



Hellbent Impact Report

A small town saves a big salamander

Impact Goals



Assist and empower communities in identifying and addressing environmental injustice.



Connect marginalized communities to helpful resources.



Help build momentum and awareness of the Rights of Nature movement.

Date: 1/23/24

Hellbent Campaign

- Create a short film featuring local community heroes and their fight against environmental injustice.
- Develop community events to bring people together and spark conversation about environmental rights.
- Develop toolkits and educational resources for communities to use to fight environmental injustice.



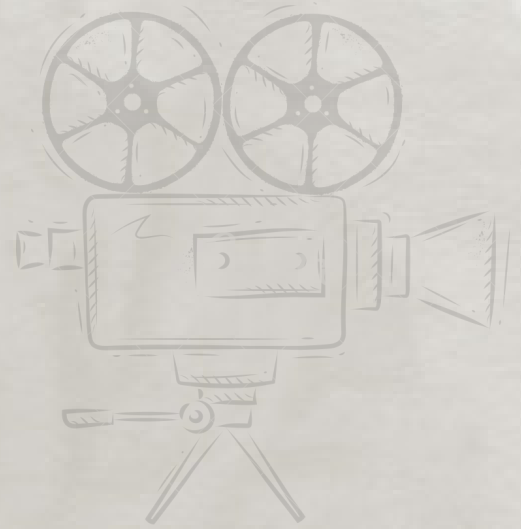
Hellbent Film Festivals

Film Festivals | 16 total

NY Wild Film Festival (World Premier)
Cleveland International Film Festival
Jackson Wild Summit
World Wildlife Day Showcase
American Conservation Film Festival
Oil Valley Film Festival
Green Film Festival of San Francisco
United Nations Association Film Festival
Southside Film Festival
West Chester International Short Film Festival
Allentown Film Festival
The 7th Annual Jim Thorpe Film Festival
Les Bois Film Festival
Environmental Film and Screenplay Festival
Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival
Wild Coast Film Festival

Honorable Mentions

Jackson Wild Summit
Nassau Film Festival
Dumbo Film Festival: Semi Finalist



Awards | 7 Total

- Best Short: NY Wild Film Festival
- Audience Choice Award: American Conservation Film Festival
- Audience Choice Award: Le Boise Film Festival
- Best Nature Documentary: Environmental Film and Screenplay Festival
- Best Cinematography: Oil Valley Film Festival
- Best Documentary Film: West Chester International Short Film Festival
- Green Production Award: Jackson Wild Summit



Hellbent Film Screenings

Public Screenings

In Person

Toledo Public Library (Toledo, OH)

Bowling Green State University (Bowling Green, OH)

Ohio University (Athens, OH)

Lycoming College (Lycoming, PA)

Indiana University of Pennsylvania (Indiana, PA)

Arkadine Theater (St Louis Association of American Zookeepers, St Louis, MO)

Ridge and River Outdoor Gear Shop (Toledo, OH)

Cape Horn International Center (Puerto Williams, Chile)

University of Mount Olive (Mount Olive, NC)

Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens (Cincinnati, OH)

Klamath Film Association (Oregon)

Imagination Station (Toledo, OH)

Big Sewickley Creek Watershed Association (Sewickley, PA)

Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards

Allegheny County's Latodami Nature Center (Wexford, PA)

Eel River Watershed Improvement Group (Fortuna, CA)

Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium (Pittsburgh, PA)

Virtual

Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders

French Creek Valley Conservancy and the Foundation for Sustainable Forests

The College of New Jersey

Parkridge High School, Environmental Science Classes

Miami University

Halt the Harm Network

Hellbent Film Impact

Viewership of Film | Estimated > 4,500

Impact Partners

Fractracker Alliance

Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund

Halt the Harm

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Gardens

Wild Spark

American Association of Zoo Keepers | St Louis Chapter



University Programs

Miami University Global Field Program | Project Dragonfly

Special Events

Cincinnati Hellbender Naming Ceremony

Judy and Stacy Panel Discussion at Indiana University of Pennsylvania

American Conservation Film Festival - Judy and Stacy panel discussion



Judy and Stacy at the American Conservation Film Festival



Judy and Stacy at the Cincinnati Zoo for the Hellbender naming ceremony where the Zoo named their two hellbenders after them.

