

# BIDDER 70

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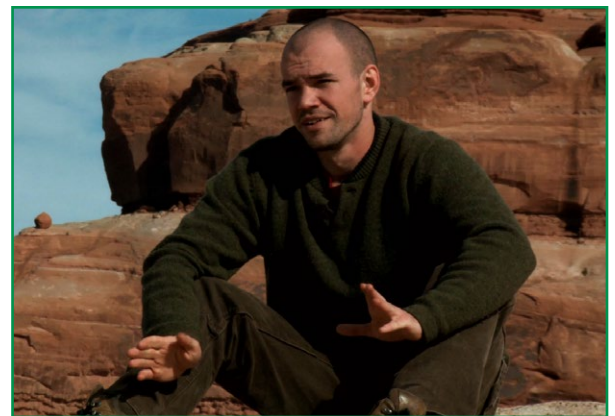
## Bullfrog Community Screening & Discussion Guide

**Roll out the red carpet!** Use your film screening of BIDDER 70 as a tool to build community and spark discussion about free speech, activism, and the history and future of the US environmental movement. This guide offers some background information plus helpful tips & discussion questions for an informative, and rewarding screening. **Good Luck!**

For additional resources, visit [bidder70.bullfrogcommunities.com/bid\\_resources](http://bidder70.bullfrogcommunities.com/bid_resources)

## About BIDDER 70

BIDDER 70 is Tim DeChristopher, the student who monkey-wrenched the 2008 fraudulent Bureau of Land Management Oil and Gas Lease Auction. Bidding \$1.8 million to save 22,000 acres of pristine Utah wilderness surrounding Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, with no intention to pay or drill, Tim brought the BLM auction to an abrupt halt. DeChristopher was indicted on two federal felonies, facing penalties of up to ten years in prison and \$750,000 in fines. During the two years awaiting his trial, DeChristopher evolved into a climate justice leader. BIDDER 70 is Tim's journey from economics student to incarcerated felon.



## About the Directors

Beth and George Gage, as Gage & Gage Productions, have created award-winning documentaries since 1993. Gage & Gage Productions creates compelling personal films that will empower viewers, initiate dialogue and prompt action on provocative issues. Concentrating on the environment and social justice, they present issues underrepresented in the current media. Their films educate, entertain, inspire and motivate viewers to become actively involved in humanitarian and environmental issues.

# ready to watch!

## Here are some ideas and best practices to help make your community screening of BIDDER 70 a success!

**1. Publicize Your Event!** This is the most important step because it not only tells the world what you're up to, but it lets the Bullfrog Community team know what your plans are so we can help you publicize your event. Visit <http://bidder70.bullfrogcommunities.com/> to register and get the word out on your BIDDER 70 screening.

**2. Visualize Your Goal!** What do you hope to achieve with your screening of BIDDER 70? Your goal could be to generate a lively post-film discussion about empowering yourselves as a community to become agents of change through peaceful civil disobedience. Or, you can simply provide an opportunity for families to watch and learn together.

**3. Where To Host?** Consider which locations in your area would be ideal for accommodating a community film screening of the size you anticipate: downtown movie theaters, churches and synagogues, town halls, community centers, public libraries, school auditoriums, warehouses at a business and outdoor screenings at parks and playgrounds, and even private homes have been venues for many successful community screenings.

**4. Find A Partner!** Give some thought to who is already working on this issue in your community. Do you know of groups and organizations who support peaceful civil disobedience in defense of our planet? Can they help sponsor the event? Spread the word? Speak on a panel discussion after the screening? Some potential partners include: environmental, law, and sustainable studies departments at universities and colleges, student groups, high schools, faith-based organizations and institutions, museums, parks, nature centers, environmental groups, human rights and social groups, small-business owners and other organizations concerned about the environment and a livable, sustainable future.

