
Environment and adventure: Breckenridge Film Festival is Sept. 18–21

Sep. 18, 2014 | By Lisa Pogue



Impressive cinematic resumes and brilliant outdoor and environmental documentaries, along with comedies and a touch of drama, are on tap for the [Breckenridge Film Festival](#) Sept. 18–21.

The four-day fest unfolds with 66 films — one third revolving around environmental or outdoor themes — and screenings that transport audiences to Venezuela’s remote Mount Roraima, Alaskan backcountry chutes, Guatemala’s jungle rivers and beyond.

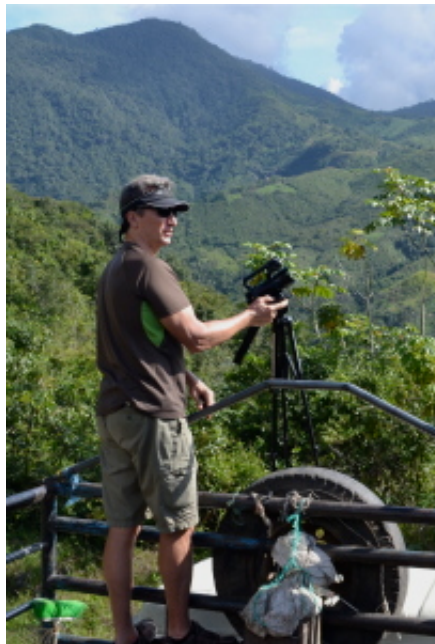
Summit County resident Paul Heesaker’s film, “[Rios Guatemala: The](#)

educational and economic opportunities while telling of lives risked to save the endangered Rio Copon.

Heesaker, who will be in attendance at the festival, shares insights on life behind the camera:

Q: What inspired you to create “Rios Guatemala: The Preservation of Wild Rivers?”

A: In 2011, I heard that the Guatemalan government had plans to dam many of the country’s wild rivers, including the recently discovered and world-class Rio Copon. Even though I knew nothing about filmmaking, I set out to learn. I’d film the river and bring it to the world’s attention before the Copon was dammed and lost forever. The film recounts that attempt to film the Rio Copon.



Q: How does living and working in Summit County inspire your work?

A: There’s good energy in Summit County. Although we’re (wife Catherine and I) relative newcomers, we love the people we’ve met and come to know. We’re both in our fifties now and plan to grow old in Summit County. From what we’ve seen, old starts a lot later here.

Q: What do you hope attendees will take away from your film?

A: The Breckenridge Film Festival is an opportunity to kick-start the Rios Education Center and get the word out about internships, adventure trips and eco-volunteer opportunities. The best-case scenario is that a few good folks come aboard as “Legacy Builders” and help build similar projects in other inspirational places.

Q: What have you learned about yourself from working on this film?

A: I’ve made a lot of mistakes over the years and I’ve been knocked down time and time again. Maybe I have to learn the hard way, but I do know this — hold fast to dreams and persevere. Persevere despite the obstacles, the detractors and the self-doubt. Dreams then become reality.

**Don't miss these
Breckenridge Film Festival
gems:**

- “[Higher](#)” Rocky Mountain premiere on Saturday night at the Riverwalk Center
- Colorado-themed films at noon on Saturday at The Village at Breckenridge
- Full [family programing](#) for teenagers and young adults



Find tickets and lodging discounts at breckfilmfest.com, as well as details on parties, forums and sponsorship opportunities.

**All photos courtesy Paul Heesaker*

– Lisa Pogue