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PRESS RELEASE

4th ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL SEE THE CHANGE – BE THE CHANGE

Friday, March 27 and Saturday March 28, 2009

For Immediate Release

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<http://econet.sk.ca/filmfest09>

Filmmaking is one of the fastest growing ways to share information and educate people on environmental issues. Literally everyone, young or old, has the ability to catch images on their digital camera or cell phone and make a “movie.” Recently, the entry of meteors into Saskatchewan was caught on tape by amateur videographers. Filmmaking is no longer the singular realm of multi-millionaires; it is now a way for students and activists to tell our stories.

Environmental issues are the biggest concern that people have today. In a poll released March 3rd, in a time of impending recession, 82 % of Canadians said they would spend extra to have energy-efficient homes.

People readily film environmental problems, make a comment and post their statement within hours on YouTube or by email. Even famous filmmakers such as the Coen brothers (“Fargo” and “Borat”) have released an eye-catching commentary on “clean coal” on YouTube. Documentaries are increasingly growing in popularity, and Hollywood “stars” take up the issue of the environmental justice in feature films.

The Saskatchewan Eco-Network, in conjunction with a wide group of sponsors, is hosting the **Fourth Annual Saskatchewan Environmental Film Festival – See the Change, Be the Change on Friday evening, March 27th and all day Saturday, March 28th at the Timlin Neatby Theatre (Room 241 Arts) on the University of Saskatchewan campus.**

“See the Change, Be the Change” will feature a number of powerful international films on the environment such as “Blue Gold – World Water Wars” based on the book by Maude Barlow (recently appointed Senior Advisor on Water Issues by Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, President of the United Nations) and Tony Clarke. There will be a wide variety of filmic approaches to the environment from animation, shorts, and documentaries to public service announcements – the focus will be on making change. Some of the films, videos and public service announcements have won awards at well known environmental film festivals such as “Planet in Focus”, the Lincoln Center Film Society and “Green Screens”; other films and clips will be premiering at “See the Change, Be the Change.”

We will be honouring local environmental activists, both individuals and groups on Friday evening through the “Environmental Activist Awards.” On Saturday evening, we will be recognizing provincial filmmakers on a Filmmakers’ Panel, and will conclude the festival during Earth Hour, an international event. Local filmmakers include Joel Entwistle who has won an award for his short “Love to Love You Landfills”, and Angela Edmunds and Marcel Petit, producers of the acclaimed “Hookers”, who will be showing clips from their latest video “ Pisim Project.” Other films focus on Saskatchewan ecologists such as Jeanne Corrigan’s “Jim Settee – the Way Home” and Lindsay Bradford-Ewart’s “Boreal Forest Expedition.”

“See the Change, Be the Change” is based on Mahatma Gandhi’s encouragement to “be the change you wish to see.” Organizers want people to recognize that environmental education is best achieved in an active learning environment – seeing and hearing is important, but “doing” creates change that leads to more change.

There will be discussions on what people can do to follow up on issues featured within the festival, and we will hear from local filmmakers on why they chose the environment as a focus and how they decided that making films was their vehicle for making change.

The Saskatchewan Eco Network has brought together a wide group of co-sponsors: the University of Saskatchewan Student’s Union (USSU), an environmental club from Mount Royal Collegiate – Royal Environmental Action Leaders “REAL,” the U. of S. Office of Sustainability, the Environmental Studies Students’ Association, the Biology Students’ Club, and filmmakers from MAESTAR Productions and MPetit Productions. The University Educational Media and Productions (EMAP) department will help with the technical aspects of the film festival. Other sponsors are the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, the Craik Sustainable Living Project and the Saskatchewan Council for International Co-operation (SCIC). Sponsors and donors are signing on daily. Funding for the Saskatchewan Eco-Network is provided by the Saskatchewan Ministry of the Environment.

Saskatchewan Eco-network

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