**5. Invite A Guest Speaker!** Guest speakers and panels are a great way to encourage discussion and debate after a community screening. When people are engaged and thinking about the issues they will stay engaged long after the screening has passed. Contact local activist and environmental groups, park directors, and teachers and professors who have expertise or insight into the issues raised by the film, and invite them to attend and participate in a discussion or Q&A session. If you're interested in having Tim DeChristopher speak at your screening, please email: [jodisolomon@jodisolomonspeakers.com](mailto:jodisolomon@jodisolomonspeakers.com)

**6. Engage Your Audience!** Included in this handout is a section called Ready to Act! which is meant to be a hand-out at your screening. It will help your audience know what they can do to educate themselves about key issues brought up in the film.

**7. Spread The Word!** Think about the best methods available to you for publicizing the film screening to people in your community. Sending emails, creating event notifications on Facebook or Meetup, using Twitter, and placing screening announcements in local newspapers and newsletters is a good start. Find the BIDDER 70 screening poster, discussion guide (includes handout), and press photos on [bidder70.bullfrogcommunities.com/bid\\_resources](http://bidder70.bullfrogcommunities.com/bid_resources) to help publicize your event around town.

**8. Tell Us How It Went!** Visit <http://bidder70.bullfrogcommunities.com/> to tell us about your event: Where it was held? Who attended? What went well, and what was challenging? Your feedback will help others in organizing their own successful events and will energize Bullfrog Communities as a whole.

# ready to talk!

**Your audience will be excited to discuss the issues raised by BIDDER 70. Here are some questions that will get people talking.**

1. What would be the consequences for the people who live nearby and for the public in general if we allow housing, mining and drilling projects to develop inside and in close proximity to our wilderness areas?
2. Within the first 5 minutes of the film, Tim DeChristopher says: “It’s hard for me not to think about climate change, with everything we’re doing. It’s this big weight that our generation is bearing on our shoulders. It’s like something chasing us, that’s getting closer all the time.” In what ways do you think climate change will impact the earth in your lifetime? Can you relate with DeChristopher’s anxiety? Or, are you reassured that the problem will be dealt with?
3. DeChristopher states “We’ve always been told...that corporations have all the power, and we don’t often get to be reminded that we are citizens of what was once the greatest democracy on the planet.” Do you feel like your voice as a citizen in today’s America has any effect? Do you feel that activism produces tangible results? What do you think is the most effective way to bring about change?
4. Dennis Willis, a retired Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff member, states “I have been in meetings with oil and gas companies that have come in and just flat said, “We own the White House. You will do it our way.” Have there been instances of environmental destruction and degradation in your community which have benefited corporations more than the public? What was your reaction? What is your reaction now, after seeing this film?
5. Dr. Terry Root, scientist with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), told Tim “I’m sorry my generation failed yours” and that it was too late to avoid some of the worst case consequences of global warming. Is the fight against global climate change hopeless? Does Dr. Root’s statement make you feel paralyzed? More energized than ever? Or, a sense of freedom, since there is nothing left to lose?
6. Tim entered the auction room not sure of what he would do, but once given the opportunity to actually bid, he went ahead with his action of civil disobedience. At what point, and by what right, does a person’s conscience carry more authority than the law?
7. Name some examples of past acts of civil disobedience that advocated non-violence, rebelled against injustice, and worked against the status quo. Can you name 5 contemporary acts of civil disobedience?
8. Some modern day and creative acts of civil disobedience are: Artistic vigils. Blockades. Planting guerrilla gardens. Facilitating three hundred environmentalists at a protest with a ‘clown army.’ Flash Mobs. Sit-ins. What do you think of these provocative actions? What are your ideas for creative, effective actions of civil disobedience?
9. What is your impression from the media of environmentalists and other activists? Do you think this depiction is accurate? How does it affect how you think about environmental issues?
10. Judge Dee Benson did not allow the 3 defense strategies that Tim and his attorneys wanted to use: the ‘choice of evils,’ ‘imminent harm,’ and ‘sufficient causal relationship’ defenses. Did any of the 3 defenses have more merit than the others? Was the judge justified in denying these defenses? Why or why not?

