Boston, come from?

Another friend, John Keough, was talking to Josh on the phone one day and suggested it. Segways

were pretty new then and he argued every new kind of vehicle has to have some sort of trans-continental inauguration. Josh and I wanted to break free from our boring office jobs and had just given our notice with no idea what lay ahead. I thought the Segway idea was totally crazy at first, but then it grew on me and we decided to go for it. I think that's what was most important. We wanted to do something fun and cool and making this film was it. We didn't back down.

Which do you prefer more the filmmaking or the storytelling?

I like the storytelling more. I don't like getting caught up in the mechanics of filmmaking. I see the value of having good equipment, but in the end if you can find and capture the story, that's what's going to keep you going. There are a lot of filmmakers out there and I think the ones who will thrive are the ones who can tell the story.

What's next? What are you working on now?

I'm considering more river films based on the success of "Where The Yellowstone Goes." The great thing about taking this film on tour is that people have made some neat suggestions like the Potomac out east and the Sheenjek in Alaska. Also, I'm doing a film on the world's oldest people, including Bessy Cooper who turns 116 this year. It's so interesting to get a chance to talk to people who were born in the 1800's and have seen all the changes of the 1900's. I'm also working on a film about park rangers and the stories they have from their work in national parks and wilderness areas.

—Cameron Martindell

Hot Rocks

Oil shale development will muck up recreation in the West.

Shale is for sale. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is revisiting a 2008 decision to allocate two million acres of public lands in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming for potential oil shale development. The planning area under review in the Oil Shale and Tar Sands Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (OSTS PEIS) includes popular recreational tourist areas, such as the San Rafael Swell in Utah and sections of the White and Yampa Rivers in Colorado and Utah.

Oil shale has yet to prove economically viable, as energy companies struggle to develop efficient technologies that can extract and refine the rock into a usable fuel. The current, experimental methods are energy and water intensive and emit large quantities of greenhouse gases.

Outdoor Alliance, a coalition of six national, member-based outdoor recreation organizations, voiced its concern to the BLM that oil shale development would damage air and water quality, as well as irreparably harm recreational opportunities. Active outdoor recreation contributes over \$20 billion annually across the three states, according to a 2006 report by the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), but is often left out of the conversation. According to Jason Keith, Policy Director at the Access Fund, a climbing access and conservation group and member of Outdoor Alliance, it's easy to overlook the recreation resources and the sustainable recreation economy that are in the viewsheds, as well as the watersheds, of these potential lease sites.

The BLM isn't considering outdoor recreation in this level of the planning process. "We're looking at the potential impacts to recreation, but we're not making recreation decisions in our plan," says Sherri Thompson, BLM Project Manager for the OSTS PEIS. Those decisions will be made in subsequent implementation and activity plans, and the BLM will make additional site-specific analyses prior to the issuing of any leases.

The BLM's preferred alternative would reduce lands available for future development to approximately 462,000 acres and would limit leases to research, development and demonstration only. Conservation and recreation groups support a more conservative option, but as Keith puts it, "It's still a huge improvement from 2008." The Final OSTS PEIS will be published in October followed by a 30-day protest period. *Contact your local recreation advocacy group to find out how to participate.* outdooralliance.net

—Casey Flynn