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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL FILM TO SCREEN AT LAGUNA'S BCSPACE 12/02/07**

Laguna Beach, CA, and Port Angeles, WA, Nov. 15, 2007— **BC SPACE** announces the screening of the feature-length documentary *Unconquering the Last Frontier*, the first film to address the topic of dam removal and ecosystem restoration on Washington State's Elwha River. Film maker Robert Lundahl made the film over a period of eight years.

The screening will be held in support of Southern California river ecosystems including San Mateo Creek (Trestles), Aliso Creek, and Matilija Creek (at the Ventura River) and others, Along with the former El Toro Marine Base habitat preservation efforts. Community and environmental leaders, activists, and the public are invited to attend.

*Unconquering the Last Frontier* describes how the Lower Elwha Dam was constructed illegally in 1908, how dam management practices contributed to the river's decline, and how events on the river were paralleled by the systematic political, economic, and cultural suppression of the native people.

The story is told through the eyes of Lower Elwha Klallam tribe elders, Beatrice Charles and Adeline Smith, along with tribal members, Rachel Kowalski-Hagaman, Joe Luce, and Tribal Chairman, Russ Hepfer. The film was narrated by acclaimed Native American actor Gary Farmer. Bay Area composer Tony Saunders created its score.

In 1976, the tribe, along with 14 environmental groups, intervened in the FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) process to stop the relicensing of one of the river's two dams. The tribe wanted the dams removed and the Elwha River watershed ecosystem restored. Such restoration was mandated by Congress in 1992 and is slowly moving forward. In February 2000, the federal government purchased the dams, in the first step toward their removal

"*Unconquering the Last Frontier* tells of the aggressive industrial development of Washington's Olympic Peninsula at the expense of the native people, who had lived along the river since time immemorial," says Lundahl. "The triumvirate of hydropower, mills and logging stripped the Olympic Peninsula of its magnificent forests and its legendary salmon. The corporations left the native people, as well the descendants of the area's European-American settlers, without jobs and often without hope.

"The film tells of the tribe's struggle to recover their culture and livelihoods in the shadow of hydropower development. At the same time, the story can be seen as a cautionary tale, as the companies that once developed the Pacific Northwest have since moved on to Pennsylvania, to the American South, to Malaysia, Thailand, South America and Russia, where they've continued their same practices. The film also calls into question the American notion of "Progress," which

assumes that ecosystem resources are expendable in the process of capital expansion and resource extraction. Now in the era of global climate change, we find out they are not.”

**Robert Lundahl & Associates, LLC** is a global film, video and multimedia production company specializing in environmental sustainability.. More information *about Unconquering the Last Frontier* is available at: [www.unconquering.org](http://www.unconquering.org).

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