**11.** After two years and nine postponements, Tim's trial began on Feb. 28, 2011. After a five-day trial, DeChristopher was found guilty. On July 26, 2011, DeChristopher was sentenced to two years in federal prison and removed immediately from court in chains. What sacrifices, if any, are you willing to make to cut down on climate change? Have you calculated your carbon footprint? Do you think the next generation of young people is willing to make climate change sacrifices?

**12.** Why do you think the federal government was so harsh in its treatment of what was a nonviolent act of civil disobedience, especially when they had already declared that the BLM's land auction was illegal? And do you think that DeChristopher was right to refuse the plea bargains and to go to jail? Do you think serving a jail term was the best way for DeChristopher to bring attention to the urgent need to address the dangers of climate change and to bring hope to the climate justice movement?

**13.** How much worse can our climate change conditions get? What should governments do to prevent catastrophic climate change effects? A carbon tax? A pledge to leave fossil fuels in the ground to the greatest extent possible? What can we, as individuals, do? Cut back on driving and, most importantly, flying? Delaying as long as possible buying a new cell phone? Join the fossil fuel divestment campaign?

**14.** Do you believe that addressing climate change is a social and moral responsibility? Why or why not?

**15.** Has BIDDER 70 changed the way you think about environmental activism, and if so, how?

# ready to act!

handout

Share this handout with your  
BIDDER 70 screening audience!

I. **Looking for ways to get involved?** Participate in upcoming campaigns, protests and rallies. Some of these very active nation-wide organizations may also have local chapters in your area:

## **Peaceful Uprising**

Co-founded by Tim DeChristopher, Peaceful Uprising is a nonprofit collective committed to action to combat the climate crisis and build a just, healthy world. <http://www.peacefuluprising.org/>

## **Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth**

The UU Ministry for Earth creates earth justice education and action campaigns to encourage respect for the inter-dependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Tim is entering Harvard Divinity School to become a UU pastor. <http://uuministryforearth.org/>

## **350.org**

350.org is building a global grassroots movement to solve the climate crisis and push for policies that will put the world on track to get to 350 ppm. <http://350.org/>

## **RAMPS Campaign**

Radical Action for Mountain People's Survival is a non-violent direct action campaign based in the southern coal fields of West Virginia dedicated to ending all forms of strip mining in Appalachia by locally supported direct action. <http://rampscampaign.org/>

## **Rising Tide North America**

A 100% volunteer, grassroots network of groups and individuals who take direct action to confront the roots causes of climate change. Rising Tide North America believes that corporate-friendly and state-sponsored "solutions" to climate change will not save us. <http://www.risingtidenorthamerica.org/>

## **Wild Idaho Rising Tide**

Since 2011, WIRT activists have challenged Alberta tar sands equipment transports, oil and natural gas exploitation in Idaho, Powder River Basin coal extraction and export, and highway expansion into native habitat. <http://wildidahorisingtide.org/>

## **Rainforest Action Network**

RAN uses hard-hitting markets campaigns to align the policies of multinational corporations with widespread public support for environmental protection. <http://ran.org/>

## **Center for Biological Diversity**

The Center for Biological Diversity wants those who come after us to inherit a world where the wild is still alive. <http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/>

## **Utah Tar Sands Resistance**

Utah Tar Sands Resistance is about taking action to preserve the land. <http://www.tarsandsresist.org/>

## **Before It Starts**

Started by PeaceUp members, Before It Starts formed to stop the immediate threat of tar sands and oil shale mining

in the United States before it is too late. <http://www.beforeitstarts.org/>

### **Transition Network (Transition Town)**

The Transition approach is a replicable, flexible methodology that empowers communities to squarely face the challenges of peak oil and climate change, and to unleash the collective genius of their own people to re-create the future in ways that are not based on cheap, plentiful and polluting oil but on localized food, sustainable energy sources, resilient local economies and an enlivened sense of community well-being. <http://www.transitionnetwork.org/>

### **Sierra Club**

MISSION: To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/>

### **Greenpeace**

Greenpeace is the largest independent direct-action environmental organization in the world.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/en/>

### **The Wilderness Workshop**

The conservation watchdog of nearly 3 million acres of public lands in western Colorado. Using science, the law and grassroots activism, WW works to keep the White River National Forest and nearby BLM lands more or less "as is" and, where possible, to restore wildness to this nationally important landscape.