Hellbent Film Impact



Grant Township Support

The campaign developed postcards to be handed out at community events for people to write notes of support for Grant Township during their fight so they do not lose momentum and their fighting spirit. Over 100 letters were received by the community.

Swaying public opinion in favor of Grant Township

Over a decade ago, Grant Township received notice from Pennsylvania Gas and Electric about the installation of an injection well in their community. Despite facing opposition from the community, the persistence of Pennsylvania Gas and Electric led to a prolonged legal battle, involving lawsuits from PGE and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. The case traversed multiple courts, including the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to rule on the decision to allow Grant Townships Rights of Nature clause stand. Leading up to that court case in fall of 2023, the Hellbent team targeted communities living in the area to get as many eyes on the film as possible to help sway the court of public opinion.

An investigation revealed that the proposed injection well site had been mismanaged by PGE, and was in several environmental violations. The court determined the well could not go in, allowing Grant Township, and the hellbender to maintain access to clean water.

Hellbent Education Impact

Education Materials

- 1 Resource Toolkit for Communities created
- 1 High School lesson plan developed
- 1 Middle School lesson plan developed
- 1 Anatomy of a hellbender activity created
- 1 survey developed for community screenings and events

[Link to folder with education materials](#)



Hellbent articles and Podcasts

- [Allegheny Front](#): A NEW FILM CONNECTS THE PLIGHT OF HELLBENDERS WITH CONCERNS OVER GAS DEVELOPMENT (2022)
- [City of Pittsburg](#): New Film Celebrates the Hellbender, Pennsylvania's State Amphibian
- [Earth to Humans](#): Hellbent
- [Wild Hub](#): Hellbent- a film about rights of nature and the power of community
- [To Hell and Back](#) - podcast with Jess Phoenix

Money Raised >\$1,500 in donations

Audience Reaction



“This story shows the power that communities can have when we organize and advocate for our own well-being, and how positive impacts can radiate throughout our environment.”

-Elyse DeFranco | Science Writer

“It brings out the beautiful duality of the notion of 'giving voice to the voiceless', where the community speaks for the endangered salamander and the salamander provides the soul for the community's fight as an indicator species of water quality and a symbol of resistance.”

-Dr. Nitya Mohanty | Researcher

“Visually compelling and charismatic people draw you in to care about this community, its hellbenders, and its water.”

-Film viewer

“Makes one believe that people can come together to make a difference in their community.”

-Film viewer

“A refreshing and enlightening film that showed the devastating impact of fracking literally through a new lens, and at the same time offered an optimistic inspiration for the power of humankind.”

-Martha Mendoza | Pulitzer Prize-winning Investigative Journalist

“I really enjoyed the story, it's a well-woven tale of community activism, conservation, and a system that devalues sustainability.”

-Film viewer

“Very well done. Cinematography was excellent and the story was genuine. Really admire the tenacity of those in Grant's township. I Enjoyed it immensely and gave me hope that we can change things in our communities..”

-Film viewer

Looking Forward



Hellbent's Continued Impact

The team is committed to sustaining the impact campaign by expanding film screenings, including participation in renowned platforms such as WildScreen, and engaging with additional Appalachia-based film festivals. This strategic approach aims to resonate with communities facing similar challenges to those portrayed in the film.

Furthermore, the campaign plans to deploy educational materials in classrooms across Appalachia, targeting schools in rural areas that overlap with hellbender and fracking zones. Building on the film's momentum, the team endeavors to organize local, in-person screenings throughout Appalachia, fostering connections with more community members. The extended impact campaign is slated to span 2024 and 2025, demonstrating a long-term dedication to effecting positive change.

Currently, Running Wild Media and Wild Lens are actively seeking film distribution and a strategic impact partner to amplify the campaign's reach and influence.



www.hellbentfilm.com



HELLBENT



A small town fights a fracking company to save their community and the hellbender.

WILD LENS COLLECTIVE PRESENTS HELLBENT IN ASSOCIATION WITH RUNNING WILD MEDIA
FROM EXECUTIVE PRODUCER JIM LESPERANCE AND PRODUCERS MATT PODOLSKY AND JUSTIN GRUBB, AND ALEX GOETZ
DIRECTED BY JUSTIN GRUBB AND ANNIE ROTH EDITED BY KATE GARRET MUSIC BY MICAH DAHL ANDERSON
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY ALEX GOETZ AND JUSTIN GRUBB AND MICHAEL CLARK
WWW.HELLBENTFILM.COM