WILD HOME

AN AMERICAN ODYSSEY

CREATED BY NOTCH THEATRE COMPANY AND JESSICA KAHKOSKA
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THE ISSUE

PUBLIC LANDS UNDER ATTACK

In April 2018, President Trump signed an executive order to review 27 national monuments. The goal: to repeal protections so that massive swaths of public lands can be leased to the gas and oil industry.

Despite public opposition to this unprecedented attack on some of our most cherished landscapes, the Bureau of Land Management moved forward with leasing plans, effectively eliminating the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments in Utah. This was the largest reduction of public lands protection in U.S. history, opening up more than two million acres to mining and drilling. Plans to reduce protections for monuments in New England, Oregon, New Mexico, and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans are also on the horizon.

WHAT WE STAND TO LOSE

Many rural communities rely heavily on our public lands for clean water and food. And we all deserve to enjoy the beauty, recreation and solace public lands provide. The threats posed by the industrialization of these precious areas are immeasurable and dire. They will affect endangered species' habitats as well as our access to clean water and air.
WHAT IS WILD HOME?

THE CONCEPT

*Wild Home* takes an odyssey across rural America, traveling to 15 wilderness areas significantly pressured by oil and gas development and collaborating with local communities to tell their real stories on stage.

By working at the cross section of theatre and environmental justice, we strive to bring disparate communities together to influence environmental policy, document a historic moment, and raise awareness of what's happening on our public lands.

THE PROCESS

The Wilderness Society has a campaign called *Too Wild To Drill*, which identifies 15 communities threatened by oil, gas, and mineral extraction on public lands. It asks, "What if we destroyed some of the best wild places in America for short-lived commercial gains?" Inspired by their call to action, we created *Wild Home*. The program strives to create a national discourse as it takes an epic journey through all 15 communities, documenting a pivotal moment in America—a moment we may look back on for generations to come as we evaluate the consequences of this current administration's re-zoning of public lands to extractive industries.

In each town, we partner with community to hold public story-sharing events about potential leasing. We then craft plays based on community concerns, which are performed by community and professional actors in the very outdoor spaces that are under attack. The plays are interspersed with facilitated dialogue about efforts in community to protect wildlands. And the program is designed so the plays can travel from rural areas to urban centers, raising awareness of this urgent issue in cities as a means of bringing disparate communities together to tackle environmental policy at a grassroots level and on a national, policymaker scale.
**IMPACT AND HISTORY**

**IMPACT**

*Wild Home* aims to magnify personal stories about American wildlands under threat and the people who depend on them. In addition to mobilizing civic engagement at a grassroots level, the plays also act as an indelible record of a community’s unique history and culture at a particularly urgent moment in that community’s journey. Because they are based on true stories, the plays are marked by an authenticity of character and voice, and a sometimes disarming honesty. They are very real and very accessible, and have the rare power to touch people on a deeply personal level, galvanizing communities to take action.

**HISTORY**


In its first year, *Wild Home* partnered with two national organizations and over 20 local nonprofits including The Wilderness Society, Citizens for a Healthy Community, NFV Creative Coalition, and Western Slope Conservation Center. We collected over 45 testimonies from artists, activists, farmers, multi-generational coal miners, small business owners, policy makers, and more, all across Delta County. The program was also featured by HowlRound in their Theatre in the Age of Climate Change series.

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IN THE NEWS

PRESS

Broadwayworld: In Conversation with Notch Theatre Company and Jessica Kahkoska

HowlRound: Theatre in the Age of Climate Change Series

Broadwayworld.com: Notch and Jessica Kahkoska Launch Wild Home

The Grand Junction Sentinel: On Stage: 'Wild Home: An American Odyssey'

Delta County Independent: Community Theater Project Features North Fork Cast

READ MORE
What's next, or what do you hope this project can/will do moving forward?

Jess: In April, we presented the first full performance of Wild Home at Delicious Orchards, in Hotchkiss, Colorado. The event was the culmination of 12 months of engagement and a week-long rehearsal process, and featured an amazing local cast of actors, original music, and of course, amazing cider. Following the performance, there was a panel with advocacy leaders in the area who shared more about their organizations and how audience members can engage with them and get involved in these issues.

Looking ahead, there's a lot to do. We're beginning to plan the next leg of Wild Home in a new community, visioning how we will grow this project to a national level and bridge gaps between rural communities.

We're also laying the groundwork to bring plays from Colorado's North Fork Valley to Denver and other urban centers, where they can be heard by policy makers and politicians who directly impact the outcome of the fight to protect these areas.

One thing is clear, the energy and urgency emanating from Wild Home is palpable, celebratory, and dire. These are stories that need to be told, need to be shared, and need to be acted on-- before it's too late.
GET INVOLVED

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
http://notchtheatre.weebly.com/wildhome.html

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WILD HOME COMMUNITIES

Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
Bears Ears National Monument
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
The Grand Canyon
Mojave Trails National Monument
Wayne National Forest in Ohio
Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness
Northern Red Desert in Wyoming
Owyhee Desert Sagebrush in Nevada
Carlsbad Caves and Rivers in New Mexico