<http://www.wildernessworkshop.org/>

### **Global Footprint Network**

Learn about the Ecological Footprint — a resource accounting tool that measures how much nature we have, how much we use, and who uses what. <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/>

### **Fossil Free Network**

The campaign to pressure institutions to immediately freeze any new investment in fossil fuel companies.

<http://gofossilfree.org>

### **Western Colorado Congress**

A grassroots, democratic organization dedicated to challenging injustice by organizing people to increase their power over decisions that affect their lives. WCC's community groups and members work together to create healthy, sustainable communities, social and economic justice, environmental stewardship and a truly democratic society.

<http://wccongress.org/wcc/>

## **2. Spread the word: Contact your local newspaper and media outlets.**

Write letters to your newspaper's editor, and introduce news tips to individual reporters working for your local television news. Tell them about environmental issues that are directly affecting the people in your community, and ask them to cover any rallies or protests you are involved in or are aware of. Bring your ideas on what we can do about it to the table.

**3. Contact congressional representatives, state legislators, mayor and city council members.** Writing a letter or calling your representatives is an important way to tell them how the voters feel about specific environ-

mental issues. Keep it brief: Choose the three strongest points that support your position and state them clearly and succinctly. Encourage others to do the same to start a letter writing campaign. Locate e-mail, mailing addresses, and phone numbers for your local, state, and federal officials at <http://www.usa.gov/>

**4. Learn More!** Helpful resources for activists and those learning about civil disobedience are:

#### **Civil Disobedience Index**

From ACT UP in New York. Offers theory, practical advice, and explanation of legal questions.

<http://www.actupny.org/documents/CDdocuments/CDindex.html>

#### **Civil Disobedience & Non Violent Action Resources from The National Parents Leadership Council**

Provides a historical background of non-violent civil disobedience. Showcases the lessons learned, implementation, and a checklist to prepare for non-violent action. <http://www.kids-right.org/civil.htm>

#### **HowToCamp/HowToOccupy**

Conceived to promote and spread the methods, techniques and knowledge about peaceful occupation of public spaces while developing sustainable ways of living based on participatory democracy.

<http://howtocamp.takethesquare.net/category/civil-disobedience/>

#### **Training for Change**

Nonprofit peace group run by Quaker activist George Lakey trains activists around the world to spread tools of democratic, nonviolent change. [http://www.trainingforchange.org/about\\_us](http://www.trainingforchange.org/about_us)

#### **350.org Cookbook**

350.org has come up with a handy Summer 2013 Cookbook of Creative Tactics for climate justice action, ready to be printed out at <http://joinsummerheat.org/cookbook/>

#### **New England Nonviolence Trainers Network**

The purpose of the Network is to make nonviolence training widely available and to provide trainers with a variety of resources. <http://www.nonviolencetraining.org/>

#### **CREDO**

A social change organization that supports activism and funds progressive nonprofits. Their mobile telephone company, CREDO Mobile, generates revenue to support progressive nonprofits and their activism arm, CREDO Action.

<http://credoaction.com/>

#### **The Appalachian Citizens' Law Center**

A nonprofit law firm that fights for justice in the coalfields by representing coal miners and their families on issues of black lung and mine safety and by working with grassroots groups and individuals to protect the land and people from misuse and degradation caused by extractive industries. <http://appalachianlawcenter.org/>

#### **SparkNotes: Civil Disobedience Review Quiz**

Test your knowledge of civil disobedience and take a quiz on Henry David Thoreau's famous essay.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/civildisobedience/quiz.html>